

AUSTRALIAN FARM INSTITUTE

MEDIA RELEASE



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Who should determine the right to farm?

John Ralph Essay Competition & Agriculture Roundtable

The right to farm describes the ability for farmers to undertake lawful agricultural practices without conflict or interference arising from complaints from neighbours and other land users.

But who defines what lawful farm practices are and where they can be performed? Increasingly, multiple stakeholders who do not necessarily have direct connections with agriculture are influencing public policy and regulations affecting how farm businesses operate. Is this public determination of farm business operation appropriate, or should farm businesses be allowed to determine their own farm practices without interference?

The Australian Farm Institute invites submissions exploring this subject for the 2018 John Ralph Essay Competition, addressing the proposition:

Society should determine the right to farm.

The John Ralph Essay Competition provides the opportunity for people from a range of backgrounds and viewpoints to have their ideas heard by Australia's agricultural leaders and senior policy-makers. Contributions are encouraged from all with an interest in the subject, whether they have been in the sector five months or 55 years, or are outside the sector with an observer's perspective.

Essays can argue for or against the proposition, and must be properly referenced with factual information in support of the argument being advanced. Where appropriate, the essays should also discuss proposed policy changes that the author believes could address the issues raised. Entries are due by 5pm on Monday, 3 September 2018.

[Entry details can be found here.](#)

The winner of the Open category will receive a cash prize of \$5000 and the winner of the Novice category will receive a cash prize of \$1000, and winning entries will be published in the Summer 2018 edition of AFI's quarterly *Farm Policy Journal*.

The winners will also attend the Australian Agriculture Roundtable on Tuesday 16 October at the National Gallery of Australia to discuss their arguments. The theme of the 2018 Roundtable is: **Evidence Meets Emotion – Creating robust agricultural policy**. The Roundtable will be held in Canberra this year to coincide with a range of events during **Rural & Ag Focus Week** from 15–18 October, including the Agrifutures Rural Women's Awards Dinner, Farmer of the Year Awards, National Farmers' Federation Congress and the Rural Leadership Foundation Gala. Along with the right to farm discussion, the Roundtable will feature panels on animal welfare, environmental policy, social trust and agricultural statistics.

The annual John Ralph Essay Competition was established in 2010 to honour the inaugural Chairman of the Institute. John made a major contribution to the Australian Farm Institute during his six years of chairmanship, and always insisted that comprehensive and objective research should be the basis for policy decisions.

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