



BOY FROM THE BUSH

TO AGRIBUSINESS ADVISOR

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BUSH BRINGS SCIENCE AND ECONOMICS TO AGRIBUSINESS

Study at the University of Southern Queensland (USQ) has helped Ian McLean turn his head for numbers and a heart for agriculture into a unique business which is making a difference to northern Australia's grazing industry.

As the founder and managing director of Bush Agribusiness, Ian's primary skill-set was built on his family's sheep and cattle property at Mitchell in southwest Queensland.

His foray into business off the farm started with his Associate Degree of Commerce from USQ, and after 8 years in Alice Springs working with a large accounting firm, the Northern Territory Department of Primary Industries and then the Northern Territory Cattlemen's Association, Ian decided 2011 was the year to step out on his own.

"To do that, I felt I needed to improve my business management knowledge, and that was the catalyst for enrolling in the USQ MBA program," he said.

After four years of external study, Ian graduated in the top 15 per cent of USQ's MBA 2015 graduates, and said

the University's online support structures helped him through the course.

"I often found myself sitting in a hotel room in the middle of nowhere while away for work doing assignments for my MBA, but the insight and the knowledge I've gained have been well worth it."

While studying as well as having a young family and working full-time required some juggling, Ian believes knowledge gained through the MBA has improved his own business by providing a more comprehensive service to his clients.

From his Toowoomba base, Mr McLean is now using skills he learned through the MBA course to integrate facets of pastoral business management such as enterprise choice, whole business performance, risk management, capital allocation, business financing, economic sustainability and environmental sustainability into business plans.

"Whilst accountancy primarily looks at aspects like taxation and compliance, I wanted to move beyond that to look at helping businesses understand and to improve their long term economic and environmental

performance and sustainability."

This required developing the skills and systems to comprehensively analyse both the financial and production performance of pastoral businesses and to put in place an end to end commercial process that facilitated long term viability and operation.

"With what I've learnt through the MBA, I now feel better qualified to help pastoral businesses understand what the strengths of their business are, what the areas for improvement are and to then develop strategies for future management that will improve their capability well into the future," he said.

Bush Agribusiness works with small, medium and large pastoral businesses across Northern and Regional Australia. Ian also leads the delivery of 'The Business EDGE' in Northern Australia, which is Meat & Livestock Australia's primary training product for improving the business skills and financial literacy of pastoral producers.

Learn more about USQ's MBA at www.usq.edu.au/mba

