SA Drought Hub Impact Report

Extension training for hub members – 2025

PROJECT LEAD: Adelaide University

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This program received funding from the Australian Government's Future Drought Fund

PROJECT SUMMARY

Training in facilitation and extension has long been recognised at many levels as a much-needed skill for many of the Drought Hub partner organisations. When delivered well extension can increase farmer engagement and ultimately lead to a willingness to adopt practices to assist in building drought resilience.

The primary focus of most SA Drought Hub projects is to promote and facilitate adoption of drought resilient practices, tools and technologies using supporting evidence through facilitated engagement with primary producers and producer groups.

There have recently been some very successful pre-project workshops run in SA through the FDF Extension and Adoption Grants to improve project staff skills in facilitated extension and adoption.

Whilst this has upskilled some project staff, there is a need for these skills to be made available to a broader range of people across the hub member base including researchers, project staff, grower group staff and advisors.

This will also build much needed regional capacity in this area with benefits realised beyond just SA Drought Hub funded projects.

The project summary will be used as the summary for any communication about your project. It should be a short, concise description of your project, key results and recommendations. It should engage the reader and be written in plain language for a public facing audience.

PROJECT ACTIVITIES AND OUTPUTS

The facilitation and extension training was made available to network partners who work closely with farmers and farmer groups, this will include, but not limited to, farming systems groups, landscape boards, PIRSA/SARDI staff, University staff and many more of the Hub partner and member organisations.

This project follows on from the highly successful project delivered in 2024/2025, where each of the four workshops delivered were oversubscribed with waiting lists.

Jeanette Long, from Ag Consulting Co was engaged to deliver four workshops across the state. Jeanette offers 2 key workshops, focusing on Facilitating Learning and Change and Designing Engaging Extension. Each workshop is capped at 15 participants, to facilitate good group interaction. Participants will have a greater understanding of:

- Understanding the role for facilitating learning in extension
- Peer-to-peer learning
- Facilitation and extension tools
- Understanding how we learn
- Understanding the stages of attitudinal change
- Personality types.

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The location of the training is flexible, with the intention to hold some of the workshops in the regions.

The 4 workshops that were delivered in 2025/26;

Date	Training	Location	Attendees	Partner organisations involved
28th & 29th July 2025	Facilitating Learning and Change	Marion Hotel	14	• PIRSA • Livestock SA • MacKillop Farm Management Group • Northern and Yorke LB • Upper North Farming Systems • Adelaide University • SA Arid Lands LB • AIR EP • Elders/Delta Ag • Australian Wine Research Institute • Flinders University • Ag KI • Dairy SA • Limestone Coast LB • WoTL • RDA EP • Paroo Pastoral Company
11th & 12th November 2025	Designing Engaging Extension	Port Augusta Yacht Club	17	
25th & 26th February 2026	Designing Engaging Extension	Flinders University City Campus	15	
17th & 18th March	Facilitating Learning and Change	Port Lincoln Hotel	11	
TOTAL			**57**	**17** hub network partner organisations

Following each workshop, all participants were invited to attend an online 90-minute follow-up session with Jeanette. This gave participants an opportunity to share learnings and discuss challenges and highlights and how they had utilised the training since the workshop. These workshops were a good refresher for all those involved.

This year's project also funded Jeanette to deliver a limited number of one-on-one sessions with those people working on the delivery of extension in a particular project. This was used by 9 participants, and was a valuable addition to the 2025 2026 project delivery.

OUTCOMES AND IMPACT

Since the SA Drought Hub began supporting the delivery of these workshops in 2024, their impact of this project is recognisable in the wider agricultural community. Many of the participants now have an increased awareness and confidence of how to communicate an extension message to the wider agricultural community. This has been observed at various events and workshops where the training participants have been involved with delivery.

The workshops have upskilled both interns and those with many years of experience in extension. The value of the workshop is that Jeanette is able to pitch her training wto abroad experience base with an engaging style to suit many learning styles. The workshops are targeted to those working specifically in agricultural extension.

Feedback from participants has reflected this with many comments such as:

“I think it should almost be a mandatory course for people leaders, or at least those coordinating high-level research projects that involve producer engagement and extension.”

“Really great practical workshop, the hands on approach is great and connecting with other participants throughout the 2 days was great. Marion Hotel is a good venue.”

“Thanks for an excellent workshop that will translate directly to my work.”

“Thank you so much for one of the most engaging upskilling experiences of my life. As someone who struggles with impulse control and attention, I was blown away with how your method of presentation elevated the material for easy uptake. I've learned a lot in those two days and will gladly carry what I can forward.”

“Engagement is a large part of my job role so this course was very relevant to my work”

“I have projects and activities to deliver that directly require these skills.”

“Consider a library series of webinars on individual topics from within the training program - short shiny how to's as reminders for people to choose from as they need to implement them.”

“It was tailored specifically for upskilling in facilitation in relation to ag which is what I was looking for”.

“Being able to use our own events as examples, having people in the room in a similar industry where their topics were also relevant to me.”

“I will be assisting in the facilitation of upcoming livestock events for farmers.”

“I do not deliver or facilitate workshops as part of my role so I found it outside of my area of knowledge but found it relevant to my future plans and ways I can facilitate meetings and the planning of workshops and the way information is delivered and extracted from participants.”

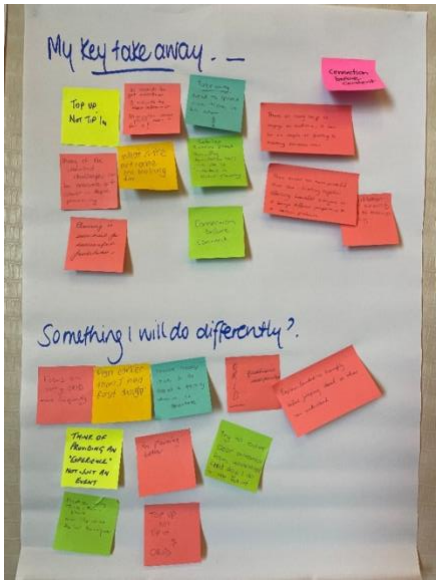
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In addition to the feedback in relation to participants work delivery, it was also raised that these workshops build strength in communities. The skills learnt in these workshops can be translated to leadership roles within regional communities. One person observed that the skills they have been taught though these workshops helped her manage community meetings, on committees which she volunteers in. Another unexpected outcome for the project.

Other observations are anything from small changes in delivery of a session at a crop walk through to rewriting the format of a whole field day program. Jeanette teaches many tools throughout the workshop which give participants the opportunity to refine one or many skills as a result of the training.











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