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2011 AARES Distinguished Fellow

Ross Kingwell



At the time of his award, Ross was chief economist in the Department of Agriculture and Food, Western Australia (DAFWA) and a professor in the School of Agricultural and Resource Economics at the University of Western Australia (UWA).

Ross was an undergraduate in the latter years of Henry Schapper's headship of agricultural economics at UWA. He graduated in the mid-1970s with first-class honours, majoring in agronomy and agricultural economics and was then employed by the WA Department of Agriculture. In the mid-1980s, when farm management research was losing its academic appeal, Ross and a small group of colleagues that included David Pannell, embarked on building and widely applying the bio-economic farm management model known as MIDAS (Model of an Integrated Dryland Agricultural System). A suite of these models was developed for different regions and they and their off-shoots have been vehicles for much research, research training, and multidisciplinary collaboration by scores of people over the past 25 years.

During his years as a researcher and government adviser, Ross completed Masters and PhD degrees from UWA. In the late 1990s, he began employment as a fractional academic at UWA, but his main role resided with DAFWA where he served in a range of senior roles before moving to the role of chief economist. A book on the history of DAFWA and its predecessors from 1894 to 2008 included Ross in the list of its 50 most influential people.

Ross continues to have a multifaceted role and is the author of over 85 journal articles and book chapters, and over 170 conference papers and policy reports. His research interests and expertise in farming systems analysis have taken him to several developing and developed countries. He is a member of the Research Advisory Committee of the Australian Farm Institute; a member of DAFF's Expert Panel on climate adaptation R&D; an adviser to a range of R&D corporations; a founding leader of the Australian Export Grains Innovation Centre; a leader in the Primary Industries Adaptation

Research Network; a supervisor of many honours and postgraduate students; and a regular speaker at farmer and agribusiness forums. He served AARES on the Masters' and PhD prize committees, has been a co-editor of AJARE and was the Society's president in 2009. His term as president was marked by the successful re-negotiated contract with the publisher of AJARE.