



**FREE LOCAL NEWSPAPER**

# BARRABA COMMUNITY NEWS

COMMUNITY OWNED AND EDITED

**Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> February 2026**

## Shop Window Display – Barraba Show 6, 7 and 8 March

The 2026 Barraba Show is fast approaching, only 3 weeks to go! The Show Society is once again asking all businesses to promote the show with a window display. Do you think you have this year’s winning window display? The pavilion theme is **"Rivers and Creeks"** but displays are not limited to this. Displays are getting better and better every year and becoming very competitive. We all wait and look forward to see what ideas everyone comes up with this year. Once again thank you everyone for your support and promotion of our show.

Judging of the Shop Window displays will take place on Thursday 5 March.

**THIRDLY – new and better prizes and awards.**

More vouchers, great prizes from our new major sponsor, our local Vet.

**FOURTHLY – a new competition.**

Great fun and skill in the Dog Jump.

**SEE YOU THERE!**

## **SUNDAY 8 MARCH 2026 – BARRABA SHOWGROUND 9.30 AM**



### ***There are big changes for our traditional children’s Pet Show***

The Junior Dog and Pet Show has had a facelift!

**FIRSTLY – a new time.**

Start time on Sunday is **now 10.30 am**

Same place (behind the Grandstand), entries from 9.30.

**SECONDLY – new classes.**

Dog classes simplified to four – separate classes for other pets. More novelty classes.



### **BARRABA RSL & RECREATIONAL CLUB LTD**

Phone 67821379

For the information of members and guests.

#### **THIS WEEK**

**FRIDAY 20th February**

**MEAT RAFFLES**

Tickets on sale from 5.30pm

Membership Draw \$2000 (2 draws)

**SATURDAY 21st February**

**BINGO starts 12.30pm**

**SUNDAY 22nd February**

**Angler Club Raffles**

Raffles on sale 12pm, drawn 1.30pm.

Membership Draw \$1700

#### **BISTRO HOURS**

**Phone 0427330808**

**DINE IN OR TAKEAWAY**

**DAILY BLACKBOARD SPECIALS**

**PIZZAS MADE TO ORDER**

**MONDAY/TUESDAY/WEDNESDAY: CLOSED**

**THURS/FRI/SAT: LUNCH 12-2PM DINNER FROM 6PM**

**SUNDAY: 12-2PM**

### 'Feed and breed' North West roadshow for cattle producers on this February

Getting the balance right between genetic selection and nutrition in a beef operation is a challenge even for the most experienced beef producers. To help local producers find more certainty in their decision making, North West Local Land Services will be hosting a series of 'Feed and Breed' workshops around the North West from 17 February – 4 March 2026.

Designed to help with herd planning and nutritional management, these workshops will cover both genetic selection and how to identify the best females and choose complementary bulls, as well as nutrition requirements for reproductive cattle and how to develop feeding programs.

Naomi Hobson, North West Local Land Services Team Leader Land Services Sustainable Agriculture said that 5 workshops will be on offer in Mungindi, Warialda, Burren Junction, Boggabri and Dungowan on 17, 19, 24 and 26 February, and 4 March.

"Producers will receive a suite of information to help guide their decision making and herd management in both good and dry times", she said. "Our aim is to help producers feel confident in the decisions they make today relating to herd structure, destocking and feeding, and the long-term outlook for their herds both in relation to the investment and retention of genetics, and maintaining and building cash flow."

These events are free, but registration is essential. Producers only need to attend one session and are encouraged to register for the date or location that best suits them.

To register for a 'Feed and Breed' workshop visit the North West Local Land Services website at <https://www.nsw.gov.au/departments-and-agencies/local-land-services/events/feed-and-breed-workshop-mungindi>. Interested landholders can also phone their closest North West Local Land Services office on 1300 795 299 for more information.



### Annabel is up to 18.33kms of her 32km swim target by the end of February.



Please donate, support Annabel to help others. You can donate online at [Annabel Kanno • Super Swim 2026](#) use the QR code below or drop into Saunders Fruit and Veg and Toni will help you. Every \$ raised will help

towards Annabel meeting her fundraising goal.



Annabel Kanno

# 2026 BARRABA SHOW

6, 7 & 8 MARCH

COME ALONG FOR THREE DAYS OF FAMILY FUN



[barrabashow.com.au](http://barrabashow.com.au)



Barraba Show Society

## BARRABA CANCER PATIENTS FUND RAISING GROUP INC.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING  
THURSDAY 26TH FEBRUARY 2026, 11am.

Andy's Guesthouse  
All are welcome



### LOCAL TRADIES MUST BUILD TAMWORTH'S UNI

Member for Tamworth  
Kevin Anderson has called  
for a strong commitment

to local jobs and local businesses as work progresses on the UNE Tamworth project. Mr Anderson said the project is a game-changing investment in the region's tertiary education options, but it should also deliver immediate benefits for the local workforce. "Our community has campaigned for many years to bring a university campus in Tamworth," Mr Anderson said. "It's a milestone project that invests in our kids' future, giving them an opportunity to stay closer to home while getting all the benefits of a tertiary education. It's also exactly the kind of project that should be putting locals to work. Our region is home to hard working, highly skilled tradespeople, contractors and suppliers who should be given the opportunity to be on site building the uni. The former NSW Coalition Government invested \$26.6 million into bringing a university to Tamworth, and it's only right that the government funding should stay local and support local jobs."

Mr Anderson said his priority was always to ensure local workers benefitted from major government projects, because using local labour not only supports families and apprentices, but it also circulates through the local economy.

"Every local job on this project keeps food on the table for a local family, provides an opportunity for an apprentice, and strengthens our region's economy," Mr Anderson added. "I want to see a clear commitment from the contractors about how many local workers are being engaged and how local businesses are being included in the supply chain."

Mr Anderson concluded that the UNE Tamworth campus will play an important role in expanding education opportunities in the region and it should be built in a way that reflects that same commitment to the community. "This campus is an opportunity for students and families across our region," he said. "That opportunity should start with local people on site building our university."

## Mandatory health star ratings a welcome step — now more action is needed to tackle obesity

The Australian Medical Association welcomes today's decision by food regulation ministers to move towards mandatory health star ratings on packaged foods, a long overdue reform that will help Australians make healthier choices at the supermarket.

AMA President Dr Danielle McMullen said the move was an important step forward off the back of strong public health and consumer group advocacy, following years of inadequate voluntary uptake by the food industry. "Making health star ratings mandatory is a win for consumers and a clear acknowledgment that voluntary approaches have failed," Dr McMullen said. "Clear, consistent labelling empowers people to make informed choices about what they are eating, and that matters when rates of overweight and obesity continue to climb across Australia."

Rates of obesity have been rising for more than 25 years and, without decisive action, will continue to increase. Obesity is a major risk factor for chronic conditions including type 2 diabetes, heart disease and some cancers, placing growing pressure on Australia's health system.

"This is a positive first step, but it cannot be the last. Labelling alone will not solve Australia's obesity crisis. We need a comprehensive prevention agenda that addresses the over consumption of unhealthy food and drinks, particularly those high in added sugar," Dr McMullen said.

Through its 'Sickly Sweet' campaign, the AMA has long warned that Australia lags behind comparable countries when it comes to effective preventive measures targeting high sugar. Australians consume more than 2.2 billion litres of sugary drinks each year. These products contain large amounts of free sugar, offer little to no nutritional value, and are a significant contributor to rising rates of chronic disease.

The AMA continues to advocate for the introduction of a tax on sugar-sweetened beverages, a measure supported by strong public backing and international evidence.

"A tax on sugary drinks is one of the most effective tools governments can use to reduce consumption and improve health outcomes," Dr McMullen said. "Importantly, Australians support this reform, particularly when revenue is directed into obesity prevention and health promotion initiatives."

A nationally representative survey conducted in 2017 found 60 per cent of Australians supported a tax on sugary drinks. This increased to 77 per cent if the proceeds were used to fund obesity prevention.



## History Notes

Our annual Show is fast approaching – 122 years since the first one was opened by the Governor in 1904. The Governor’s visit was very special with a parade down Queen Street before he made his way to the Showground.

There are very few details of that first Show in the Witten diaries, apart from the fact that it was held in April and there was a concert held at night – two of the Witten children, Kate and Frank attended this concert while Kate and Ella went over to the Show on Friday afternoon. Arthur Witten did not attend this Show as he was busy complaining to Mackenzies and Sons about some 2<sup>nd</sup> hand wheat bags which were patched, darned, and threadbare – not suitable for freshly harvested wheat later in the year.

In 1905 the Show was moved back to the 7<sup>th</sup> March, still over three days and the Witten family entered cattle, wheat, pumpkins, beeswax and pictures.

In March 1912 the seventh Annual Show was held in the middle of the month and Julie Williams has rounded up several pages of information about this one. There were 475 entries in the horse sections – 51 stallions, 54 mares together with 90 hacks, 30 Galloways and ponies, and 70 jumpers. Just imagine the time it must have taken to put all those horses through their paces!

The Cattle Section of the Show was very small due to the bad season. The Sheep Section was also affected but there were some good exhibits by the Carter brothers from Linton. Mr. John Coote showed some Lincoln sheep.

In the Pavilion, Mr. CG Williams had some nice peaches and Mr. Dan Capel of Piedmont also showed some excellent fruit. Samples of chaff and hay and locally grown wheat were also on display.

Apart from all the horses there were sheep, wool, pigs, poultry and flowers. The show report then goes on to name those who won prizes such as C. White’s two stallions – Footwork and Golden Harvest, C. White’s Clydesdale, G. Hall’s pony stallion, J. Salter’s blood mare with foal at foot.

D. Capel won champion ribbon for both his Durham cow and a bull. Mr. Crowley also won prizes in the cattle section and the fat cattle section. Mrs. Clisces won prizes for a Jersey cow and a bull. J. McKid won prizes at Back Plain defeating CG Williams at Roxton. There were also prizes for a poultry section.

It seems Barraba will be very busy with this year’s Show if they are to catch up with the 1912 numbers.

**CATHOLIC CHURCH TIMES**  
Barraba 1st Sunday of the month, Saturday evening  
Mass 6pm.  
All other Sundays 9am

**BARRABA UNITING CHURCH NOTICES**  
Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2026  
Time 10.45am  
Please note new time till the end of April.  
All welcome

**ANGLICAN CHURCH TIMES**  
**St Laurence’s Barraba**  
Sunday service at 10.00am  
Woodsreef 11.30am, 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of each month

**BARRABA COMMUNITY NEWS**  
COMMUNITY OWNED AND EDITED

**Published by Community College  
Northern Inland Inc.**

Cnr. Alice and Fitzroy St Barraba  
 Contacts: Bronwyn 0447 165 008 or Office: 67821662  
 Email [news@barrabacommunitynews.org.au](mailto:news@barrabacommunitynews.org.au)  
 Printed on site at the Community College. Free publication  
 by email or collection from local Barraba main street  
 businesses

On learning, by way of our Community News, of Annabel's endeavour to swim 32Kilometeres to raise money for the Starlight Foundation - the Freemasons of Lodge Saint Andrews, who meet in Manilla, invited Annabel and her mother, Fiona, to attend their St Valentine's meeting on Thursday 12.02.2026.



The members of the Lodge voted to sponsor Annabel in her enterprise by presenting her with a cheque for \$500.00. We wish her all the best to accomplish the task she has set herself. Regards, Bryan Barrass



## Here is an overview of outcomes the Ordinary Meeting of Tamworth Regional Council 10 February 2026:

- Council tonight consented to the sale of the “Mechanics Institute”, 87-93 Brisbane Street, Tamworth. Council had previously considered the sale of the building in April 2021, however the one expression of interest received was well below the estimated market value. An independent real estate agent will be engaged to handle the sale on Council’s behalf.
- A Notice of Motion from Councillor Brooke to investigate initiatives to provide heat relief within the LGA following the recent heat wave in the region was supported by five Councillors. Possible options will be discussed at a future meeting.
- Council reviewed and approved the proposed Four-Year Work Plan as presented by the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee (ARIC). The ARIC Workplan outlines the actions and activities that ensures the Committee complies with s428A of the Local Government Act 1993, over the Council term of 2024-2028.
- Councillors Webb, Budd, North, Brooke, and Sutherland will attend the 2026 National General Assembly of Local Government Conference to be held at the National Convention Centre, Canberra from 23 - 25 June 2026. Attendance and travel are estimated to cost \$4,000 per delegate, funded from the Councillor’s conferences and seminars budget. Councillors will consider the motions they wish to put forward to the Assembly which will be discussed at a future Ordinary Meeting.
- Tonight, Councillors nominated Cr Brooke to attend the 2026 Australian Local Government Women’s Association (ALGWA) Conference to be held on 26 – 28 March 2026 in Blacktown, Sydney. The conference will focus on creating a space to support one another, share experiences and build the confidence and networks that help women thrive in local government.
- Councillors have approved, in principle, to name the small section of road leading into the Australian Equine and Livestock Events Centre (AELEC), Yarraman Close, to clearly identify the centre’s entrance. Yarraman is the

Gamilaraay word for horse and AELEC has consulted with the Tamworth Aboriginal Lands Council for approval for the use of the word to respectfully acknowledge the Gamilaroi/Kamilaroi people who are the Traditional Custodians of the land on which AELEC sits. The section of road stretches from the roundabout on The Ringers Road and Jack Smyth Drive to AELEC’s entrance and the proposed name follows the Equine theme for road names in this area.

For more information, see the full reports at [www.tamworth.nsw.gov.au/business-papers](http://www.tamworth.nsw.gov.au/business-papers)

## HOW TO RAISE AN ISSUE WITH OUR ELECTED COUNCIL

As Council meetings are now underway for 2026, a key change from the newly adopted Code of Meeting Practice, is the way you can formally engage with Councillors at meetings.

Locals have two options: Public Forum or Community Strategic Sessions, depending on what you'd like to speak about.

You can register and find out more about these opportunities to engage with Councillors at our website - <https://www.tamworth.nsw.gov.au/.../mayor-and-councillors>

**At a glance**

**Formally engage with Councillors**

**Public Forum**  
Previously called 'Community Consultation', this is an opportunity for you to speak to matters that are included in the Business Paper for a Council Meeting. The Public Forum is live streamed on YouTube.

If you'd like to speak in the Public Forum, you'll need to apply via our website before 4.30pm the day before the meeting.

**Community Strategic Session**  
A monthly opportunity to speak with Councillors about strategic or advocacy matters that aren't listed for a Council Meeting.

These sessions occur on the third Wednesday of the month and are not public meetings, but an opportunity for individuals, businesses and community groups to address the Councillors.

You'll need to register via our website to speak at least one week before the session.

## Tamworth Regional Council Welcomes New Events Manager

Tamworth Regional Council is pleased to officially announce the appointment of Joel Ulbricht as the new Manager, Events. Mr Ulbricht will replace Barry Harley, who has worked for Tamworth Regional Council for 11 years, leaving an incredible legacy, especially in his role as the Tamworth Country Music Festival Manager.

Mr Ulbricht is an experienced festival and events professional with a career spanning across more than two decades. He's held numerous leadership roles across Australia's major event landscape including in Northern Territory, Queensland, ACT, and New South Wales.



Known for combining strategic vision with hands-on delivery, he has led the planning, commercial development, and execution of large-scale community festivals, agricultural shows, and cultural events that collectively attract tens of thousands of attendees and generate meaningful regional impact.

His portfolio spans major agricultural shows, community festivals, cultural celebrations, and tourism-driven events, including leadership roles with the Katherine Show & Rodeo (2025, 2026), Parkes Elvis Festival (2024, 2025), Garma Festival (2024), Trundle Abba Festival (2024), UCI BMX World Championships (2017) and involvement across numerous regional showcase events.

Mr Ulbricht says he is passionate about events as drivers of economic development, cultural identity, and community connection, particularly in regional Australia. "I am thrilled to be in Tamworth and honoured to take on such an important role. I hope to contribute forward-thinking perspectives grounded in innovation, financial discipline, and audience experience for already established and new events across the Tamworth Region, while honouring its legacy as Australia's country music capital." Says Mr Ulbricht.

He will also take on the role as Tamworth Country Music Festival Manager, working closely with the TCMF Advisory Committee and Country Music Cabinet. "I was fortunate enough to experience the Festival this January, and I was blown away. I am committed to enhancing visitor engagement, supporting artists and industry participants, and reinforcing the festival's reputation as a world-class cultural event." Says Mr Ulbricht.

In late 2025, Barry Harley announced his retirement. He will remain at Council part time for the next few months to ensure a smooth and successful handover, providing continuity, insight and support.

---

## CR MARILYN "MASH" DIXON OAM RESIGNS FROM GWYDIR SHIRE COUNCIL



Gwydir Shire Council has received the formal resignation of Cr Marilyn Dixon OAM, effective Tuesday 3 February 2026.

Cr Dixon has resigned due to medical reasons, and the resignation has

been formally notified to the NSW Electoral Commission. The vacancy will be filled by a countback election from the 2024 ordinary election. Mash's resignation marks the end of an era for the Gwydir community.

First elected in 2012 and re-elected in 2016, 2021 and 2024, Cr Dixon served the Shire with pride, compassion and common sense. She sat on numerous committees, attended countless events and always put community first.

Her contribution extended far beyond Council. Named Citizen of the Year in 1998 and nominated for the Hidden Treasures Honour Roll in 2011, she was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) in 2017. A life member of Bingara Pony Club and Bingara Rugby League, Patron of Bingara Central School and dedicated member of the Bingara Special Events Committee, Mash is at the heart of community life — often behind the scenes, and often in the kitchen.

Gwydir Shire Council acknowledges Cr Dixon's extraordinary contribution and extends its deepest gratitude and best wishes to her and her family.

---

## Ageing Australia makes recommendations ahead of federal budget

Ageing Australia has made a series of recommendations ahead of the federal budget to build a sustainable and investable aged care sector, supported by a workforce to match, that will grow with our ageing population.

“Action is needed now, with the number of Australians aged over 70 set to hit 2.3 million by 2044,” Ageing Australia CEO Tom Symondson said. “The most immediate step the Government can take to relieve pressure on the aged care system is to increase the number of Support at Home packages. At last count, more than 100,000 older Australians were waiting for a package and another 100,000 waiting just to be assessed, so the issue is fast approaching a national emergency.”

“Last year, the Government announced the release of 83,000 new packages for 2025-26. Sadly, that’s proving to be nowhere near enough, given the surge in demand. Just last week, the Productivity Commission revealed the median time between an older person being approved for a package and receiving care doubled from 4 months to 8 months, with many still waiting more than a year. We need to urgently bring the wait times down. The Royal Commission said nobody should wait more than a month, and we are a very long way from that. Helping older Australians stay in their own homes benefits individuals, their families and reduces demand on our health and aged care systems. Without rapid access to home care, too many people end up in hospital unnecessarily or on residential aged care waiting lists, when they could be living in their own home.”

Australia also needs to urgently grow the capacity of residential aged care to meet demand. “We should be building 10,000 beds a year over the next two decades just to meet that demand, but sadly we’re only building a fraction of those - about 800 last year.”

“We also need a workforce to match. By 2050, aged care will face a projected shortage of some 400,000 workers. Without urgent action, Australia will not have the workers needed to support our ageing population. These proposed measures, if adopted, will support a viable and growing sector that can meet the needs of the Australian community.”

### Ageing Australia key recommendations

#### Funding

1. Increase the Accommodation Supplement for supported residents so residential aged care providers can keep their doors open and invest in building safe, modern homes.

2. Set a price floor for the Maximum Permissible Interest Rate (MPIR) of eight per cent to encourage investment in building and upgrading residential aged care homes.

3. A review of the Australian National Aged Care Classification (AN-ACC) funding model to more accurately align care funding with actual provider costs in support of older Australians. Current care funding is falling behind the cost of delivering that care.

4. Introduce a low interest loan scheme to facilitate the development and renewal of residential aged care homes. Most providers are unable to access commercial finance to build new beds.

5. Expand the Aged Care Capital Assistance Program (ACCAP) to support capital development in areas and communities of highest priority. This will particularly help in rural and remote areas.

6. Implement price caps for Support at Home services no earlier than 1 January 2027 using data from Support at Home activity, so pricing accurately reflects delivery costs. The current deadline of 1 July 2026 will mean using outdated and inaccurate data which risks homecare providers closing or reducing services.

7. Increase the care management cap for Support at Home to ensure older people receive the care and coordination support they need. The decision to reduce the cap to 10% of a person’s package mean those with complex needs cannot get the support they need.

8. Increase funding for CHSP services so providers can continue delivering the support older people rely on before CHSP becomes part of Support at Home.

#### Workforce

9. Allocate \$150 million to expand ACCAP with a dedicated aged care worker accommodation stream to help providers to attract and house staff, especially in non-metropolitan and First Nations communities.

10. Establish a national Essential Skills Visa to make it easier for overseas aged care and community care workers to come to Australia.

11. Remove Labour Market Testing for critical aged and community care roles so providers can recruit international workers more quickly.

## **BARRABA SHOW 2026**

### **Sports Shear and Wool Handling Competition – in its fourth year**

In 2022, local shearer Jock Mallise decided to work to get Barraba on the national shearing and wool handling competition circuit. "Barraba has a long and proud history as a centre of the wool industry – it still is," Jock told me. After a huge amount of hard work by Jock, the Barraba Show Society and other volunteers, a substantial grant from the Royal Agricultural Society Foundation, and support from Australian Wool Innovation and other sponsors, it all happened. The old sheep pavilion at the Showground was transformed into a modern four stand shearing board with the sheep and wool handling (and spectator) facilities to match, ready for the 2023 Show.

It was a great success – "I was overwhelmed", Jock told me. With over eighty competitors registered, and when the first shearers hit the board on Saturday at the 2023 Barraba Show, there was already a crowd in the stands. The crowd grew as the competition hotted up, and, right in front of the spectators, the wool handling competitors' skills were on display. Such was the entertainment on display that the spectator stands overflowed; some spectators stayed all day, others kept coming back.

From that beginning, the Sports Shear and Wool Handling Competition became the major attraction for the 2024 Barraba Show, and for the 2025 Show, attracting even more competitors and spectators each year. Improvements in facilities for shearers, wool handlers, spectators (and sheep!) were made each year, as well as adding a competition for traditional blade shearing – a spectacular competition! An added bonus was that this special built facility is perfect for training the future crop of shearers. Shearing schools, accredited by TAFE NSW, are held there.



*Sport Shear at the 2025 Barraba Show*

The two days at the Show are as follows:

**Saturday 7 March 7.30 am** – Sports Shear competition starts (Merino sheep).

**Sunday 8 March 7.30 am** – Sports Shear competition starts (Crossbred sheep)

On both days **Wool Handling** competition starts when shearing heats for the five classes are finished.

While it will be mostly the same competitors on the two days, the skills and techniques used are different for merinos and crossbreds – the champions, who wins the day's battle, may be quite different.

This is an enormous operation, that takes months to plan. Moving the individual competitor in and out of their heats and finals efficiently is a very complicated logistic exercise, as is moving the sheep, and pressing and moving the wool. At least five hundred sheep will be needed on each day. On Saturday those five hundred sheep will need to be yarded, shorn, then trucked out so that the next five hundred are ready at 7.30 am on Sunday. On Saturday, the fleeces from the merinos may make up to fifty bales; they have to be pressed and moved out. There is no woolshed in which to stack them!

This enormous operation will need many pairs of hands throughout the day. Moving the sheep, clearing the board, pressing and moving the wool, supporting the competitors, the list goes on. Many volunteers are urgently needed. If you think that you can offer some help call/text Jock Mallise 0428 416 050, or contact the Facebook page.

The Sports Shear and Wool Handling Competition on its own is a reason why you must visit the 2026 Barraba Show!



Your friendly  
local professional

**Rod Bonner**

Your local Plumber, Drainer, Gasfitter  
and Handyman

Lic No. L8791

[plumberdrainer@gmail.com](mailto:plumberdrainer@gmail.com)

Text is best 0447 052 140

**SUMMER SPECIAL**

**MITSUBISHI HEAVY INDUSTRIES AIR CONDITIONING**

**KEEP COOL THIS SUMMER**

**PH: 0410 522 967**

BARRABA BASED AND WILL TRAVEL TO SURROUNDING AREAS

**BK ELECTRICAL + AIR CONDITIONING**

ONE TRADESMAN WITH BOTH ELECTRICAL & REFRIGERATION LICENSES

2.5kw Mitsubishi Heavy Industries A/C Fully Installed - Back to Back <b>\$2270</b>	5 kw Mitsubishi Heavy Industries A/C Fully Installed - Back to Back <b>\$2870</b>	7.1kw Mitsubishi Heavy Industries A/C Fully Installed - Back to Back <b>\$3350</b>
--	---	--

From Brendan Moylan's weekly Newsletter –



**NSW Volunteer of the Year Awards**

Nominations for the 2026 Volunteer of the Year Awards are open. The awards celebrate the numerous people who contribute to our communities by selflessly offering their time. Although they don't do it for recognition, the Volunteer of the Year Awards provide the opportunity to formally thank and acknowledge how valuable these people are in our communities.

There are seven categories for the awards:

- Young volunteer (24 years and under)
- Adult volunteer (25 to 64 years)
- Senior volunteer (65 years and over)
- Volunteer team
- Emergency volunteer
- Volunteer leader
- Not-for-profit voluntary governance

For more information or to submit a nomination, visit The Centre for Volunteering's website:

[www.volunteering.com.au/nominations-open-for-2026-nsw-volunteer-of-the-year-awards](http://www.volunteering.com.au/nominations-open-for-2026-nsw-volunteer-of-the-year-awards)

Nominators must have the nominee's consent and provide their personal email address so they can receive ceremony invitations and important updates. For nominees under 18, parental or guardian consent is required in line with Child Safe Standards.

Volunteers and Volunteer Leaders and managers are not permitted to nominate themselves.



**Lawn Mowing**

Yard maintenance, rubbish removal, weed spraying.

Pensioners and DVA discounts on provision of appropriate cards.

Phone Scott, 0428941979, for an obligation free quote.



Lic No. 306630C

- Plumber
- Drainer
- Gasfitter
- Polywelder
- Roof Welder

Ph0408117358 [wardsplumbing@bigpond.com](mailto:wardsplumbing@bigpond.com)



**PHIL DENYER MECHANICAL REPAIRS**  
**(02) 6782 1107**



## AI isn't likely to wipe out all farming jobs – but it is changing who bears the risks

*Sophia Duan, Associate Dean, Research and Industry Engagement, La Trobe University*

*David A. Fleming-Muñoz, Professor of Agricultural and Resource Economics, La Trobe University*

The global economy is bracing for major job disruption as artificial intelligence (AI) advances and spreads across industries. Experts have been warning about this shift for years, and fiercely debating whether the benefits of an AI revolution will outweigh the cost of mass displacement in the workforce.

Few sectors expose this tension as clearly as agriculture. Pressure on farming is intensifying. Global food demand is projected to rise by 35–56% by 2050, driven by population growth, urbanisation and changing diets. This helps explain why AI is increasingly promoted as a productivity solution to produce more food with fewer inputs, under more volatile conditions.

Yet on farms, enthusiasm for AI is often tempered by caution. And that caution is not simply about whether jobs will disappear. A deeper concern is risk, and who bears responsibility if the technology fails.

### Technological change

Agriculture is not a controlled environment. Farming is biological, dynamic and deeply context-dependent, shaped by weather, soils, ecosystems and animal behaviour. Because of this complexity, AI is (and will continue to be) rarely used to replace people outright. Instead, it automates specific tasks.

Automation has been a big part of the farming story for decades, long before AI arrived on the scene. From mechanised harvesting and GPS-guided tractors to automated milking systems and variable-rate fertiliser application, technology has gradually changed how farms operate.

But AI is different. Rather than replacing farmers, AI is mainly being used to support decision-making in environments that are too complex, variable and context-dependent to be fully automated.

Most current uses of AI support monitoring and optimisation: detecting crop stress from satellite imagery, predicting irrigation needs, tracking livestock behaviour or flagging disease and weed risks. Farmers and farm workers still interpret the information and decide how to respond.

### AI is automating tasks, not whole jobs

Our previous research with colleagues from CSIRO's Data61 explored the future of Australia's agricultural workforce, showing how digital and automated technologies are changing how farm work is done rather than removing the need for people. Demand is growing for skills in decision-making, oversight and technology management, particularly as labour shortages persist. However, adoption of advanced technology in farming remains limited, especially among small producers.

It's a similar story internationally. For example, in the United States, only around 25% of farms used advanced technology by 2019, with adoption of automatic steering and machinery guidance systems more common on larger operations. These technologies automate specific tasks and can reduce fatigue, but they do not eliminate farm operators.

Across other industries, evidence from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) shows about 60% of jobs in advanced economies are exposed to AI. Separate findings from the OECD indicate AI exposure is primarily at the task level, with only about 27–28% of employment currently in occupations at high risk of full automation.



*A horse-drawn seed drill at a farm in New South Wales in 1926. Technology has dramatically transformed agriculture over the past century. Photographic Collection from Australia via Wikimedia Commons, CC BY-SA*

## Uneven gains

The productivity promise of AI and other types of digitalisation in agriculture is genuine. In practice, however, these gains are uneven.

Evidence shows adoption and benefits vary widely by farm size, crop type, region, and access to capital, data and skills. It also risks leaving some farmers behind due to poor connectivity and limited digital access, constraining their use of data-driven and AI-enabled tools.

## Risk and reward

This is where the core tension lies. When AI-supported decisions succeed, efficiency improves. When they fail, humans carry the consequences. For example, if an irrigation system mistimes watering, the farmer bears the yield loss or soil damage. If a particular crop disease is missed, a whole season's income may be wiped out.

AI systems do not absorb financial loss, regulatory scrutiny or reputational damage. Farmers and advisers do. This dynamic is central to our research through the Australian government's Soil CRC program on how easy it is for farmers to actually adopt these new technologies. That work shows farmers assess technologies not just on technical performance, but on how they affect business risk, autonomy and accountability.

## The future of farming

AI will continue to reshape Australian agriculture. The most important question is not whether it replaces farm jobs, but who carries the risk when AI becomes part of everyday decisions.

If AI is designed to genuinely support human judgement, backed by shared accountability and proper assurance, it can make farming safer, more resilient and more skilled.

If not, it risks quietly increasing exposure for those already operating at the edge of uncertainty.

Productivity gains are possible. But they will only be realised and socially accepted when AI systems are designed not just to optimise outcomes, but to protect the people who live with the consequences.



## Apple, walnut, and cinnamon cake

The apple makes its entrance for dessert with this recipe for a moist and fragrant cake with walnuts and cinnamon. A recipe with sweet autumn flavours that will delight you as the cool days settle in. Step by step, follow the instructions to make our easy dessert and don't forget to prepare a cup of tea, coffee, or hot chocolate to accompany it.

### Ingredients

- 5 apples
- 1 cup walnuts, chopped
- 1 cup sugar
- 2 eggs
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- 2 tsp vanilla sugar
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 1⅔ cups all-purpose flour
- ½ cup + 1 tbsp oil

### Materials

- 8x8 inches 20x20 cm square baking pan
- Stand mixer (optional)

### Preparation

- **Step 1:** Preheat the oven to 390°F/200°C. Peel and cut the apples into small pieces. Place them in a large bowl.
- **Step 2:** Using a pestle, chop the walnuts and then mix them with the apples. Add 1/2 cup of sugar and mix. Set aside.
- **Step 3:** Mix the eggs with the remaining sugar, add the cinnamon, baking powder, and flour. Then, add the oil. Mix well.
- **Step 4:** Incorporate this mixture into the apple and walnut mixture and mix well.
- **Step 5:** Pour the mixture into a greased baking pan and bake for 50 minutes at 390°F/200°C.
- **Step 6:** And there you have it, your apple, walnut, and cinnamon cake is ready!