

AUSTRALIAN FARM INSTITUTE
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‘Evidence meets Emotion’ Roundtable: creating robust agricultural policy

With many of today's agricultural policy issues focusing on the emotive and personal reactions, how can the industry temper emotion with facts to enable effective policy?

The Australian Farm Institute's Agriculture Roundtable, on Tuesday 16 October at the National Gallery of Australia in Canberra, will aim to distinguish fact from feeling in the ag policy debate. This year's Roundtable will focus on the theme 'Evidence meets Emotion'. Discussions will concentrate on the proposition that agricultural policy must be evidence-based, not emotion-driven.

Current pressures on animal welfare and environmental sustainability are both issues that draw out passionate responses from core personal belief systems – and attract considerable regulation. AFI Executive Director Richard Heath said: “most people would agree that regulation should be based on evidence rather than personal belief. So how do you temper that emotional debate to have a constructive discussion that leads to workable policy outcomes? And what if the evidence is patchy or in dispute?”

The 2018 Roundtable keynote address will be presented by influential science communicator and ABC presenter Bernie Hobbs. Bernie will speak on her experience in communicating climate research and complex sciences to an unfamiliar audience and what she has learned in the emotion versus evidence debate. The subsequent Roundtable sessions will focus on animal welfare, environmental policy, community trust and agricultural statistics. In the evening, the 'Right to Farm' After Hours Forum will feature a panel discussion including Agriculture Minister David Littleproud, along with networking and cocktails.

The Australian Agriculture Roundtable will coincide with 'Ag & Rural Focus week' in Canberra from 15 – 18th of October, which also includes the National Farmers' Federation Congress, the Farmer of the Year and Rural Women's Awards and Australian Rural Leadership Foundation gala dinner. Combined, these events will ensure that agriculture provides a strong voice to those that most need to hear; debating issues, discussing solutions and celebrating success in the sector.

For further details and booking information please visit the AFI website: farminstitute.org.au

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Media contact

Katie McRobert 0477 758 257

Richard Heath 0427 447 872