



The Australian Grains
Industry Conference

2021

RECONNECT • REIGNITE • REVITALISE

6 - 7 September 2021
VIRTUAL

Media Release

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For Immediate Release

AGIC Australia 2021 Reconnect – Reignite – Revitalise

The Australian grain industry has reconnected with an information-packed and entertaining two days at Australian Grains Industry Conference (AGIC) on the 6th and 7th of September 2021.

Originally planned as a ‘hybrid conference’, with an in-person event in Melbourne, the latest round of pandemic outbreaks saw the organisers move to a 100% virtual format. This did little to dampen the enthusiasm of delegates. With nearly 70%* of delegates in lockdown, the Chat Rooms and Network Meeting Hubs were buzzing both days with numerous video and live chats.

“While the reconnection was virtual again, our 22nd Annual AGIC Australia achieved its goal to reignite and revitalise conversation and connection amongst the Australian grain community.” said Pat O’Shannassy, CEO at [Grain Trade Australia](#), which co-hosts the popular conference alongside [Pulse Australia](#) and the [Australian Oilseeds’ Federation](#).

“And, whilst the excitement of getting together in person is again delayed, or rather **heightened for 2022**, the feedback is AGIC Australia has delivered again. While virtual reality was our only option this year, the insights, learnings and opportunities were 100% real. Delegates were able to interact and network through the specifically tailored on-line conference platform.” Mr O’Shannassy said.

Andrew Goyder, Chair of Grain Trade Australia, agreed. “Delegates joined AGIC Australia from across the globe, keen to connect and discuss the topical issues with colleagues, potential customers and suppliers. The opportunity to connect and communicate as an industry, and within a community, is critical to demonstrate leadership and engender an appropriate culture for its many participants. This is how sustainability within an industry is fostered and achieved. I must congratulate the industry and the AGIC Australia coordinators for delivering this opportunity.”

“The impact of the past few years has created a toll on the grain industry, so it’s a great feeling to be able to come together as an industry and its people,” says Mr Goyder.

This sentiment was echoed throughout the content of the conference. Insights proved COVID-19 has created a change in the way we work, live and how businesses operate with movement into sectors that are more COVID resilient. The future appears bright in the grain industry due to its resilience and hard work during the pandemic.

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The industry experts

Like previous years, AGIC produced an impressive line-up of local and international experts, including:

- **The Hon. Dan Tehan**, Minister for Trade, Tourism and Investment
- **The Hon. David Littleproud**, Minister for Agriculture and Northern Australia, Deputy Leader of the National Party
- **Joe Lardy, Research Analyst**, CHS Global Research, USA
- **Adelaide Timbrell, Senior Economist**, ANZ Research
- **Nick Hazell, CEO**, v2food
- **Robert Spurway, CEO**, GrainCorp Limited
- **Rob Rogers, CEO**, Allied Pinnacle
- **Kieren Perkins**, Olympic Champion
- **Professor the Honourable Bob Carr, Former Australian Foreign Minister & NSW Premier, Industry Professor**, Institute for Sustainable Futures
- **Mick Keogh, Deputy Chair**, ACCC

The insights

Just some of the insights on offer included:

- Minister Tehan's opening address stated the agricultural industry, and in particular the grain sector, should be congratulated on rebounding from the impacts of drought and to continue to develop and grow what is a world-leading grains sector in this country.
- Sustainability was a strong focus of both the international and local speakers. Key messages included the importance in meeting the customer, and also community, expectations towards sustainable agriculture.
- Connection across all parts of the grain supply chain was highlighted. Being able to articulate and demonstrate a positive culture and a simple message that supports the creation of workplace and industry values, and leadership was promoted as critically important. For industry to be successful, talent must be nurtured through appropriate environments including diversity, training and management support.
- We heard from the Hon. Bob Carr on the relationship between diplomacy, politics and trade. The discussion looked at how to "get the politics out of the trade" and approaches to the current trade disruptions that may be a lost opportunity for Australian industries, for growth and economic potential as China continues to grow.
- ACCC Deputy Chair, Mr Mick Keogh, outlined that from a competition perspective, the industry is growing up and exhibiting maturity since deregulation. The grains sector has been on a competition journey since the 1990s as well as a sector growth and innovation journey. This has led to a more agile industry with positive trends including the introduction of competition in additional exporting facilities. Mr Keogh outlined the ACCCs views on the recommendations of Wheat Port Code review.
- Market conditions and forecasts were enthusiastically absorbed by delegates interested in the global outlook for commodities. Market analysts reported the short-term market appears positive for Australian grain, some expectations of the impacts of high global freight and container prices pressuring the market in the medium term. Similarly, the long term forecast for agriculture and especially plant based foods is extremely buoyant and positive.

Full **AGIC Australia 2021** Program details can be found here: [AGIC 2021 Program Book](#) Delegates continue to have access to the recordings, sessions and information for 30 days.

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*Informal conference poll