



**Rabobank**

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## ***A collective mindset to boost action – Global Farmers Master Class to unite farm leaders***

Adopting the right attitude and maintaining a collective mindset will be crucial in order for farmers to tackle the global food security challenges in the future, according to large-scale broadacre farmer Andrew Fowler from Esperance WA.

Selected to participate in the **Rabobank Global Farmers Master Class**, which begins on November 5, Mr Fowler will join 40 of the world's leading primary producers who will gather in Victoria and New South Wales to share information and ideas on the future of farming. The week-long Master Class program will cover key topics in the context of global agriculture, including social enabling, sustainability, succession, supply chain, science, social media, and silicon farming (big data).

Mr Fowler said the issue of global food security must be critically addressed.

“Broadly speaking, to double food production in the next 40 years is a massive challenge – so much is taken for granted by most of our population, but when you look at society’s demand profile into the future, this challenge won’t be easily sorted out,” Mr Fowler said.

“The issue really is on the human side. It’s about the people making the right decisions and the right technology being put in place to see results transpire at the farm level. We need the academia and the research but we need it to be put into practice on-farm.”

Ironically, Mr Fowler believes farmers have been their own “worst enemies”, being too good at meeting the demands of food production.

“We’ve managed incredible increases in production over the past few years, but I don’t think it’s going to be as easy to get the next big productivity gains as it has been in the past,” he said.

“If you look at the grains industry, the productivity gains are starting to plateau because the easy things have been done. You can find an increase of one per cent here or there, but any more than that is far more complex and harder to manage.”

For this reason, Mr Fowler will be travelling to the week-long Rabobank Global Farmers Master Class this week to gain insights from other primary producers around the world, uniting to address a common goal.

“I will learn a lot from the other people participating in the Master Class and I expect the program will be hugely stimulating,” he said.

“We will be addressing these critical topics at a global scale rather than a local scale and that really is why I wanted to be there. I think it will be quite inspirational. Farmers need to stick together to better manage the marketing of their produce and help each other. Without collective action, it’s hard to get traction.”



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A big believer in cooperation across industry, Mr Fowler is a committed member of several grower groups within the grains and agricultural sectors in WA.

“We are very focused on sharing what we do and sharing with others in our area because the more you share and the more you give, the more you get back,” he said.

“We do that with working with local growing groups and share the innovative things we are doing to try and learn from the other innovators in our community with a real belief you can never know it all yourself.”

Mr Fowler is the part-owner of a family farming business producing grain, sheep and beef east of Esperance, WA. The area farmed is approximately 28,000 hectares with grain crops grown on two-thirds of the land and sheep and cattle on the remainder.

Seven leading Australian farmers will be among the Master Class participants, including beef producer and genetics specialist Euan Murdoch from south-east QLD, mixed cropping and sheep producer Mark Modra from Port Lincoln SA, dairy farmer Pete Notman from Gippsland VIC, mixed enterprise farmer Robert O'Connor from Launceston TAS, cotton and beef producer David Statham from the New England NSW, and pig, sheep, cattle and crop farmer Edwina Beveridge from Blantyre Farms in Young NSW.

These farmers will then join with up to 600 participants from government, industry, academia, media and advocacy groups at the inaugural full-day Rabobank F20 (Food) Summit in Sydney on November 13. Titled ‘Global food security: shared responsibility, collective solutions’, the Summit will feature a range of international keynote speakers discussing the themes of increasing food production, improving access to food, encouraging balanced nutrition, and strengthening stability in markets and production chains.

For more information regarding the Rabobank F20 Summit, please visit [www.rabobank.com.au/f20](http://www.rabobank.com.au/f20).

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