



# MORE THAN GUMBOOTS AND TRACTORS CAREERS ADVISERS EVENT

## RESEARCH SUMMARY

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### FAST FACTS

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#### PROBLEM

There is a significant gap between opportunities in the grain industry and what professional careers advisers know of those careers and their pathways.

#### PROJECT

Through an immersive, full-day tour of grain industry research facilities, trial sites and consumer products, advisers were shown the diversity, importance and relevance of grain industry careers.

#### PARTICIPANTS

AgCommunicators -  
Belinda Cay

#### DATES

Start: 1 July 2018

Finish: 30 June 2019

More Than Tractors and Gumboots was a unique all-day event for secondary school careers advisers, designed to showcase the diversity of agriculture and increase their appreciation of the many career opportunities the grain industry offers to students.

Twenty-three career advisers were immersed in the research, agronomy, grain chemistry, grain marketing, communication extension, products and career pathways offered by the SA grains industry.

They were then able to take their new-found awareness and knowledge back to share with hundreds of students in a powerful multiplier effect.

### BACKGROUND

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There is a clear knowledge gap between the diversity of careers available in the grain industry and the awareness of those opportunities among school science teachers and career advisers. This is especially true among metropolitan teachers who have little exposure to the sector.

They are largely unaware of agriculture's relevance to their science curriculum, or the many lifelong career opportunities that agriculture can offer to students across a wide range of skill levels and interest areas.

This means agriculture has been unable to fulfill its potential for attracting young people to the industry through science subjects and vocational education pathways. .

### RESEARCH AIMS

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The core objectives of the project were to:

- Design and deliver activities and resources that generate a high level of engagement among secondary school career advisers, recognising their role as profound influencers of the career choices students will consider and pursue.
- Immerse career advisers in the diversity of career directions within the grain industry and provide opportunities for them to learn about the industry's career options from a wide range of subject matter experts.
- Provide information, experiences and resources that career advisers could take back to their schools to share with interested students, parents, teachers and other influencers.

## IN THE FIELD

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The full-day 'More Than Tractors and Gumboots' event was promoted to schools via posters, flyers, direct emails and social media. It attracted 26 registrations of which 23 attended (with three apologies). Their interactive tour of grain industry career opportunities began at the Waite Campus where they met with representatives of universities, Registered Training Organisations, TAFE and potential employers to learn about entry pathways into the grains sector. This included information on the many degrees, trades or diploma qualifications that can be achieved within agriculture.

PhD students and researchers then talked about their careers and achievements in the industry, before attendees toured the plant breeding, molecular biology, cereal chemistry and plant biology facilities at Waite.

This was followed by a visit to Coopers Brewery and Australian Grain Technologies at Roseworthy, before a networking event at the Royal Adelaide Showgrounds – including pre-dinner grain experiments and activities involving 25 leviable grains. The day culminated in a specially prepared, grains-based dinner with presentations from Career Harvest and the evening's chef.

All the attendees finished their day with a resource kit that included industry information, career pathways brochures and grain kits.

## RESULTS

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Pre- and post-event survey data showed a shift in the participants' average knowledge of grain industry careers from 'little knowledge' to 'good' and 'excellent knowledge'. Further data showed that 90 per cent of advisers intended to change how they advised student on careers in agriculture, with most saying they would encourage students to consider innovation in ag as a career path.

Eighty percent said the event changed their perception of the agriculture industry overall, that it offered more career opportunities than they thought, and that they would confidently suggest a career in agriculture to students thanks to their improved knowledge of the many opportunities.

## VALUE FOR GROWERS

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More Than Gumboots and Tractors lays the groundwork for a creating a reliable stream of young people interested in becoming part of the SA grain industry. Ensuring a high level of participation in career pathways from research and chemistry to agronomy, machinery support and product marketing will help ensure the long-term vibrancy and resilience of the entire industry.

### MORE INFORMATION:

Belinda Cay, AgCommunicators

T: 08 8332 3277

E: [belinda.cay@agcommunicators.com.au](mailto:belinda.cay@agcommunicators.com.au)



ABOVE: Attendees at the dinner enjoyed chef prepared grains-based meals.

BELOW: Attendees visited industry facilities including Coopers.



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