

MEDIA RELEASE
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New Chair and directors for Agribusiness Australia

Board continues to forge a path towards an \$300bn agri-value chain by 2030

Agribusiness Australia on Friday elected Mark Barber as the new Chair. The appointment was made after Mark Allison decided to step away after a decade in the role.

At the AGM on 1 September, Agribusiness Australia also reappointed Patrick McClelland to the board who will retain his role as Deputy Chair, along with two new directors Elizabeth Jackson and Paul Thompson.

The changes provide stability to Agribusiness Australia's leadership, while injecting new capabilities and perspectives, setting up the organisation for another three years of sectoral advocacy, promotion and leadership.

Outgoing chair Mark Allison said Agribusiness Australia's strong position reflects the growing importance agribusiness plays in the Australian economy, overcoming challenges and volatility to provide prosperity and growth.

"Australian agribusiness has provided resilience and hope in the face of geopolitical challenges, climatic and economic volatility, growing strongly during the past 10 years," he said.

"I'm proud of the role Agribusiness Australia has played in this period, driving understanding of sectoral issues through a range of reports, hosting hundreds of events, and challenging the status quo through advocacy and debate. We've help frame priorities and define the agri-value chain \$300bn agri target and brought together CEOs from some of the biggest sectoral balance sheets in our CEO Summits.

"Throughout this time our membership has grown, and our financial position has remained sound, which is a real achievement given the challenges caused by lockdowns and social distancing during the pandemic.

"Now is the right time to handover to an experienced and diverse board of directors, and I couldn't think of a better person than Mark Barber to lead the organisation, along with Agribusiness Australia's committed staff," Mr Allison said.

Mr Barber joined the board in 2017 when he was Investment Director at Laguna Bay Pastoral Company, and now is General Manager, Farmland Agency and Agribusiness Investments, Elders Ltd. He said he was pleased to take on the Chair role, and ready to continue to drive Agribusiness Australia's momentum.

"I look forward to providing stability and continuity to the leadership of the organisation, while we bed down new important initiatives and champion the role of the sector.

"Australian Agribusiness is dynamic and strong, despite ever present challenges and volatility. It's underpinned by substantial asset values, renewed investment, and has a growing array of domestic and global markets and opportunities. ESG, while a challenge, also provides positive new frontiers for the sector.

"Agribusiness Australia is excited about realising not only these collective opportunities but supporting our member companies, organisations and individuals - and those across the sector - as they evolve, innovate, and grow.

“It’s an exciting time, and alongside my fellow directors, look forward to continuing Mark’s legacy. On behalf of the board, members and everyone in the sector, I thank Mark for his advocacy and inspired leadership over a decade,” Mr Barber said.

It has been another successful year for Agribusiness Australia, delivering 19 networking events nationally, hosting more than 1000 guests who heard from experts discuss topics like supply chain disruption, workforce, ESG, carbon, AgTech, and investment in agriculture.

The Agribusiness Australia’s CEO Summit in March 2023 - which was attended by 40 leaders from the biggest balance sheets in the country – focused on ESG and progress was made identifying a consistent message and approach. This will be a core focus for the organisation in 2024.

Mr Allison thanked all participants along with members, sponsors and event hosts for their support. He also provided special thanks to executive officer Leonie Welsh and events coordinator Emma Papps for their tireless work through the year. He also thanked Anna Speer from Woolworths who due to competing priorities also stepped back from her board role.

The AGM was followed by Agribusiness Australia’s Annual lunch, which was attended by more than 150 people. The event *entitled The Dirt on Carbon Farming: Insights from Industry Leaders'* focused on the practical realities of carbon farming in Australia.

Biographies for Mark Barber and the new directors are below:

- [Mark Barber](#)
- [Paul Thompson](#)
- [Elizabeth Jackson](#)

ENDS

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About Agribusiness Australia

Agribusiness Australia exists to serve the Australian agribusiness sector, and our membership reflects the diversity of businesses in the sector. We are proud to support the work of our corporate and individual members, our community partners and network, and the Australian community.

Our **vision** for the future is a growing and thriving sector where individuals, organisations and industries can strive for and reach their full potential.

In short, our specific vision is a **\$300bn Australian agribusiness sector by 2030.**

To achieve our vision we advance the interests of the Australian agribusiness sector through advocacy, promotion, and leadership, and we support our members through events, services, and platforms for engagement.