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2007 AARES Distinguished Fellow

Carolyn Tanner



Like many agricultural economists of her generation, Carolyn Tanner's commitment to the agricultural sector developed during her early years spent on a family farm, in her case at Coolah in New South Wales. After graduating from the University of Sydney in 1968 with a BScAgr. (Hons. 1) specialising in agricultural economics, she worked as an economist with the New South Wales Department of Agriculture before returning to the University of Sydney to take up a lecturing position in the early 1970s. She had found her niche: she was an enthusiastic and inspiring teacher, renowned for her meticulous classroom preparation that skilfully breathed life into the curriculum through integration of theory with current events.

Carolyn held visiting appointments at the University of Reading and Stanford University and during the 1990s was a regular lecturer in Agricultural Policy at the University of New England. It was during her first sabbatical leave at the University of Reading that she began her fruitful collaboration with Alan Swinbank on the European Union's Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) and her interest in agricultural trade policy developed. That collaboration resulted in a number of papers, culminating in the publication of *Farm Policy and Trade Conflict: The Uruguay Round and CAP Reform* by the University of Michigan Press in 1996. Her more recent publications have been on quarantine policy and food safety, as well as numerous papers on agricultural trade reform.

Carolyn has made an outstanding contribution to the profession and to AARES. She has served as President of the New South Wales Branch of AARES and as co-editor (with Brian Fisher) of the *Australian Journal of*

Agricultural Economics, as it was then known, from 1984 to 1987. For a number of years she served on Federal Council and, in 1995, she became the first woman to be elected President of the Society. She has since served on the Editorial Board of the *Australian Journal of Agricultural and Resource Economics*, and been a regular participant in the Society's annual conferences.

She has always enjoyed the opportunity to contribute to government policy making and has held a number of government appointments. In 1995 she was appointed by the Commonwealth Government to a major review of Australia's quarantine polices and procedures (chaired by Professor Malcolm Nairn) that resulted in significant changes to Australia's quarantine system. She served on the Quarantine and Exports Advisory Council from 1997 to 2006, and in 1998 she chaired the National Competition Policy Review of the Imported Food Control Act 1992. In 2003 she was appointed to the WTO Advisory Council by the Minister for Trade. Her attendance at the subsequent WTO Ministerial meetings in Mexico and Hong Kong provided her with an abundance of up-to-date material for her Agricultural Trade classes which were always appreciated by students for their relevance to contemporary trade policy.

Carolyn has always had a strong commitment to the University of Sydney, as well as to its students, and has willingly contributed to its administration. She served as an Associate Dean, responsible for undergraduate students, for many years and was the Head of the Department of Agricultural Economics from 1988 to 1989. Through her participation in the University's Careers Days and visits to schools, she has actively contributed to raising the profile of agricultural economics not just at the University of Sydney but also within the broader community. Carolyn's passion for teaching, her well-organised classes and her sympathetic mentoring of students have had a lasting impact on the growing number of agricultural economists who studied at the University of Sydney over the past 35 years.

Cheerful, enthusiastic and direct, Carolyn always makes her presence known; and in her interventions, presentations and publications, she has set exemplary standards for clarity and academic rigor. She has provided inspiration and guidance to many people in their early careers, and is a strong positive role model for women in the profession.