

NZARES Newsletter July 2026



Welcome to the July newsletter.

With just over a month until the conference, preparations are well underway, and we are looking forward to gathering in Christchurch in August. I'd like to thank the organising committee, our sponsors, speakers and reviewers, whose generous support has helped shape what promises to be an outstanding programme.

This year's conference brings together researchers, policy makers and industry representatives to discuss many of the issues currently facing agriculture and natural resource management. Whether you are presenting a paper, contributing to a panel discussion, or simply catching up with colleagues, I hope you will find the conference both stimulating and enjoyable.

Registrations are now open on the NZARES website. We encourage delegates to register early and look forward to two days of discussion, networking and the latest research in agricultural and resource economics, with colleagues from New Zealand and overseas.

I look forward to seeing many of you in Christchurch.

Ngā mihi,
Katie Bicknell
President, NZARES



NZARES Conference 2026 – Christchurch

The NZARES conference organising committee warmly invites you to join us in Christchurch for the 2026 NZARES Conference, together with the pre-conference field trip and reception. The conference will be held at The Commodore Hotel on 27–28 August, with the conference dinner on Thursday evening. On Wednesday 26 August, delegates are invited to participate in a pre-conference field trip showcasing innovation in New Zealand agriculture, from regional water governance and irrigation infrastructure to integrated dairy farming systems. The field trip will be followed by a reception at the Commodore.

If you have received a confirmation email of your paper acceptance, please register for the conference by 1 August 2026 to confirm your place. Registrations for the Conference and the Field Trip are open at www.nzares.org.nz. When registering, please use the same email address you used to submit your abstract, so we can match your registration to your accepted abstract.

We are delighted to welcome **Dr Robyn Dynes**, Principal Scientist and Farmer Engagement Specialist with the Bioeconomy Science Institute (BSI), as the keynote speaker for the Robin Johnson Memorial Session. Dr Dynes is widely recognised for her work at the interface of science and practice, helping farmers, researchers and industry work together to address the challenges facing New Zealand agriculture.

This year's programme features an outstanding line-up of plenary speakers from New Zealand and overseas. Alongside the keynote address, delegates will hear from leading researchers and practitioners including Professor Chris O'Donnell (University of Queensland), Dr Michael Harris, Dr Sue Clearwater (Department of Conservation), Dr Gerald Schwarz (Thünen Institute, Germany), Dr Mario Fernandez (DairyNZ), Stephen McNally (IrrigationNZ), Keri Johnston (Irricon), and Carla Muller (Perrin Ag).

Three panel sessions will explore issues of critical importance to New Zealand's primary sector: Productivity, Biodiversity, and Irrigation and Fresh Water Management. Bringing together perspectives from academia, industry and policy, these sessions are designed to encourage discussion of both current challenges and future opportunities.

Complementing the plenary sessions will be four concurrent contributed paper sessions showcasing the latest research from New Zealand and overseas. Presentations cover topics ranging from climate change, greenhouse gas mitigation, biodiversity, water management and food security to artificial intelligence, agricultural technology, trade, farm systems, productivity, renewable energy and behavioural economics. Whether your interests lie in research, policy or industry, there will be plenty to inform, challenge and inspire.

A detailed programme is also available on the NZARES website: www.nzares.org.nz

More on the Pre-conference Field Trip, 26 August 2026, 1.00 -5.30 pm

The field trip will commence at Lincoln University, where Central Plains Water Ltd will provide an overview of one of New Zealand's largest irrigation schemes. Delegates will gain insight into the governance of shared water infrastructure, environmental stewardship, catchment management, data-driven decision-making, and the contribution of irrigation to regional economic development. Afternoon tea will be served during the visit.

Delegates will then travel to Lincoln University's Integral Health Dairy Farm at Ashley Dene Research Farm, where they will explore a systems-based approach to dairy production that integrates soil, plant, animal, environmental, and human health. The farm provides an opportunity to consider how future dairy systems can enhance resilience, environmental stewardship, animal welfare, and commercial viability.

Together, these visits provide complementary perspectives on the future of New Zealand agriculture—from regional water governance and enabling infrastructure to innovation in farming systems—while offering opportunities to engage with researchers and practitioners working across agriculture and water management.

The day concludes with a Pre-Conference Reception at the Commodore Hotel. The reception will include an informal discussion with senior academics on academic publishing and career development. All delegates are welcome, although the discussion will be of particular interest to early career researchers seeking insights into publishing, peer review, and academic career development. NZARES will provide the first beverage, with a cash bar available thereafter.

The timeline below is indicative only and may be subject to change. A final version will be emailed to registered delegates prior to the trip.

Wednesday 26 August 2026	
1pm Start	Bus departs from The Commodore, 449 Memorial Avenue, Christchurch
1.30 – 2.30	Presentation from Central Plains Water Ltd (CPWL) at Lincoln University
2.30 – 3.00	Afternoon Tea and informal discussion with CPWL personnel
3.30 – 5.00	Lincoln University's Integral Health Dairy Farm at Ashley Dene Research Farm
5.30 Finish	Bus arrives at The Commodore, Christchurch
6.00 – 7.00	Pre-Conference Reception at The Commodore, Christchurch

Awards

NZARES first-time presenter and best paper award

NZARES offers two conference awards, one for **the best first-time presenter** and one for the **best paper**. The prize for each award is \$200. If you are interested in being considered for the first-time presenter award, please indicate when registering for the conference and submitting your abstract. Please note - to be considered for the best paper award, you must submit your full paper by Deadline for full manuscripts (Best Paper award): 18 July 2026.

NZARES will introduce a **Best Poster Award** at the 2026 conference. The award carries a prize of \$200 and recognises the quality of posters presented at the conference.

To be eligible, nominees must present a poster at the conference.

Offers for Delegates

The Commodore Hotel has provided us with special rates for delegates and members.

- Premium rooms (Single or Twin-share) @ \$243.00 or
- Business Level rooms @ \$288.00 inclusive of GST per room per night
- Breakfast add-on @ \$40 per person per night

If you are booked to stay at The Commodore, they offer a FREE AIRPORT SHUTTLE. The shuttle operates out of the regional arrival area, Door 1.

NZARES Committee

Your Executive Committee for 2025–26:

Position	Name	Email
President	Katie Bicknell	kathryn.bicknell@lincoln.ac.nz
President-Elect	Wei Yang	w.yang@massey.ac.nz
Past-President	Phil Journeaux	phil.journeaux@agecon.co.nz
Treasurer	Yvonne Matthews	yvonneresearch@gmail.com
Secretary	Stefania Mattea	Maternity Leave
Committee	Meike Guenther (Acting Secretary)	meike.guenther@lincoln.ac.nz
	Maksym Polyakov	PolyakovM@landcareresearch.co.nz
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If you have any questions, please contact us by email at nzares@nzares.org.nz

Ngā mihi,
The NZARES committee