



Building a Network in Agriculture

A practical guide for adults seeking work or career opportunities in agriculture



Why networking matters in agriculture

Agriculture is a relationship-based industry.

Many jobs, work experience opportunities, internships and partnerships are filled through:

- word of mouth
- recommendations
- local reputation
- industry connections

This can feel intimidating if you did not grow up on a farm or already know people in the industry — but agricultural networks are often more welcoming than people expect.

Building a network is not about “knowing important people”.

It is about:

- showing genuine interest
- being reliable
- asking thoughtful questions
- getting involved consistently



1. Start with industries that interest you

Agriculture is extremely broad. Networking becomes easier when you focus on sectors you are genuinely interested in.

Examples include:

- sheep and wool
- beef cattle
- dairy
- grain production
- viticulture and wine
- horticulture
- poultry and eggs
- forestry
- agricultural technology
- agronomy
- sustainability and carbon farming
- food processing
- agricultural education
- environmental management

Choose 2–3 sectors to begin with.

Good starting points:

- [Ag Institute’s SA Student Compendium](#)
- [Ag Institute National Compendium website](#)
- [Careers In Agriculture | Ag Careers | Australia - Career Harvest](#)

2. Learn the language of agriculture

You do not need to become an expert before talking to people.

However, learning some basic terminology helps you feel more confident and shows respect for the industry.

Useful topics to learn:

- seasonal cycles
- basic livestock terminology
- cropping systems
- agricultural regions
- biosecurity
- common machinery
- sustainability issues
- current industry challenges

Good starting points:

- [PIRSA](#)
- [Primary Producers SA](#)
- [GRDC](#)
- [Meat & Livestock Australia](#)
- [Australian Wool Innovation](#)
- [Landscapes Boards](#)



3. Attend agricultural events

One of the fastest ways to build connections is simply to attend industry events regularly.

Good networking events include:

- field days
- agricultural shows
- workshops
- industry conferences
- livestock sales
- machinery demonstrations
- local grower meetings
- careers expos
- short courses

South Australian examples:

- Royal Adelaide Show
- Yorke Peninsula Field Days
- South East Field Days
- Eyre Peninsula Field Days
- Hart Field Day
- Beef Week
- MerinoSA Field Days

Tips:

- introduce yourself to exhibitors
- ask questions
- collect business cards
- follow up afterwards
- attend more than once

People remember familiar faces.

4. Join local industry groups

Agriculture has strong local communities.

Groups to consider:

- farming systems groups
- agricultural bureaus
- Landcare groups
- commodity organisations
- young farmer groups
- women in agriculture groups
- agricultural teacher and educator groups
- sustainability or natural resource management groups

South Australian examples:

- [Ag Institute Australia](#)
- [Agricultural Bureau of South Australia](#)
- [Livestock SA](#)
- [Grain Producers SA](#)
- [Women Together Learning](#)
- [Agriculture Teachers Association of SA](#)
- [Society for Precision Agriculture Australia](#)
- [Australian Institute of Horticulture](#)

These groups often provide:

- mentoring
- workshops
- newsletters
- local contacts
- volunteer opportunities
- job leads



5. Use LinkedIn properly

LinkedIn is increasingly important in agriculture, especially in:

- agribusiness
- ag technology
- sustainability
- advisory roles
- research
- education
- food and fibre industries

A strong agricultural LinkedIn profile should include:

- interest in agriculture clearly stated
- relevant transferable skills
- any agricultural training or volunteering
- field days or industry events attended
- photos or reflections from agricultural activities
- engagement with industry content

Follow:

- farmers
- agronomists
- agricultural businesses
- commodity organisations
- recruiters
- universities
- rural journalists

Comment thoughtfully on posts rather than only “liking” them.

6. Volunteer or help at events

One of the best ways to build relationships is to become useful.

Volunteer opportunities might include:

- agricultural shows
- school agriculture programs
- Landcare activities
- junior judging competitions
- field days
- conservation projects
- community gardens
- livestock events

You will meet people naturally while working alongside them.



7. Ask for informational conversations

Many people in agriculture are happy to talk about their work if approached respectfully.

A good approach is:

"I'm exploring opportunities in agriculture and would love to learn more about your role and how you entered the industry."

Keep conversations:

- short
- curious
- respectful
- practical

Good questions include:

- What does a normal week look like?
- What skills are most valuable?
- How did you get started?
- What challenges are facing the industry?
- What would you recommend for someone entering agriculture?

Avoid immediately asking for a job.
Focus on learning first.

8. Build practical experience early

Even small amounts of experience create credibility.

Examples:

- harvest work
- livestock handling courses
- fencing or machinery workshops
- work experience days
- vineyard pruning
- shearing shed work
- farm tours
- drone training
- short courses in biosecurity or safety

This gives you:

- confidence
- practical stories to discuss
- industry understanding
- additional contacts

9. Follow up and stay connected

Networking is not a one-off activity.

After meeting someone:

- send a brief thank you email or LinkedIn connection request
- mention something specific you discussed
- stay in touch occasionally
- share opportunities or articles of interest

Simple professionalism stands out.

10. Understand rural relationship culture

Agriculture often values:

- reliability
- practical skills
- honesty
- follow-through
- humility
- willingness to learn

People are usually less impressed by:

- titles
- corporate language
- self-promotion

A good reputation develops from:

- turning up
- listening well
- helping out
- being consistent over time

11. Create your own "agriculture story"

People will often ask:

"What brought you into agriculture?"

Prepare a simple, genuine answer.

Example:

"I became interested in agriculture through sustainability and food production, and I'm now building my understanding of the industry and looking for opportunities to contribute."

This helps people remember you.

12. Be patient — networks take time

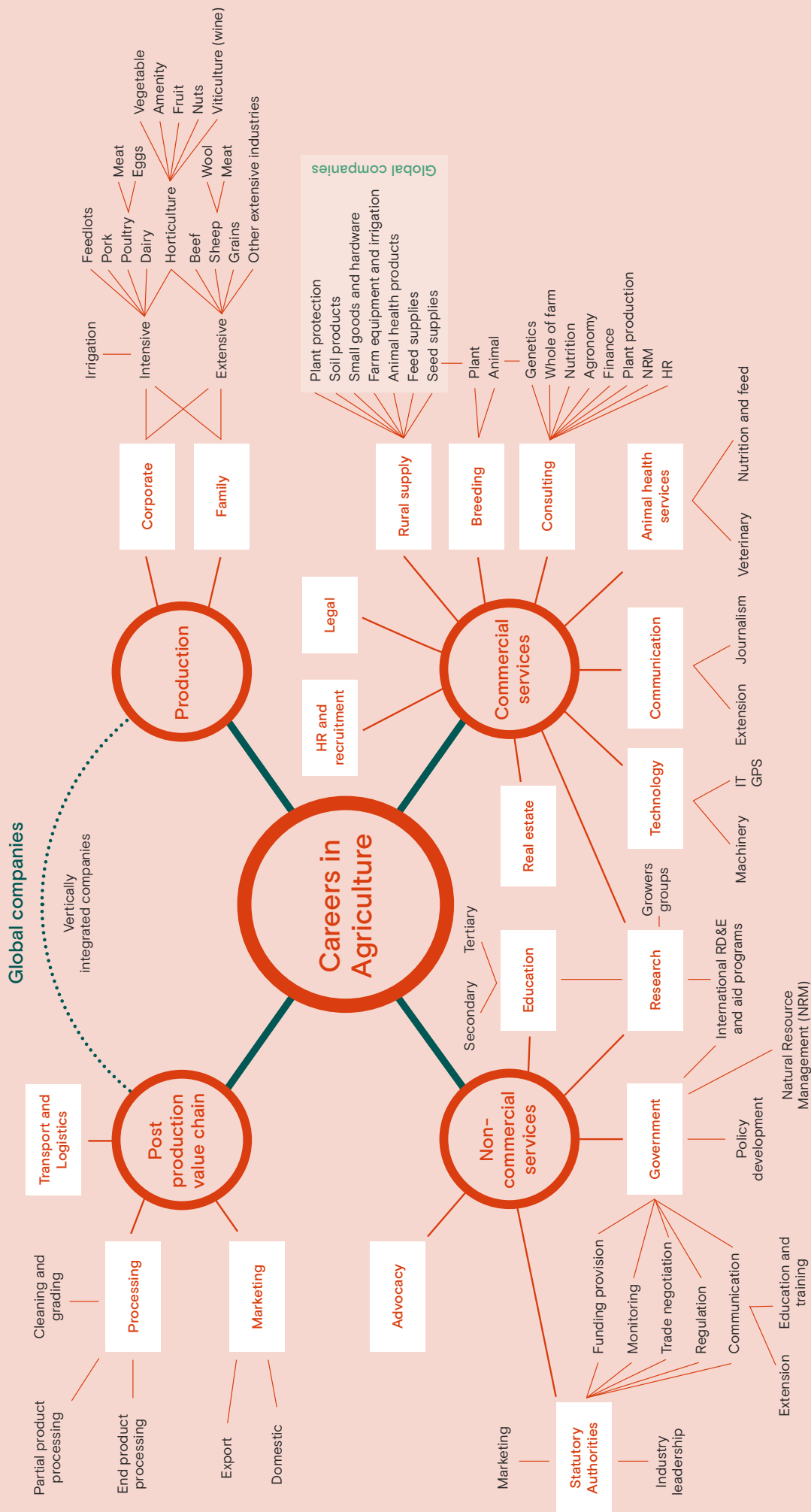
Agricultural networks often develop slowly but become very strong over time.

Many people enter the industry through:

- one conversation
- one field day
- one volunteer opportunity
- one introduction

Consistency matters more than speed.

Careers in Agriculture



A simple first-month networking plan

Week	Action
1	Update LinkedIn profile with agriculture interests
1	Follow 20 agricultural organisations or businesses
1	Connect with an employment agency
2	Attend one local agricultural event or webinar
2	Join one industry group or association
3	Contact one person for an informational conversation
3	Complete one short agriculture course or webinar
4	Volunteer at one agricultural or environmental activity
4	Reflect on which sectors interest you most

Useful organisations and starting points

- [Primary Producers SA](#)
- [PIRSA](#)
- [Ag Institute Australia](#)
- [National Farmers' Federation](#)
- [TAFE SA Agriculture Courses](#)
- [AgCAREERSTART](#)



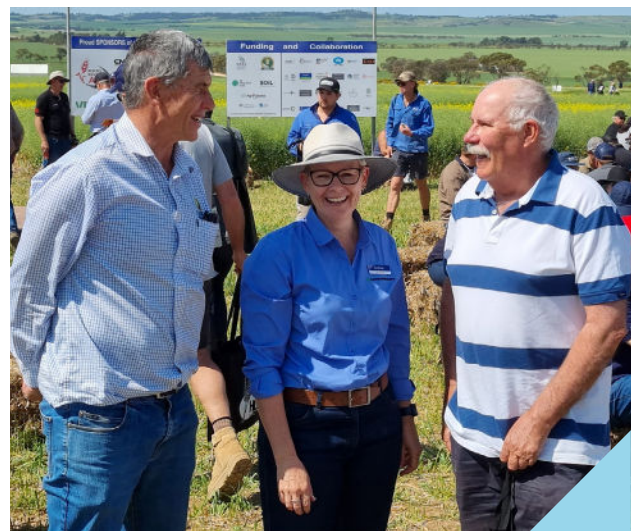
Final thought

You do not need to grow up on a farm to build a successful career in agriculture.

The industry needs:

- communicators
- technicians
- educators
- engineers
- scientists
- data specialists
- environmental managers
- problem-solvers
- practical people willing to learn

Strong agricultural networks are built the same way crops and livestock systems are built — gradually, consistently and through genuine relationships.



CONTACT LEAD AGRICULTURE TEACHER SUE PRATT

E sue.pratt@agcommunicators.com.au • M 0428 445 171 • agcommunicators.com.au/ageducation/

Sign up for newsletter: mailchi.mp/agcommunicators/education