

Roseworthy Old Collegians Association Inc.

C/- The ROCA Secretary, Roseworthy College
ROSEWORTHY SA 5371

The Dean,
Faculty of Agriculture and Natural Resource Sciences,
The University of Adelaide,
Waite Campus,
PMB 1,
Glen Osmond, SA, 5064.

April 5, 1998

Dear Sir or Madam,

RE: SUBMISSION TO THE TASK FORCE; ROSEWORTHY CAMPUS.

Please find attached the Roseworthy Old Collegians' Submission on the future direction of Roseworthy Campus.

Should you have any questions relating to the submission, please feel free to contact the writer on telephone (08) 8357 9291, or any member of the Roseworthy Old Collegians Association.

Yours sincerely,



James Holland
ROCA Member

Handwritten note: * COPY *

cc.Mr. Malcolm Buckby, Minister for Education.
Mr. Rob Kerin, Minister for Primary Industries.

SUBMISSION TO THE TASK FORCE

**THE FUTURE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ADELAIDE'S
ROSEWORTHY CAMPUS**

Compiled by

Bardy McFarlane & James Holland

On behalf of the

ROSEWORTHY OLD COLLEGIANS ASSOCIATION

SUBMISSION TO THE TASK FORCE ON THE FUTURE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ADELAIDE'S ROSEWORTHY CAMPUS

Introduction

The Roseworthy Old Collegians Association (ROCA) supports the continued role of the Roseworthy Campus as a training centre for undergraduate students wishing to learn the techniques and business aspects of farming, environmental land management, viticulture and winemaking.

Roseworthy Agricultural College was established to;

- Research new and innovative methods of farming practices
- Train future agriculturalists, winemakers and land managers
- Transfer research and development studies to South Australian (and Australian) farmers.

Current Problems at Roseworthy Campus

Reduced numbers of undergraduates are enrolling for courses being offered through the Roseworthy Campus.

The courses on offer are not producing graduates to suit the current and future needs of the agricultural industry.

It would appear that the direction for the Roseworthy Campus is not in accordance with the State Government's policy for South Australian Agriculture.

There is a little or no industry involvement in the design and composition of the courses being offered through Roseworthy Campus.

- Industry has not involved itself in the running of the Roseworthy Campus until now, possibly because industry feels the situation has reached a crisis point.
- The University is driven by economic guidelines and imperatives and it may feel it has to relocate the education portion to the Adelaide CBD.

The University has not given a clear indication of the future of Roseworthy Campus and consequently staff moral and community feeling around the Campus is low.

Advantages of Roseworthy Campus

Roseworthy Campus is a major state and national asset. Its proximity to the Adelaide CBD and airport allow for easy access by business and industry representatives from SA, interstate or overseas.

The Campus is located near the township of Gawler. It is within easy access of Virginia, (the State's major market gardening area) the vineyards of the Clare & Barossa Valleys, numerous cereal growing properties, sheep and beef farms as well as the intensive poultry and piggery industries.

The accommodation system enables staff, students and visiting delegates to reside within walking distance of lecture theatres, dining hall, recreational venues and the fully operational College farm.

The education facilities include;

- Modern lecture theatres
- Laboratories
- Practical demonstration sites (including a fully functional dairy and piggery).
- Fully operational farm incorporating;
 - Broad acre
 - Horticulture (& vineyard)
 - Poultry
 - Dairy
 - Piggery
 - Sheep & Beef
- Adequate plant breeding facilities
- Recreational facilities.

Examples of Current Problems

With the decline in agronomic services provided by PISA, industry has been required to provide the larger farming community with trained agronomists. Nine agronomy positions still remain vacant after eighteen months due to the shortage of trained agronomic staff. One company decided to employ a pharmacist in the role of an agronomist rather than employ an Adelaide University Graduate.

Much of the agricultural industry is based on selling produce or merchandise. Very little training in this regard is now undertaken in the University courses. Sales type roles are however, the basis to many careers within the agricultural industry.

Several Human Resource companies questioned by ROCA advised that they would rather select graduates from other interstate Colleges or Universities before selecting a Roseworthy graduate. They also advised that Roseworthy is no longer the preferred option for graduates.

Many industries are using numerous agricultural colleges to conduct staff training sessions. Roseworthy was rejected (even in the viticultural and cereal cropping sections) as its education standards are "perceived to have slipped".

The development of the corporate farm sector throughout Australia has increased the demand for farm and business managers. In the survey conducted by ROCA, no Roseworthy graduate had been employed as a corporate farm manager recently.

Charles Sturt University is now considered the first preference for undergraduates wishing to study winemaking.

Proposed Solutions

Develop and implement a vision for Roseworthy Campus based on the vision of the SA Government and industry requirements.

Return the Agricultural Science, Environmental Science and Winemaking courses to the Roseworthy Campus.

Continue training students on the practical aspects of agriculture.

Involve industry in the selection of subjects offered.

Maintain the College Farm as a working operation.

Capitalise on the expansion of the Northern suburbs

Develop the conference side of operations and secure the Agricultural conference trade.

Create alternate methods of funding (eg. Agricultural conference trade).

Maintain and improve college facilities with industry assistance and guidance.

Explore other industry options and users of land resources. (Eg. mining tourism, water management, forestry, fishing / aquaculture etc.)

Continue to develop overseas education with either short or full courses

Further Information

For further information on any of the issues discussed in this submission, please feel free to contact either of the following ROCA Members;

Mr. Bardy McFarlane, c/- Piper Alderman, Flinders Street, Adelaide.
Telephone: (08)

Mr. James Holland, c/- AgrEvo Pty Ltd, Adelaide.
Telephone: (08) 8357 9291
Mobile: (018) 806 474.

Or the Roseworthy Old Collegians Association, telephone: (08) 8363 4371.

APPENDIX

Roseworthy lead the way in introducing integrated courses, thereby allowing students from one discipline to work in conjunction with those studying a entirely different field. Thus when an RAC student entered the workforce, they possessed a basic knowledge of all sectors of agriculture, and they also had the ability to directly contact the correct industry reference. Thus offering a distinct advantage over other agricultural graduates.

On a South Australian scale, the rural industry is estimated to have produced about \$3.6billion worth of produce. When combined with the agri-food and forestry industry, the total earnings reached \$8billion. Analysisists estimate that the rural fishing and forestry industry, combined with associated fields like machinery, merchandise fertiliser, irrigation, finance etc, the total employment is nearer 120,000 or 20% of the State's total.

Many if not most, of those employed in the industry have completed one of the various courses offered by Roseworthy College.

With the increased integration of the agricultural and food sectors, many farmers and primary producers will need to make significant changes to their operations. In the past, Roseworthy College would have provided them with the necessary grounding and industry contacts (nationwide) to re-evaluate their production methods. Presently, farmers would have to rely on their local TAFE or Agbureau to provide them with such information. The pool of information would be limited to local thoughts and ideas as farmers are denied the opportunity to associate with representatives in different sectors.

The attempt by the University of Adelaide to reproduce a Roseworthy Agricultural College style organisation within the Central Business District has failed. The relationship between courses is the basis for the success of the former RAC and

ROCA is concerned that the University of Adelaide has focused on a science based package with research and development the key objectives. This has created a large void between the farmer or land manager and the research officer.

How will future developments in agricultural production be communicated back to the farmer level? Who can communicate new technology to the primary producer? Who will train the land managers of the future?

Roseworthy College has lost its reputation for excellence in applied hands on agricultural education. As a brand name it is well known locally, interstate and internationally with employers such as IAMA, National Australia Bank and State and Federal Governments, keen to employ graduates who have a balance of applied science, practical skills and a rural understanding.

By running down the on Campus facilities, Roseworthy College has become unattractive to students willing to enter the field of agriculture. Some decide to study in Adelaide, others look interstate at colleges such as Charles Sturt, which is now the leading producer of winemakers to the expanding wine industry.

All human resource firms interviewed by ROCA suggested that they would rather hire graduates from alternative agricultural colleges than those from the University of Adelaide, Roseworthy Campus. A disappointing fact for South Australia whose wine industry employs nearly 9000 people in grape growing, wine making and blending, plus about another 9000 in part-time and casual jobs.

The infrastructure is still there and the Roseworthy brand name, although somewhat tarnished by the events of the last few years, stills holds a place of reverence in many industries. Much work would be needed in resurrecting Roseworthy Campus and ROCA would be pleased to assist in this regard.

Future Industry Development.

The President of the South Australian Farmers Federation, Mr. Wayne Cornish encouraged us to think about the "big time advantage for South Australia" that will arise with the completion of the Adelaide to Darwin rail link. While the State Government is actively basking in the success of this new venture, it has not secured the load by ensuring that SA farmers are educated in the methods of producing market quality produce.

As a final note, schools such as Faith and Trinity (now South Australia's largest Independent School) are preparing for the future increased demand for student education in the northern suburbs. It would be strategically vital for the University to keep Roseworthy viable and maintain its good reputation for the long term future of the University.