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AFAM ITAB

Agriculture, Food
& Animal Management

September 2024

In this newsletter:

- [Mid North Coast Skills Forum](#)
 - [Engagement Activities](#)
 - [Smart and Skilled Update](#)
 - [Les Young Scholarship Awarded to Basil Nolan](#)
 - [Upcoming in October](#)
 - National Safe Work Month
 - NSW Small Business Month
 - [Jobs and Skills Councils \(JSC\) Project Updates](#)
 - [NSW Grants, Opportunities and Scholarships](#)
-

AFAM ITAB and many of our stakeholders have been contributing to the NSW Review of VET, as part of a range of reforms to the skills system. The final report was released at the end of August 2024 with a key focus on ensuring that the workforce has the right skills and opportunities to access quality training. If you haven't seen it already, you can download the report at the [NSW Department of Education and Training](#) website.

It's been a great month with the launch of the NSW Aquaculture Vision Statement at the [NSW Oyster Conference](#) in Port Macquarie, which AFAM attended. You can read more about this in the 'Engagement Activities' section of the newsletter.

Also, be sure to read the [NSW Grants, Opportunities and Scholarships](#) section as more government grants have been included and a link to the NSW government grants and funding webpage.

Best wishes,
Jess
Executive Officer

Mid North Coast Skills Forum – 24 October 2024

Employers are invited to attend the Mid North Coast Skills Forum where employers and local experts will discuss:

- Insights from Mid North Coast employers on how to attract and retain employees
- A Mid North Coast regional snapshot of workforce and skills development needs
- The skills that are most needed and how they are being developed
- Ways of tapping into new pools of talent.

ITABs are keen to understand more about the workforce and training issues and concerns within the Mid North Coast Region and have organised this event for small, medium or large size businesses.

Date: Thursday 24 October 2024

Time: 9.00 – 11.00 am

Location: Panthers Port Macquarie – 1 Bay St, Port Mcquarie.

Space is limited so please [reserve your spot today](#).

Engagement Activities

At the NSW Oyster Conference, the Minns Labor Government launched the NSW Aquaculture Vision Statement which is a joint industry and government initiative to double the farm gate value of the NSW aquaculture sector to \$300 million by 2030.

Key to delivering this increased value will be industry and government support initiatives including:

- Managing oyster industry risk through a breeding program, plus alternate species
- Innovative research at DPIRD research stations and with partners
- Opening up new areas for marine aquaculture (mussels, oysters, algae)
- Promoting the environmental benefits of aquaculture – e.g. algae, oysters and mussels all take up excess nutrients and help improve water quality
- Streamlining aquatic biosecurity rules to facilitate access to interstate spat

supply

- Protecting and enhancing water quality
- Providing opportunity for Aboriginal people to participate in aquaculture businesses.

The Minister for Agriculture and Regional NSW, Tara Moriarty, addressed the conference reflecting on the importance and strength of the NSW oyster industry, “These past few years have been tough for oyster farmers with NSW estuaries having suffered from storms, floods, harvest area closures, disease and climate change impacts.

“Despite this, the increasing output of produce highlights the strength of the industry and the people who work in it.”

Learn more in the [media release](#).

A highlight of the conference was the opportunity to visit a local oyster farm at Sandfly Alley, Port Macquarie where we were able to see firsthand the type of work that takes place. Stewart and Ewan Bale conducted demonstrations on different machinery, discussed the benefits and pitfalls of working with different machinery, and talked about how the oyster farm responded to repeated disasters such as storm damage and the catastrophic floods in 2021.



Ewan Bale demonstrating the oyster grading machine at Sandfly Alley, Port Macquarie.

Smart and Skilled Update

NSW Skills List updated

The NSW Skills List and Smart and Skilled Prices and Fees schedule have been updated. This update covers changes because of:

- qualifications added to the NSW Skills List
- updates to training packages*
- updates to Vocational Training Orders (VTOs)
- ASQA extensions to qualification transition periods
- price indexation of 2% for full and part qualifications.

*Training package updates include revisions to the Agriculture, Horticulture and Conservation and Land Management training package.

Read more in the [September Smart and Skilled update](#).

Download Version 15.1 of the [NSW Skills List](#) and [Prices and Fees Schedule](#)

Operating guidelines for the 2024-25 activity period – new release

Training Services NSW has released a new version of the Smart and Skilled Operating Guidelines. The new version is now available on the [NSW Government website](#).

Les Young Scholarship Awarded to Basil Nolan

AFAM would like to congratulate this year's Les Young's Scholarship winner, Basil Nolan. Basil will be swapping his family's thoroughbred breeding farm in south-east Queensland for the UK National Stud in January 2025. Thanks to the [Les Young Scholarship](#), which is supported by the AgriFutures Thoroughbred Horses Program, Basil will further develop his understanding around foaling and breeding, bloodstock, husbandry and stable and equine management.

When he returns to Australia, Basil is keen to develop a long and fruitful career in the Australian thoroughbred industry, helping to overcome some of its current challenges as well as securing its many opportunities.

For more information, visit [Agrifutures Australia](#).



Basil Nolan, winner of the Les Young Scholarship 2024.

Upcoming in October

National Safe Work Month

National Safe Work Month is a time to commit to building safe and healthy workplaces for all Australians. AFAM encourages all industries to take preventative action to reduce the number of work-related injuries, illnesses and fatalities. You can

get involved by hosting a SafeTea talk event at your workplace encouraging your team to have a chat about WHS over a cuppa!

Each week of October will focus on a different health and safety area:

- back to basics unpacking the fundamentals of WHS that everyone should know (Week 1)
- how to identify and manage psychosocial hazards (Week 2)
- risk management fundamentals (Week 3)
- musculoskeletal injuries – effectively manage the risk of harm (Week 4).

You will find plenty of resources and information on each week's topic by visiting [Safe Work Australia](#).

The NSW Government has [SafeWork small business rebates](#) for small business owners or sole traders up to \$1,000 towards work health and safety items.



NSW Small Business Month

Throughout October, the NSW Government is offering a lineup of informative events designed to help small businesses to overcome challenges, grow and thrive. NSW Small Business Expos will be taking place in eight regions of New South Wales and will be an opportunity for networking, hearing expert speakers and participating in interactive workshops.

There are also plenty of online events taking place. Learn more about what's on and how to get involved for [Small Business Month](#).

Jobs and Skills Councils (JSC) Project Updates:

Manufacturing Industry Skills Alliance (MISA) JSC have released their [2024 workforce plan](#) which outlines the skills and training opportunities and challenges for manufacturing. Snapshots of the food manufacturing workforce can be found on pg. 28 and pharmaceutical manufacturing on pg. 31.

Skills Insight JSC currently have both training package and research projects underway in various stages. To learn more and provide input please follow the links below.

Development Stage:

- [Rural Operations Project](#) (this project has been paused while qualification reform work takes place)

Broad Consultation Underway:

- [Essential Meat Processing Skills Project](#)
- [Textiles, Clothing and Footwear Workforce Insights Project](#)
- [Worker Safety Induction Pilot](#)

Broad Consultation Complete:

- [Exploring Training Demand Supply Challenges Project](#)
- [From Training Package to Training Delivery](#)
- [Training Support Materials for Meat Processing Project](#)

Consensus Gathering:

- [Livestock Operations Project](#)
- [Shearing and Wool Classing](#)

Other Projects Underway:

- [ANZSCO review project](#)
- [Qualification reform](#) – watch the video on the project webpage.



NSW Grants, Opportunities and Scholarships

The following grants, opportunities and scholarships are available to employers and vocational learners. Follow the links for more information.

[Aboriginal Business Advisory Initiative](#): support for existing Aboriginal owned and operated businesses to grow and diversify their business.

[Barranggirra](#): to provide end to end support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander learners through culturally appropriate mentoring to ensure successful retention and completion of training and improved post-training employment outcomes.

[Elsa Dixson Aboriginal Employment Grant](#): the grant adopts a number of strategies to

develop and support First Nations people through the creation of training and employment opportunities.

[Free Training for Veterans](#): to broaden their career opportunities and help transition to civilian life after service, veterans and their partners will have access to free training.

[Free Workshops: Supervising your apprentice or trainee](#): free workshops for employers and supervisors of apprentices or trainees in the workplace held across NSW.

[OCHRE Opportunity Hubs](#): aim to provide First Nations young people with the confidence and knowledge to follow a supported pathway between school and further education and/or employment through partnerships with schools, coordination of local opportunities, mentoring, support and more.

[Resources to Assist in Supervising Your Apprentice or Trainee](#): a series of videos and resources are available.

Other Grants and opportunities:

[Free Support to Help Create Mentally Healthy Workplaces](#): SafeWork NSW has a range of programs, tools, and resources available to help on the journey to create mentally healthy workplaces.

Food Rescue Rebates

The NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA) is working to reduce good quality food suitable for human consumption from being disposed to landfill. The rebates are part of a suite of organics programs available to support NSW to halve organics waste to landfill by 2030.

Amount: Up to \$2,000 per rebate with a total funding pool of up to \$800,000

Status: Open, ongoing until 30 June 2027, until funding is expended, or at the EPA's discretion.

Seafood Innovation Fund - The NSW Government is offering low interest loans up to \$500,000 to assist commercial fishers and aquaculture farmers to identify and address risks to their business, improve permanent assets and infrastructure, ensure long term productivity and sustainable use of the marine, estuarine and land-based environment.

Seafood Innovation Fund loans are available to businesses within the seafood sector in NSW.

Amount: Loans are up to \$500,000 for 100% of the net, GST exclusive cost of eligible works.

Status: Open, until funding is expended.

Carbon on Country Partnerships EOI

The Carbon on Country initiative will support NSW Aboriginal organisations to own and manage carbon projects that deliver cultural, environmental, economic and social outcomes alongside carbon abatement. The grant is targeted towards NSW Aboriginal organisations and Traditional Owner groups that own the land the project will be implemented on.

Amount: From \$20,000 to \$250,000

Status: Open. Closes 24 October 2024, 11:00pm.

Living Carbon Grants

NSW Government is investing \$5 million in Living Carbon grants to assist eligible applicants in delivering carbon abatement through planting projects in 3 regions in NSW:

- the Riverina Local Land Services region
- the North Coast Local Land Services region
- the MidCoast Local Government Area.

Amount: Successful applicants will receive up to \$200,000 of grant funding, and the landholder is expected to commit funding and/or in-kind contributions to complete the

project.

Status: Open. Closes 30 April 2024.

Find information about these and all available grants and funding opportunities on the [NSW Government website](#).

Please feel welcome share this newsletter with anyone you think might be interested.

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