



## Travel & Training Bursary Report

**FFN member:** Gemma Tapp, QLD

**Event:** International Rural Women's Conference (IRWC), Adelaide SA – 23-24 March 2015

Arriving on my own, at least 10-15 years younger than the average age, and in a room comprised of awe-inspiring and innovative industry leaders, I initially questioned what I was thinking when I registered for the 2015 International Rural Women's Conference. 48 hours later and I have nothing but praise for the organisers, speakers and delegates that graced the Adelaide Showgrounds on the 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> of March.

The ground-breaking research into Wellbeing and Resilience currently happening at SAHRMI under the guidance of Gabrielle Kelly, and the wisdom of knowing, being and loving thyself from ANZ's Tania Motton were definite highlights. There was not an attendee I spoke to who had not been greatly inspired or deeply moved by the high calibre of content in South Australia's capital.

As a young industry member, the opportunity to meet with such incredible teachers and peers was an eye-opening and stirring one. The networking that the event facilitated was tasteful and honest, everyone coming together to realise the team effort required to address issues facing both rural women and their families. Personally I was inspired most by the emerging research into rural mental health and wellbeing, and the straightforward methods being devised to bring about real social change. The passion and drive that each speaker – and numerous delegates – presented was reassuring and motivating because I realised that issues I am passionate about are being dealt with, and there is a real need for more support.

It is experiences such as the IRWC that open your eyes to an array of possibilities in the rural industry, and it provides a safe place for discussion and problem solving. Particularly for rural women, who often find themselves quite isolated, this conference was memorable and necessary for sharing concerns and exploring real solutions.

I would like to thank the FFN for firstly making me aware of the IRWC 2015, and secondly providing a bursary for my registration. It was a truly exciting experience that forced me out of my comfort zone, and into a setting that dealt with pertinent issues to the continual growth and success of the rural industry.