

How do farmers influence their industry?

David Jochinke – Nuffield Scholar



Murra Warra

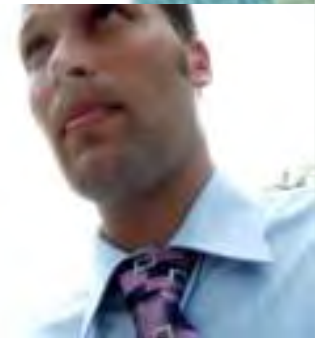
Ultra Dryland Farming
Mainly Cropping
Sheep enterprise





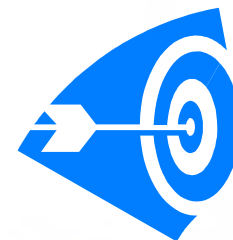
Why influence?

- Australian Wheat Exports (Volker & Cole)
- Why are there so many organisations saying that they represent me?
- Declining farmer empathy to become active in their industrial issues?
- Why do PETA and GREENPEACE get so much attention?



Aim of study

- Identify the way farmers organise themselves to influence their industry (focusing on grains)
- Investigate various organisations varying in influence and methods of engagement
- Measure their differences and record the positives and negatives



Key Findings

- Farmers have diverse opinions (no surprise)
- Decline in political support for agriculture
- Many types of “interest groups”
- Reputation opens doors
- Many different influence techniques
- Relationships key to success
- Some organisational features

Interest Groups

An “interest group” for everything
(public librarians to flightless moth societies)

- Influence legislation, research, education, funding...
- Represents common ground of members
- Delegated members represent the memberships policy

Agricultural Interest Groups

- Dominant Organisation
- Small Alternative Organisation
- Policy vs. production driven
- Grassroots Membership
- Have state and national representation



Decision “Table”

- The most effective time for influence is during policy development/writing
- Key players are asked for input



Influence Basics (Rules of engagement)

- Understand the issue completely
 - Your views
 - Opposing views
- Creditable structure
- Speak bi-lingual
- Must have an open door policy
- Communication is vital

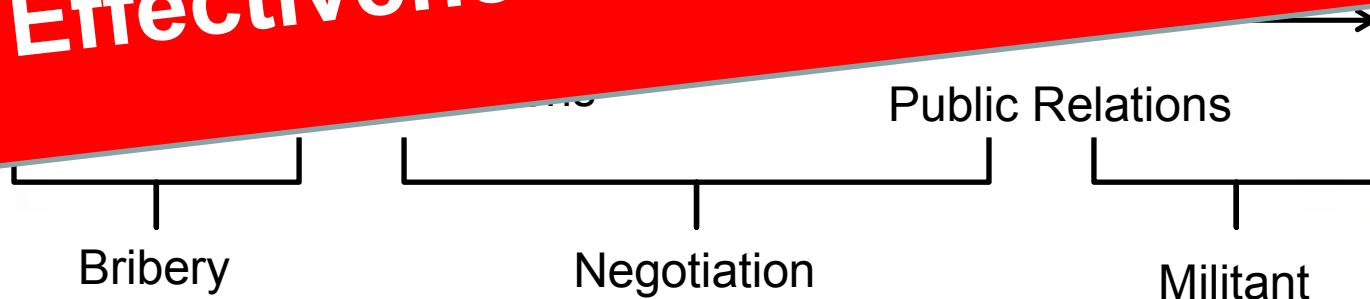


- Farmers are the best lobbyists but need to keep up-to-date with policy & issues
- Impact relies on your public image & media manipulation
- What does this issue mean to industry
- Unfortunately money = resources
- Require sharp elbows and thick skin
- Grassroots support is the most important
- Positive message about industry



David's Theory of World Influence / Lobbying Tactics (Version 1.1)

**Social Culture and Governance
will determine the
Effectiveness of any technique!**



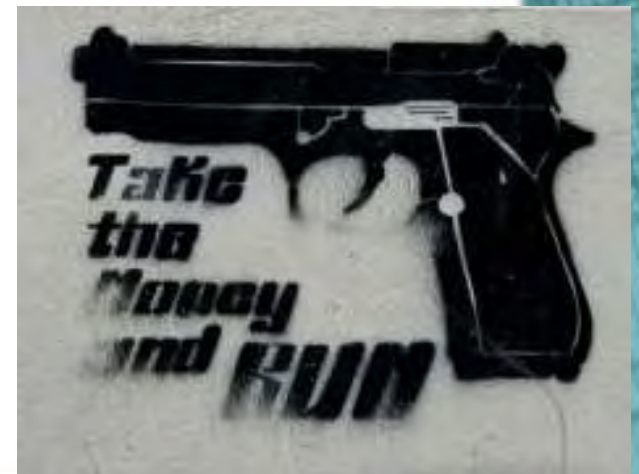
Bribery (tipping the waiter?)

- Corruption! (according to western culture)
- Cost of doing business
- Loss of public reputation (business morals)
- Trapped into system
- Organised (stable)
vs. Unorganised (unstable)



Negotiation

- Know your demands/concessions?
- Sound policy based on sound science
- Provide reliable advice to government
- A good communication
- Eyes, ears and voice of membership
- Relationships open doors!



Militant

- Break down in negotiations (frustration)
- Strikes, protests, blockades... (flex of power)
- Need lots of membership support
- Public understanding of your issue
- Gather public support



Building Relationships = Access

- Political Action Committees (PAC's)
 - Voluntary funds (Transparent & accountable)
 - To help with re-election of Politicians
 - Weighted to voting and action history
- Drop-in's / keeping in touch
- Provide reliable information
- Understanding needs



Effective influence

- Have education and training for leadership
- Some form of Young Farmer involvement
- Strong realistic, science based policy
- Good communication to members, government and public
- Have multiple income streams
- Excellent first name relationships

Not so effective influence

- Reject public opinions
- Policy is historical
- Weak brand
- Under staffed
- Strongly affiliated with political party
- Not involved with Governmental reviews
- Use one issue stunts which attack parties

Things to think about...

- Compulsory vs. Voluntary membership
- Membership and policy focus
- Future funding sources
- Services to members
- Alternative structures
 - Quality (ranking top 20%)
 - Professional Credentials (lawyers/doctors)
 - Think tanks (member less)

Conclusion

- Reputation is everything! (negotiation strategies)
- Relationships (open door policy)
- Promotion (perception is a persons reality)
- Membership (database, invigorate, common ground)
- All about “*finding the right buttons to push*”
- **We’re responsible for our industry!**
(what are you doing to be proactive?)



Nuffield Australia



**Grains Research & Development
Corporation (GRDC)**