SA DROUGHT HUB IMPACT REPORT

Young Farmer Peer to Peer Learning Lower EP 2025

PROJECT LEAD: AIR EP

PREPARED BY: Lucy Pedler, Naomi Scholz

Australian Government
Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Future Drought Fund

SA DROUGHT HUB

Adelaide University

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

CONTENTS

PROJECT SUMMARY 3
PROJECT ACTIVITIES AND OUTPUTS 4
OUTCOMES AND IMPACT 10
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT 13

Australian Government
Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry
Future Drought Fund
SA DROUGHT HUB
Adelaide University

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

PROJECT SUMMARY

The Young Farmer Peer to Peer Learning Lower EP 2025 project was established to support the next generation of farming leaders across Lower Eyre Peninsula by building their knowledge, confidence, decision-making skills and professional networks. The project responded to feedback from local farming communities that many young farmers had limited opportunities to connect with peers, develop leadership skills, and gain practical experience in managing farm business risks and climate variability.

Delivered by Agricultural Innovation & Research Eyre Peninsula (AIR EP) in partnership with George Pedler Ag, the project engaged approximately 15 young farmers through a series of peer-to-peer learning activities focused on soils, agronomy, farm business management, risk management and strategic planning. Participants helped shape the program by identifying topics most relevant to their farming businesses and future aspirations.

The project created a supportive environment where participants could openly discuss ideas, ask questions and learn from both industry experts and each other. Activities included group planning sessions, crop walks, farm visits, practical soil assessments and discussions around business profitability, risk and long-term planning.

A key outcome of the project has been the development of strong peer networks and increased confidence among participants to contribute to decision-making within their farming businesses. Feedback indicates participants have improved their understanding of risk management, strategic planning and agricultural production systems while building connections that will continue beyond the project. These outcomes contribute to stronger drought preparedness, improved farm business resilience and the development of future agricultural leaders across Lower Eyre Peninsula.

Australian Government
Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry
Future Drought Fund
SA DROUGHT HUB
Adelaide University

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

PROJECT ACTIVITIES AND OUTPUTS

The Young Farmer Peer-to-Peer Learning Project was designed to build the capacity, skills and resilience of young farmers aged approximately 18-35 years across Lower Eyre Peninsula. Through consultation with local farming communities, the project recognised a need to better support emerging farm business leaders by providing opportunities to learn alongside peers, expand their networks and develop skills that contribute to long-term farm resilience. The project aligned with SA Drought Hub priorities around farm planning and decision making, soil and land management, crop production and building resilient farming communities.

The project commenced with a facilitated planning session attended by ten young farmers. This initial workshop provided participants with an opportunity to establish expectations for the group, identify priority learning topics and discuss what success would look like for the program. Participants also identified additional young farmers who may benefit from involvement and established a dedicated communication group to support ongoing engagement between activities.

The first major learning activity was a field-based crop walk and farm tour involving thirteen young farmers, together with industry consultants and facilitators. A mini-bus format encouraged networking and discussion between participants throughout the day. Visits included a local National Variety Trial site where participants developed practical skills in interpreting trial results and applying research findings to on-farm decision making. Discussions focused on variety selection, crop rotations and making informed management decisions based on local data. Participants were also involved in practical soil assessment activities including pH testing and clay dispersion assessments, providing hands-on experience in understanding soil constraints and opportunities.

The project also explored broader farm management themes linked to drought resilience. Participants examined soil improvement practices, machinery options such as delving, water management strategies including tile drainage, and innovative crop rotation approaches such as mixed lentil and bean production systems. These discussions encouraged participants to think critically about farm productivity, risk management and adaptation options available within their own businesses.

Participants also took part in a workshop focused on understanding the profit drivers of farm businesses, evaluating ownership versus leasing decisions, managing risk and improving long-term planning processes. These sessions encouraged participants to think strategically about business performance and recognise how resilience can be strengthened through informed decision-making and forward planning.

The final workshop in the program was delivered as a topical in-paddock learning session, providing participants with an opportunity to apply knowledge gained throughout the project in a practical field setting. Participants worked through the identification of crop diseases,

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

assessment of disease pressure and discussion of management options appropriate to varying seasonal conditions. The session also explored crop nutrition strategies, with participants considering how nutrient management decisions may change in response to seasonal outlooks, production goals and seasonal variability. Through facilitated discussion and paddock observations, participants compared experiences from their own farming businesses and evaluated management approaches to balance productivity, profitability and risk. As the concluding activity of the program, the workshop reinforced key themes of informed decision-making, adaptive management and building confidence to respond to changing seasonal conditions, all of which contribute to improved drought resilience and farm business preparedness.

Beyond the formal learning activities, the project facilitated the development of valuable peer networks. Participants regularly engaged with one another through group communication channels and informal discussions, creating a supportive environment for ongoing knowledge sharing. The project also generated communications outputs through AIR EP channels, including newsletter promotion and updates to support participant recruitment and raise awareness of the initiative across the broader farming community.

Overall, the project engaged approximately 15 young farmers from Lower Eyre Peninsula and delivered learning opportunities that combined technical knowledge, business management skills and peer-to-peer networking. Through this integrated approach, the project contributed to building the confidence, capability and resilience of emerging agricultural leaders in the region.

Comms and Social media

Newsletter article "Lower EP Young Farmer Group | Register your interest today!"	AIR EP e-newsletter article	Young farmers	1 x newsletter article	500 subscribers	https://airep.com.au/news/lower-ep-young-farmer-group-register-your-interest-today/ 13 August 2025
Media release	New group helping young Lower EP farmers connect and thrive	Farmers Advisors	1 x article and 3 x associated social media posts on facebook, X, Instagram.	The Stock Journal x 9600 copies distributed	Media release: https://airep.com.au/news/new-group-helping-young-lower-ep-farmers-connect-and-thrive/ Article published in The Stock Journal, 29 January 2026 (article attached). Associated social media posts in February 2026 on facebook, X, Instagram (further below). See social media stats below.
Newsletter article	AIR EP e-newsletter article	Young farmers	1 x newsletter article	625 subscribers	https://airep.com.au/news/young-farmers-big-ideas-

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

Webpage	AIR EP hosted project webpage	Farmers Advisors	1 x webpage hosted		https://airep.com.au/research/young-farmer-peer-to-peer-learning-lower-ep-2025/

Lower EP Young Farmer Group | Register your interest today!

August 13, 2025 | Posted in News

Are you a young farmer aged between 18 and 35 living on the Lower Eyre Peninsula? Are you looking to build your knowledge, skills, connections and network in agriculture?

Expressions of Interest are now open for the Lower EP Young Farmer Group, commencing in September 2025.



Over 10 months, the group will participate in three facilitated workshops and a spring field day/crop walk. The program aims to build confidence in decision-making, risk understanding, agronomic knowledge, communication, and crop and farm management.

Workshop topics will be prioritised by the group following an initial discussion, ensuring the content is participant-focused.



To register your interest or for more information, contact Lucy Pedler.

E. lucy@georgepedlerag.com.au | M. 0439 027 064

This program is supported by the SA Drought Hub, and delivered by AIR EP and George Pedler Ag.

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN DROUGHT RESILIENCE ADOPTION AND INNOVATION HUB

Lower EP Young Farmer Group (2).mp4

Young farmer group sprouts on Lower EP

A NEW generation of Lower Eyre Peninsula farmers are building connections, growing their agricultural knowledge and becoming more confident farm managers thanks to a new group designed just for them.

Beginning in September 2025, the EP Young Farmer Group was established by AIR EP, delivered by George Pedler Ag and funded through the SA Drought Resilience Adoption and Innovation Hub (SA Drought Hub).

Lower EP Young Farmer Group co-ordinator Lucy Pedler said both the Lower EP and Rudall Young Farmers groups were also providing important social and networking opportunities.

"Farming can be an isolating career at times, so opportunities for young people to meet, socialise and connect with others going through similar experiences is important," Mrs Pedler said.

"Being able to talk to others in a similar situation aids resilience in those tough times and supports our young farmers to know they're not alone, and that they're capable and well supported."

Open to farmers aged 18 to 25, the Lower EP group aims to assist in building members' knowledge, skills, connections and networks in agriculture.

It follows the earlier success of the Young Farmers groups that ran in the Rudall and the Far West areas from early 2024 to December 2025, which were supported by funding from the Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal Community Impact grants.

AIR EP executive officer, Naomi Scholz, said the initiative had been well received.

Their first crop walk in October was an opportunity for the young farmers to learn about decision making in crop rotation planning and spray scheduling, soil management, how to read and understand trial results, and connect with others.

Over the coming months, the group, which has about 15 members, will participate in three facilitated workshops designed to build confidence in decision-making, risk understanding, agronomic knowledge, communication, and crop and farm management.



George Pedler takes the Lower EP Young Farmer Group on a crop walk. Picture supplied.

Example social media post:

Tuesday, 24 February

4:44 PM

AIR EP - Ag Innovation & Research Eyre Peninsula



🌾 Lower EP Young Farmers gearing up again for 2026 🌾

In September 2025, AIR EP partnered with @GeorgePedlerAg and the @SADroughtHub to launch the Lower EP Young Farmer Group. Since kicking off, around 15 young farmers aged 18–25 have come together to build skills, confidence and connections.

So far, the group has:
- ✔ Held its first crop walk & bus tour
- ✔ Explored crop rotation decisions, spray scheduling and soil management
- ✔ Built skills in understanding trial results
- ✔ Strengthened networks to reduce isolation and build resilience

🚜 Looking ahead to 2026, the group will participate in two workshops focused on:
- Confident decision-making and risk management
- Advanced agronomy and soil health science
- New technologies to support crop and farm management
- Communication and farm management skills

Feedback so far has been overwhelmingly positive — both from participants and their families — so be sure to follow AIR EP to see how the group progresses.

Australian Government
Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry
Future Drought Fund
SA DROUGHT HUB
Adelaide University

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

Supporting and developing Young Farmer Networks has been a high priority for AIR EP, with groups also established around Rudall and in the Far West. If you have any interest in forming a Young Farmer Group in your area, we would love to hear from you.

To stay up to date with all AIR EP young farmer projects and events, subscribe to the newsletter or become a member at 👉
www.airep.com.au
#youngfarmers #eyrepeninsula #georgepedlerag #sadroughthub #futurefarming

Reactions	Comments	Eng. Rate	Likes	Impressions	Sh
41	0	17%	39	6,791	0

Project webpage hosted by AIR EP:



Young Farmer Peer to Peer Learning Lower EP 2025

PROJECT LOCATION
Lower Eyre Peninsula

PROJECT MANAGER
Naomi Scholz

FUNDING SOURCE
SA Drought Hub

FUNDING AMOUNT
$30,000

START DATE
September 2025

FINISH DATE
December 2026

KEY PEOPLE INVOLVED
George Pedler Ag

The Lower EP Young Farmer Group kicked off in September 2025, bringing together around 15 young farmers keen to build their skills, share ideas and connect with others in the same stage of their farming careers. Delivered by AIR EP in partnership with George Pedler Ag, the program gave young farmers the chance to learn from industry experts and each other, while building confidence to take on more responsibility within their farming businesses.

The group started with a planning session in September 2025, where 10 young farmers came together to discuss what they wanted to get out of the program. Rather than having a set agenda, participants helped choose the topics they were most interested in, making sure the

Australian Government
Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry
Future Drought Fund
SA DROUGHT HUB
Adelaide University

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

AIR EP e-newsletter article November 2026:

Young Farmers, Big Ideas!

November 18, 2026 | Posted in News

The Lower EP Young Farmer Group has plenty to celebrate as its latest peer-to-peer learning project comes to a close!

Kicking off in September 2025, the group brought together around 15 young farmers for a series of crop walks, farm visits and workshops.

The group hit the road for a crop walk and farm tour, exploring variety trial results, crop rotations and soil assessments, including pH testing and clay dispersion. Discussions also covered soil improvement options such as delving, tile drainage and mixed lentil and bean cropping systems.

Further workshops tackled the business side of farming, including profitability, owning versus leasing land, risk management and long-term planning.

The final in-paddock session focused on identifying crop diseases, assessing disease pressure and making crop nutrition decisions to suit changing seasonal conditions.

But one of the biggest wins has been the confidence and connections built within the group. Participants have gained new skills, developed stronger peer networks and feel better equipped to contribute to decisions within their farming businesses.

A great outcome for the next generation of Lower EP farmers, with plenty of knowledge, friendships and connections to take forward.

This program was delivered by George and Lucy Pedler of George Pedler Ag, in partnership with AIR EP and funded by the SA Drought Hub.







Read more about the group's activities and key outcomes on the AIR EP project page.

Australian Government
Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry | Future Drought Fund | SA DROUGHT HUB

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

GeorgePedlerAg
INDEPENDENT CONSULTING SERVICES

AIR EP
Ag Innovation & Research
Eyre Peninsula

Australian Government
Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry | Future Drought Fund | SA DROUGHT HUB | Adelaide University

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

OUTCOMES AND IMPACT

The most significant outcome of the Young Farmer Peer-to-Peer Learning Project has been the development of confidence, networks and decision-making capability among young farmers entering leadership roles within family farming businesses. While improving technical agricultural knowledge was an important project outcome, participant feedback indicates that the greatest impact has been in empowering individuals to contribute more actively to business discussions and strategic decision making.

Many participants are involved in intergenerational farming operations and are progressively taking on greater responsibility within their businesses. Through exposure to industry experts, practical learning activities and peer discussion, participants developed greater confidence in discussing long-term business direction, evaluating risks and contributing to business planning conversations.

One participant stated:

“I feel confident to sit down with my family and look at our position for the next 5-10 years.”

Another noted:

“I feel more confident and keen to get involved in the planning and business side of the farm.”

These comments demonstrate an important shift from knowledge acquisition towards increased participation in farm business decision-making. Such capability is critical for building drought resilience, as businesses are better equipped to assess risk, plan ahead and respond to changing seasonal conditions.

The project also strengthened participants' understanding of agricultural systems and their ability to interpret information for practical application within their own enterprises. Participants reported improved understanding of variety trial data, agronomic principles and crop decision-making processes.

Feedback included:

“Learning what the different meanings on the trial graphs and what to look at when you are planning what variety to use.”

“The timing of the day was very good as it's helped with clarity in making decisions for upcoming rotation planning and spraying.”

These examples highlight how the project improved participants' confidence to utilise information and apply it directly to management decisions on-farm.

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

A particularly valuable project outcome was the establishment of strong peer-to-peer networks among participants. Feedback consistently highlighted the importance of learning alongside others experiencing similar challenges and opportunities.

Participants reported:

"Great safe space to ask questions that I would normally be afraid to ask at other field days/crop walks."

"Great to connect with people of the same age and with similar interests to me."

"Having a smaller group helped me feel more connected and made it easier to talk and meet people."

This sense of connection is an important component of drought resilience. Strong social networks increase opportunities for knowledge sharing, support informed decision-making and help reduce the isolation that can occur during challenging seasonal conditions.

The broader farming community also recognised the value of the initiative. Parents and senior business partners observed benefits associated with leadership development, networking and succession planning within family farming enterprises.

Community feedback included:

"Really happy to see my son have the opportunity to network with others in a similar situation."

"Great way for my son to ask questions and learn in a safe environment rather than always asking me."

"Great to see young farmers getting together again. Has been missing since Ag Bureaus seemed to have faded away."

These comments suggest the project has generated benefits extending beyond individual participants, contributing to stronger community connections and supporting the next generation of agricultural leaders.

Overall, the Young Farmer Peer-to-Peer Learning Project has strengthened drought resilience by building participants' confidence, improving their technical and business management knowledge, encouraging long-term thinking and fostering trusted peer networks. The relationships, skills and confidence developed through the project will continue to support participants as future farm business leaders, helping create more adaptive, resilient and connected farming communities across Lower Eyre Peninsula

Australian Government
Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry
Future Drought Fund
SA DROUGHT HUB
Adelaide University

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

PHOTOS







Australian Government
Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry
Future Drought Fund
SA DROUGHT HUB
Adelaide University

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



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This project is supported by the South Australian Drought Resilience Adoption and Innovation Hub, through funding from the Australian Government's Future Drought Fund.

Australian Government
Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Future Drought Fund

SA DROUGHT HUB

DISCLAIMER

Any recommendations, suggestions or opinions contained in these publications do not necessarily represent the policy or views of the South Australian Drought Resilience Adoption and Innovation Hub (SA Drought Hub). No person should act on the basis of the contents of these publications without first obtaining specific, independent, professional advice. The SA Drought Hub and contributors to these publications may identify products by proprietary or trade names to help readers identify particular types of products. The Hub does not endorse or recommend the products of any manufacturer referred to. Other products may perform as well as or better than those specifically referred to. The SA Drought Hub will not be liable for any loss, damage, cost or expense incurred or arising by reason of any person using or relying on the information

Australian Government
Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Future Drought Fund

SA DROUGHT HUB

Adelaide University