

Australian and NSW Case Study

Achieving systemic change through advocacy, strategic intervention, agritourism cluster development, supported by 'fit-for-purpose' policy and regulatory reform

Rose Wright
regionality
PTY LTD

Key Points

1. The role of advocacy in policy and regulatory reform.
2. Systemic change enables growth in agritourism supply
3. The importance of policy, supported by strategy and investment in capacity building and regional cluster development to support positive change in the farming community.
4. National impact of State-Based Change
5. Be careful what you wish for!



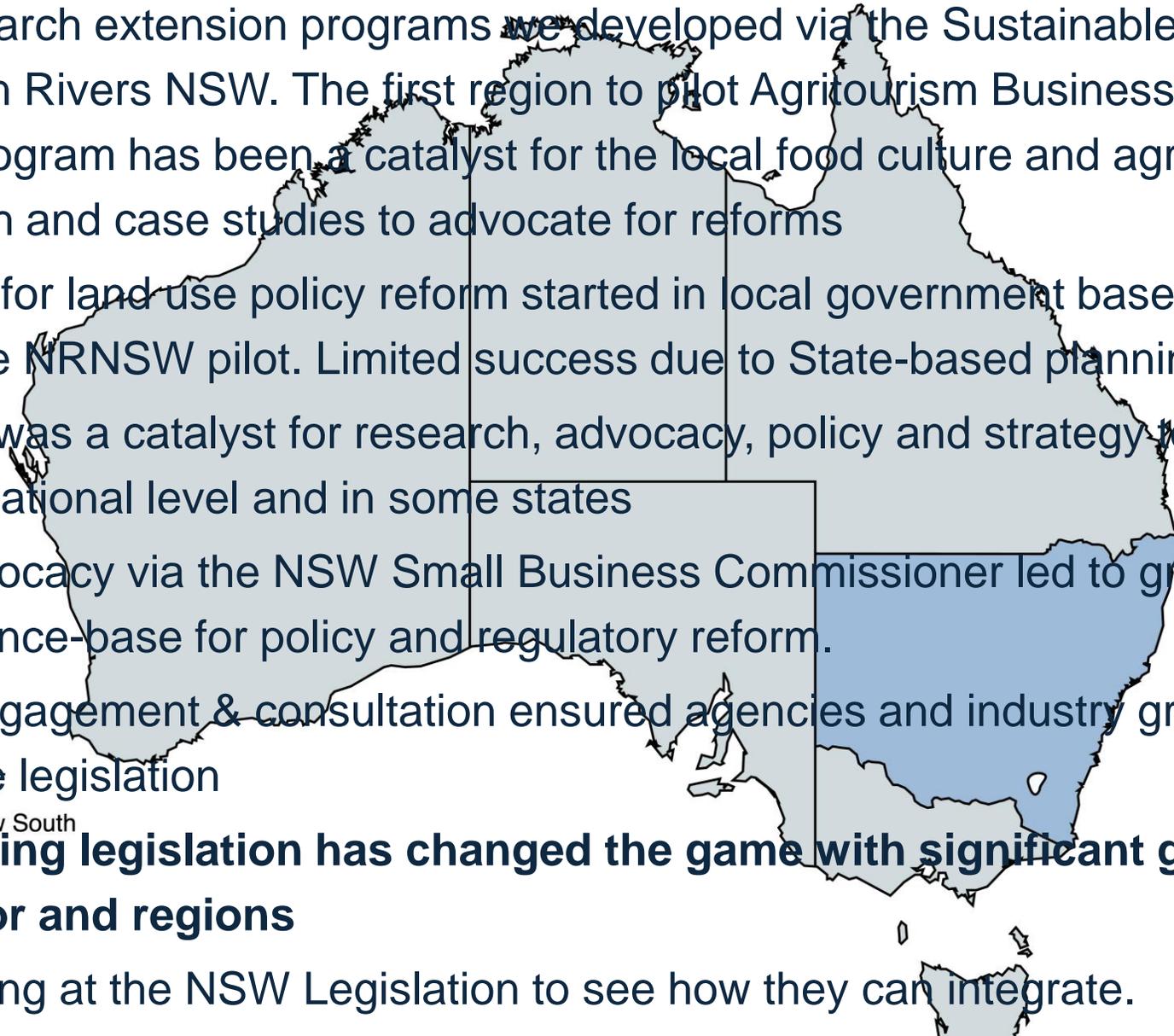
Why was reform required?

- Some in the farming **sector recognised the opportunity** for value-adding and diversification through agritourism.
- Land use planning presented significant barriers to entry for farmers, with complex policy, planning legislation, and other regulations created costly and complex barriers that limit access to the agritourism option for many working family farms. **It is all too difficult for many.**
- Without a fit-for-purpose agritourism planning framework, the growth and development of agritourism Australia and in this case NSW is severely constrained

Context – New South Wales, Australia Case

Study

- 2006 – Pilot research extension programs we developed via the Sustainable Tourism CRC were trialed in Northern Rivers NSW. The first region to pilot Agritourism Business Development Program. This program has been a catalyst for the local food culture and agritourism growth and provided research and case studies to advocate for reforms
- 2007 - Advocacy for land use policy reform started in local government based on research and evidence from the NRNSW pilot. Limited success due to State-based planning definitions
- 2008 to 2011 - It was a catalyst for research, advocacy, policy and strategy to identify and support agritourism at a national level and in some states
- 2017-2022 – Advocacy via the NSW Small Business Commissioner led to ground-breaking pilot creating an evidence-base for policy and regulatory reform.
- Cross - sector engagement & consultation ensured agencies and industry groups could have input into designing the legislation
- **Reformed planning legislation has changed the game with significant growth emerging across the sector and regions**
- Everyone is looking at the NSW Legislation to see how they can integrate.
- Overnight success was achieved through consistent advocacy over 16 years



■ New South

NSW AGRITOURISM – Regulation Reform and Pilot Supply Dev

YEAR	ACTIVITY
2017	NSW Small Business Commissioner Sponsors Agritourism Pilot Program (designed and delivered by Regionality) and Regulatory Journey Mapping (Service NSW
2018	35 Farms in three Local Govt Areas through Regionality’s Agritourism Business Development Program provided live case studies to journey map the barriers
2019	Journey mapping through Development Application Process Identified Significant Barriers – up to 39 planning definitions none of which are suitable for agritourism
2020-22	Work on legislation reform continued until 01 Dec 2022 Australia’s 1st agritourism planning code was legislated Pilot regions formalise agritourism groups and clusters
2023	Agritourism Strategy developed by State Tourism Organisation The Plains Cluster group is now recognized by Regional Tourism Organisation as an emerging opportunity and local cluster

Key Considerations in developing legislation in NSW

A photograph of a chain-link fence with a wooden sign that reads "FARMERS ONLY" in white, hand-painted capital letters. The sign is attached to a horizontal metal bar. In the background, a sheep is visible behind the fence, and the scene is set outdoors with greenery and a bright, slightly blurred background.

FARMERS
ONLY

Key Considerations in developing legislation in NSW

Bringing together key stakeholders across agriculture and tourism sectors as well as legislators, policymakers to clearly define what Agritourism is and isn't, ensuring it remains **ancillary to farming activity** and distinctive to rural tourism.

- These reforms will help landowners where the main use of their land is the production of agricultural goods for commercial purposes.
- **The land's use for agritourism must be ancillary (secondary) to its agricultural use.**
- They consider **size, scale, frequency and ancillary nature** of the agritourism activity with different levels of approval required based on these 4 factors

Defining Agritourism in Planning

New and amended terms for agritourism

“Agritourism is a tourism-related experience or product that connects agricultural products, people or places, with visitors to a farm.”

The introduction of **clear terms for agritourism activities in NSW:**

Farm gate premises – where visitors interact with produce from the farm, such as fruit picking, sales, tastings, workshops and cafes.

Farm experience premises – where visitors can experience life on a farm including tours, horse riding, weddings, functions and retreats.

Farm stay accommodation – where visitors can stay in buildings or moveable dwellings, including tents and caravans, on a farm.

Key Considerations in developing legislation in NSW

- **Existing agritourism operations that are already lawfully** operating are not impacted by these policy changes. Businesses are lawfully operating if:
 - the business is operating under a **valid development consent** or approval and complies with any conditions of that consent or approval
 - the use is **exempt development and complies** with the requirements and development standards for that development
 - the use is an **ancillary (secondary) development** to another lawful use of the land and that other use has development consent or approval or does not require approval.

Factors that have influenced the growth and momentum in Asutralia?



Credible data sources to back up strategy



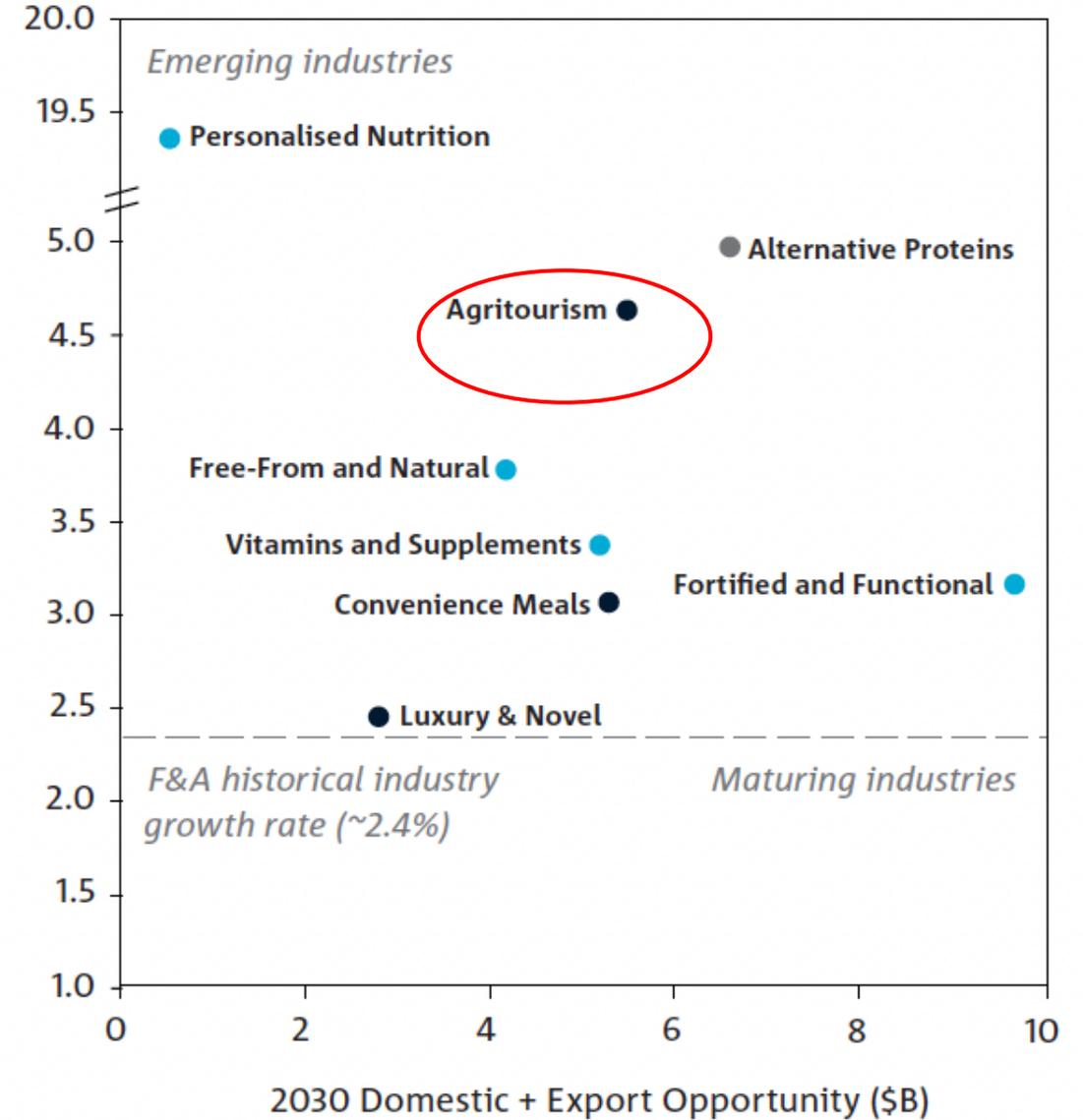
Australia's National
Science Agency

Growth opportunities for Australian food and agribusiness

Economic analysis and market sizing



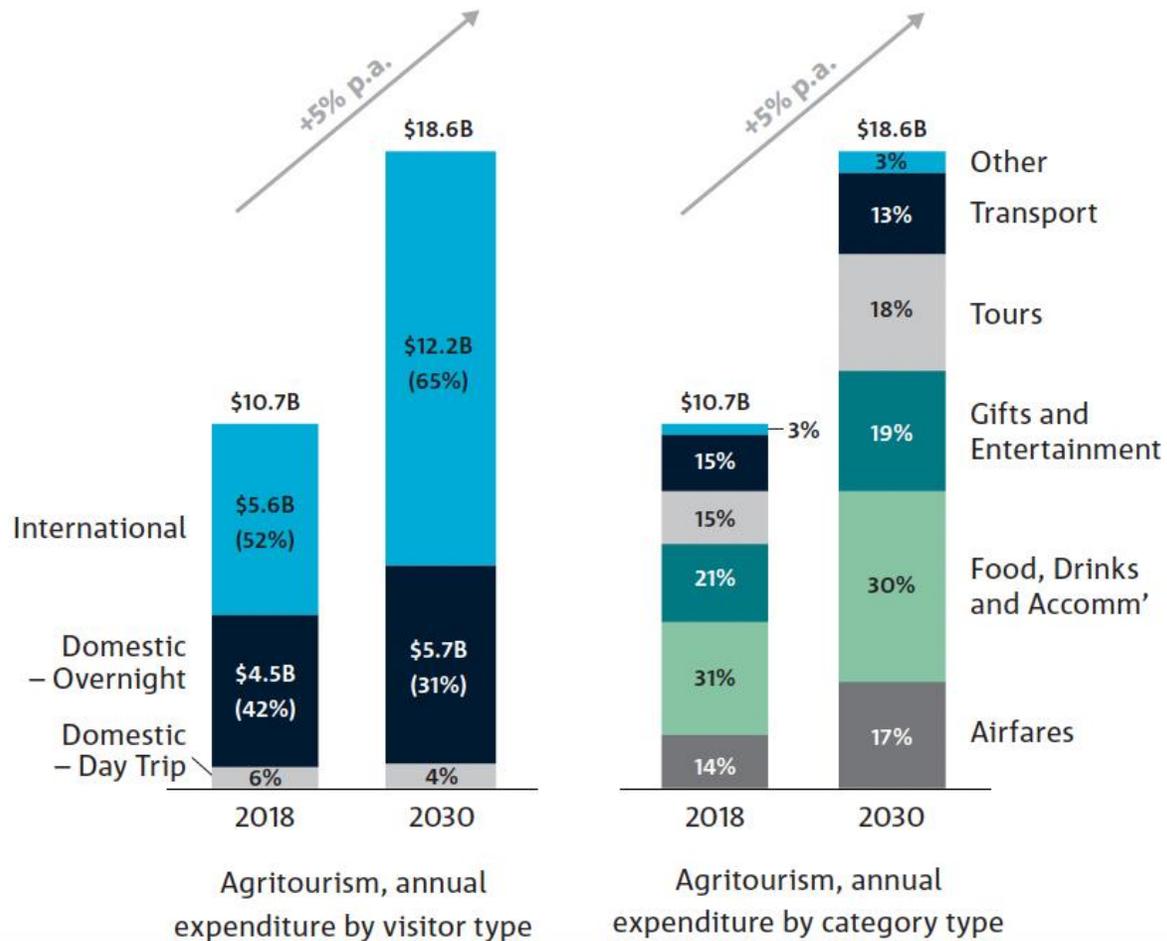
Forecast Annual Growth 2018–30 (%)



● Health and Wellness ● Sustainable Solutions ● Luxury Markets

Source: Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation 2019.

“Agritourism will be an important growth industry for Australia’s regional and rural economy over the next decade.”



“CSIRO analysis estimates the annual opportunity for agri-related tourism, including accommodation, transport and retail sectors, to reach around **\$18.6B by 2030**.”

Focusing on expenditure for food, drinks and accommodation (which most closely align with the food and agribusiness industry), the annual opportunity is expected to reach **\$5.6B by 2030.**”

Source: Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation 2019.

What are the key learnings from these processes?

Systemic Change

- Is achieved through strategic intervention
- Research is critical
- Advocacy is critical
- Find a champion within Govt and link to the policies of each department
- Understanding stakeholder perspectives
- Speak their language

Supply Development

- Supply development in embryonic region takes time.
- Program delivery and mentoring with a core focus on agriculture first is highly successful
- Agritourism is more than marketing
- Clusters breed regional leaders in agritourism

Be careful what you wish for !



**FARMERS
ONLY**

Key Take Outs

- While tourism often recognises the opportunity, their comprehension of the unique challenges in developing agritourism and the challenges farmers face is limited.
- In many cases tourism tries to drag agriculture into tourism and the farming sector was wary as it can have ramifications for farm viability
- When farmers take the lead in agritourism development, it ensures authenticity
- Having very clear definitions of what agritourism is and is NOT is critical to ensure the protection of primary production land and communities

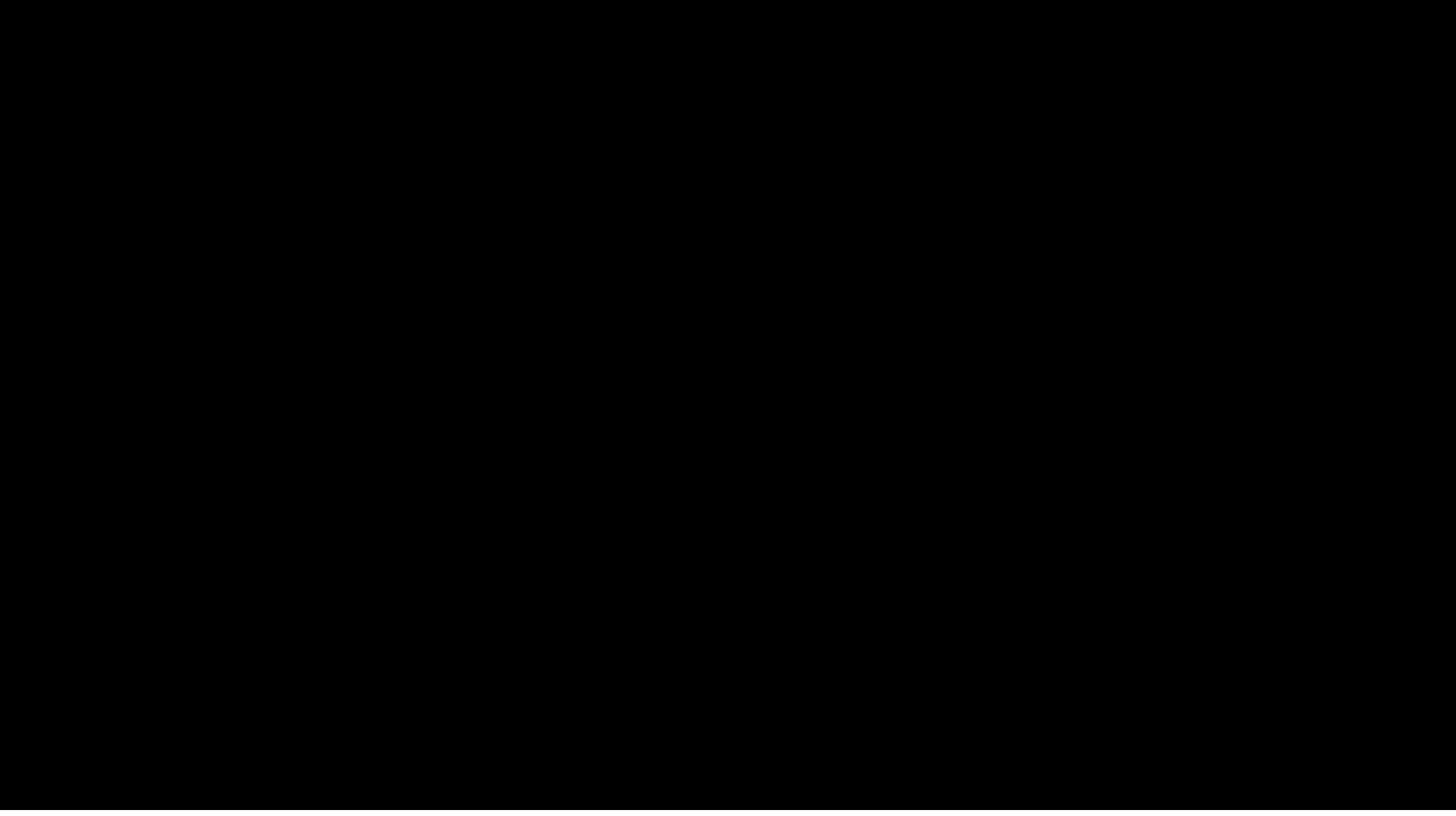


The Plains Case Study



Creating opportunities that connect agriculture with visitors through experiences

regionality



**Thank you and stay in contact if you're interested in GAN
Policy and Advocacy Committee
Rose Wright**



GAN Committee Chair

www.regionality.com.au

@regionality_au

Rose.wright@regionality.com.au