



14 June 2023

## Successful AGM for the North Central LLEN

More than 50 Board Members, staff, partners, stakeholders, and community members attended the North Central LLEN Annual General Meeting and stakeholder event at the Rex Theatre in Charlton last week.

Hosted by CEO Jane Hosking and fellow staff member Molly Meadows, the evening featured a range of elements including the AGM itself and a facilitated panel of young people about why they chose agriculture as a career pathway.

Chair Cr Dan Straub welcomed everyone to the meeting and ran through the usual procedural matters before launching the Annual Report documenting the projects and initiatives the LLEN had been involved in during 2022 and commending this to the membership.

Two current Board Members were re-elected to the Board – Colleen Condliffe (Inglewood) and Win Scott (Charlton) and two Board members were farewelled – Cr Eddy Ostarcevic (St Arnaud) and Barry McKenzie (Charlton) – and thanked for their contribution to the sound governance of the North Central LLEN.

After a short break to allow attendees to enjoy the drinks and nibbles on offer in the foyer, and network with others, everyone was encouraged to grab a box of popcorn and return to the theatre for the second half of the program.

The Stakeholder event began with a Welcome to Country by Dja Dja Wurrung Elder Jason Kerr and a traditional didgeridoo performance in acknowledgement of National Reconciliation Week.

First on the program was Careers in the 21st Century in Agriculture Project Officer Sue Gould talking about the project and what she has learnt so far (the project runs through until mid-2024).

She then introduced some footage from the first stage of filming for a series of new videos on why young people should choose a career in agriculture featuring young people involved in a range of agricultural roles including landcare, research, technology, machinery, and farming.

Angus Verley, Rural Reporter with ABC Wimmera then facilitated a panel of three young people who have chosen a career pathway in agriculture to explore the theme "Why Ag".

Will Simpson (Berriwillock), Danielle Lang (Nareewillock) and James Taylor (Tandarra) have all had different paths back to the farm, but all share a passion for the potential in agriculture - something we are hoping to capture in our new project 21st Century Careers in Agriculture project funded through the Sustainable Schools Agriculture Fund.

After growing up on the family farm and completing his secondary schooling at Tyrrell College in Sea Lake, Will completed a Bachelor of Community and Human Services (Welfare) at Federation University, and worked within the welfare sector before returning to the family farm.

He has been full time on his family farm for 5 years now and loves the challenges and variables farming presents.

"I love the open-endedness to ag – it is such an innovative and broad sector and there is no roof to its growth potential" he said.

Danielle Lang lives and works on her family's cropping farm at Nareewillock, north-east of Charlton where she grew up, and attended Charlton College. After completing Year 12 VCE, Danielle completed an apprenticeship with Bourke's Butchers in Birchip and then went on to study Agribusiness and Agronomy at Longerenong, after realising her real passion was farming.

Over the last couple of years she has worked part-time with Cobram Estate Olives during harvest but has now committed to her family farm full-time as she has always loved farm life and seen it more as a lifestyle than a job.

"I love it. Every day is different - things break and go wrong but you are always learning" she said.

The third speaker was James Taylor who lives and works on the family farm at Tandarra running sheep, cattle and lucerne hay.

James grew up in the area and attended East Loddon P12 College and Bendigo Senior Secondary College before studying a Bachelor of Agriculture at Melbourne University and working with Meat and Livestock Australia and the Birchip Cropping Group.

James returned to the farm full-time in 2022 and said that he was passionate about growing the farm business.

"I love that agriculture is full of people that are extremely passionate. There are so many emerging opportunities because we have the challenges of climate change and developing products for new markets", he said.

The evening concluded with a short video documenting the work of the North Central LLEN in 2022 in pictures. To view a copy of the Annual Report and see photos from the evening, or to become involved in our 21<sup>st</sup> Century Agriculture program, visit the North Central LLEN website – [www.ncllen.org.au](http://www.ncllen.org.au).

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For more information please contact Jane Hosking on 0439 886 339

Photo Caption:

- "Why Ag" Panel members (L-R) Angus Verley, Danielle Lang, James Taylor and Will Simpson
- Welcome to Country and Didgeridoo performance by Dja Dja Wurrung Elder Jason Kerr
- Agriculture Careers in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Project Officer Sue Gould