



# CRAWFORD FUND Media Release

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## HOW TO MANAGE AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH?

Australia has a proud history and reputation in agricultural research and its management. A new book will help impart some of the reasons why agricultural research in Australia 'works' but includes input from all over the world.

*"Research Management in Agriculture: A Manual for the Twenty First Century"*, with Ian Metcalfe, Bruce Holloway, Jim McWilliam & Neil Inall (editors) is being launched today (14 November) at the University of New England (UNE).

The book is a collaborative effort between the ATSE Crawford Fund and the UNE, with an interesting history and international input.

"We wanted to help improve the management of agricultural research in developing countries, where every dollar counts and the impact is so desperately needed to alleviate poverty and hunger. So we developed and ran three very successful and sought-after Master Classes in Research Management in Agriculture with participants from Africa, Indonesia, Philippines, China, PNG, Cambodia, Vietnam, Colombia, Kenya, South Africa, Sri Lanka, and Zimbabwe," said Professor Bruce Holloway, one of the editors of the book who was the Crawford Fund coordinator of the Master Classes in Research Management.

"Participants were all senior management personnel from key agricultural agencies in their home countries who provided significant input to the Classes and humbling lessons for us all."

"But we needed a resource so the experience and knowledge provided and refined for each Master Class could go further afield, nationally and internationally. So the modules of the Master Classes became the chapters of the book," explained Bruce.

"What we also learned is that despite the different governments, research conditions and national priorities faced by agricultural research managers, they all face the same set of difficulties and demands."

"They are collectively facing a tougher, more competitive funding environment, as well as the need for greater accountability in terms of the adoption and the impact of research outputs. And in developing countries these pressures can be exacerbated by very low funding, limited facilities and sometimes government policy and bureaucracy."

"So the book has a practical set of principles and guidelines to improve the way in which agricultural research is being organised, conducted and financed. It will be equally helpful to managers in developing and developed countries," said Bruce.

"And we also expect that some of the Master Class participants will become the research leaders of tomorrow".

Bruce noted that if there is one key lesson he hopes the book will impart, it is that collaboration and communication are key features of efficient agricultural research management.

"Successful research outcomes are only achieved through inclusive involvement of clients and stakeholders at all stages of the research, beginning with priority setting and planning, then right through to the application of research outputs and outcomes for the end users - more often than not, the farmers."

**For further information and interviews, contact:**

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