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Panel of Referees: Each scientific editor has an independent panel of discipline-related referees who remain anonymous to ensure a process of objective reviewing of the papers.
Foreword

In this issue there are six articles that have implications for various aspects of farm management and rural living. The first, by a group from Industry & Investment NSW led by Salahadin Khairo, examines a much-neglected issue related to the interaction between lime and superphosphate on acid soils. It reveals the financial impact on wool-growing enterprises of various levels of these inputs.

The second article reports on some fairly provocative research on the returns to investment and equity financing in Canadian farmland. Marv Painter examines this issue by including farmland investments as one component of a portfolio that also includes stock exchange investments and government bonds. In this context, Canadian farmland is shown to have fairly promising returns, with relatively low risk. I wonder what the results would be of a similar study in Australia.

Next, a group (led by Jennifer Sappey) from Charles Sturt University looks at a perennial issue—the provision of aged care. The unique aspect of this article is that it considers the issue within the context of a regional Australian city, and as such is probably more relevant to Australian farm managers than any previous work on the subject. The article points to the need for urgent policy action if a sustainable outcome is to be achieved for aged care provision in regional centres.

The fourth article (Mason et al.) considers the issue of district livestock officers dealing with RSPCA cases on farms. It highlights the need for clear thinking and recording of detail as the (sometimes) bureaucratic procedures are followed through in animal welfare cases involving livestock.

The fifth article (by Graham and White) does some fairly detailed analysis of farm management decisions either to change sheep enterprise or to improve the current enterprise. Given the between-year variation, the results point to the conclusion that no particular sheep enterprise is better than any other. This leads the authors to question the benefits of shifting between enterprises.

Finally there is an important issue considered in the article by Cameron Thomas. This analyses the impacts of carbon pricing on the use of agrichar in the sugarcane industry.

In addition to these articles, there is a review of the book by Philip Gissing titled A History of the Orange Agricultural College. Given the many former students of this and other similar colleges who work in the farming sector, I expect that many readers would find this a valuable review of a topic close to their heart.

The team that put together this issue of the Journal is Allan Charry who continues in his role as part-time assistant-manager, together with the editorial team of Kevin Parton, Mark Filmer and Kerry Madden.

Professor Kevin A Parton
Head, Orange Campus, Charles Sturt University.

September 2010
The character of *AFBM Journal*

*AFBM Journal* is a registered publication of the Australasian Farm Business Management Network (i.e. AFBMNetwork) and published by Charles Sturt University, Orange Campus, School of Agriculture and Wine Sciences.

AFBMNetwork is a professional organisation supported by Charles Sturt University – Faculty of Science, Curtin University – Muresk Institute; Massey University – College of Sciences; The University of Melbourne – Institute of Land and Food Resources and Marcus Oldham College. Members from these organisations and the AFBMNetwork membership are the primary users of the *AFBM Journal*. However, independent and other organisational professionals are encouraged to publish in the *AFBM Journal*.

AFBMNetwork vision and mission statements actively encourage the design of farming systems matched to the environmental, social, economic and marketing conditions of Australasia. It promotes quality education, research, consultancy and extension to service the primary sector and its organisations. The *AFBM Journal* will therefore publish quality papers related to the areas of Animal Systems and Technology; Cropping Systems and Technology; Ecological Agriculture; Farm Economics; Global Perspectives of Agriculture; Business Management and Decision-Making; Social Issues of Farming and Sustainable Farming Systems.

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- substantial scholarly activity, as evidenced by discussion of the relevant literature, an awareness of the history and antecedents of work described, and provided in a format which allows a reader to trace sources of the work through citations, footnotes, etc
- originality (i.e. not a compilation of existing works)
- veracity/validity through a peer validation process or by satisfying the commercial publisher or gallery processes

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