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RESHAPING AGRICULTURE FOR BETTER NUTRITION

The agriculture, food, nutrition, health nexus

The Crawford Fund 2018 Annual Conference

Parliament House, Canberra ACT, Australia
13–14 August 2018

Editor: A. Milligan

The Crawford Fund

The Australian Academy of Technology and Engineering established the Crawford Fund in June 1987. Named in honour of the late Sir John Crawford, the Fund commemorates his outstanding services to international agricultural research.

The Crawford Fund is a non-profit, non-government organisation, dedicated to raising awareness of the benefits – to developing countries and to Australia – of international agricultural research. The Fund depends on grants and donations from governments, private companies, corporations, charitable trusts and individual Australians. It also welcomes partnerships with agencies and organisations in Australia and overseas.

The Fund promotes and supports international R&D activities in which Australian research organisations and companies are active participants. It supports the work of the Australian Government's aid program, particularly with the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR), the CGIAR Consortium, and other international research centres. The Crawford Fund also runs training programs that fill a niche by offering practical, highly focused non-degree instruction to women and men engaged in agricultural research and management in developing countries.

We also support and encourage the next generation in their study and careers in international agricultural research, through our international agricultural student awards and our Crawford Fund Conference scholarships and related activities, and by providing volunteering opportunities in our mentoring program.

The annual Conference is a key part of the Fund's public awareness campaign to increase understanding of key food and nutrition security issues and the importance and potential of international agricultural research.

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©The Crawford Fund 2018 ISBN 978-0-9953679-3-7

Cite this work as:

Crawford Fund (2018). Reshaping agriculture for better nutrition: the agriculture, food, nutrition, health nexus. (Ed. A. Milligan.) Proceedings of the Crawford Fund 2018 Annual Conference, 13–14 August 2018, Canberra ACT, Australia.

IMAGES: The Crawford Fund; speakers' presentations;

Marchien Van Oostende (front cover main); Robyn Alders AO (back cover main)

COVER: Stacey Phillis, Graphic Force, Brisbane QLD

TRANSCRIPTIONS: TranscriberOnline, www.transcriberonline.com

EDITING, PRODUCTION: ENRIT: Environment & Natural Resources in Text, Canberra ACT

PRINTING: Bytes 'n Colours, Braddon ACT, http://bytesncolours.com.au/

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For Media coverage of the 2018 conference

see https://www.crawfordfund.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/CrawfordFundConference2018_MediaCoverage_05September2018.pdf

For the Summary of the 2018 conference by the RAID Listeners

see https://www.crawfordfund.org/news/news-2018-crawford-fund-annual-conference-keynote-listeners-report-august-2018/.



Conference scholars with Board, Coordinators and staff of the Crawford Fund ${\rm August}~2018$

Acknowledgements

The Crawford Fund wishes to thank the Chairs of the conference sessions, and the sponsors and supporters of this year's conference and scholar program

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Waite Research Institute, The University of Adelaide

Western Sydney University School of Science and Health

World Vegetable Center

Acknowledgments

SCHOLAR SUPPORTERS

In addition to the conference scholars supported by our State and Territory Committees and some individual donors, the following have supported conference scholars this year:

Australasian Agricultural & Resource Economics Society (AARES) Queensland Branch, with School of Economics, The University of Queensland

AARES South Australia Branch

Central Queensland University

Centre for Nutrition and Food Sciences, QAAFI (Queensland Alliance for Agriculture & Food Innovation), The University of Queensland

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Faculty of Veterinary and Agricultural Sciences, The University of Melbourne

Gardiner Foundation

Graham Centre for Agricultural Innovation

Marcus Oldham College

Plant Health Australia

School of Agriculture and Food Sciences, The University of Queensland

University of New England

University of the Sunshine Coast, Forest Industries Research Centre.

7oreword

Each year, the Crawford Fund board considers potential topics for the annual conference, from across a range of agricultural disciplines. This year we opted for the food, nutrition and health nexus, because this topic is of major concern to the developing world these days, and because we now face both under-nutrition and over-nutrition almost side by side in many countries, including Australia where overweight and obesity issues are putting an increased strain on our health facilities and budgets.

The Green Revolution of the 1950s to 1970s and the follow-up work to increase crop yields were incredibly successful, allowing a rapidly increasing population to be fed, globally, in a way that even Sir John Crawford would hardly have believed possible. Arguably, the world can produce enough food to feed everyone, but economic, political and distributional issues as well as wars and various sorts of distress mean that people still go hungry. Hunger and malnutrition account for 1.5 times more deaths now than disease and natural disasters, and it would appear that around 800 million people are chronically under-nourished. That figure has increased by 38 million since 2015, and yet it is probably dwarfed by the number of people now overweight, over-nourished or obese.

Growth in individual wealth across the world has led many people to change their dietary preferences to Western-style diets, high in proteins (meat and dairy products), lower in whole grain (cereals, fruit and vegetables), high in processed food, rich in sugar and salt. As a result over 2 billion people are over-nourished.

Compounded in this is the deeply disturbing matter of food waste in western societies. In Australia, food waste accounts for between 30% and 45% of food produced in this country in our domestic markets. We addressed the topic in the Crawford Fund's 2016 conference, and it remains of great concern.

To produce the right food and the right quantities to satisfy diets globally will require a great deal of effort. That stress on land, on water, on other resources including fertilisers and energy places further strain on the natural environment. However, Australia is a sophisticated and well-to-do country that has enormous expertise in agricultural science and agricultural know-how. Australians can 'punch well above our weight' in these fields. In agriculture, food, nutrition and health, Australia can have a very large positive impact.

The challenges posed by these complex issues set the scene for the speakers at today's conference. If we have the will, there will be a way through these issues.

This year's conference delegates (pp. 137–142) include 44 young scholars – young scientists with genuine interest in international agricultural development. They can and must be the heroes of tomorrow, committed to seeking out the evidence and to drawing knowledge from the evidence. The Crawford Fund would like to acknowledge the supporters (listed above) who, with the Fund's State and Territory Committees, have guaranteed those scholars this opportunity to take part in today's agriculture, food, nutrition and health discussions. The scholars' names and supporters are also listed on the Crawford Fund website.

The conference delegates also include members of Researchers in Agriculture for International Development – RAID. The Crawford Fund's support for RAID is another part of our commitment to the next generation, encouraging young people's enthusiastic embracing of what we do. RAID members again this year summarise the whole conference in a short paper published online at the Crawford Fund website.

Finally, the Crawford Fund gratefully acknowledges the contributions of the Chairpersons of this year's sessions, and the sponsors who have supported this conference, and Ms Cathy Reade and her team without whom the conference would not take place.

The Hon. John Anderson AO Chair, The Crawford Fund