# Northern Western Australia and the Northern Territory Drought Resilience Adoption and Innovation Hub

**Snapshot video transcript**

**June 2022**

**Introduction**

The Northern Western Australia and the Northern Territory Drought Resilience Adoption and Innovation Hub is one of 8 hubs across Australia. Short snapshot videos for each hub were featured in the 2022 Future Drought Fund Science to Practice Forum on 7-8 June 2022.

**Transcript**

[Video begins]

Jed Matz:

Drought takes many different forms in our region. We cover desert, we cover subtropical and tropical environments. So what drought means to our producers and communities is different in every sort of region that we have. We talk about the business resilience and it's about people planning for risk.

Patrick Underwood:

We need to deliver cattle 365 days of the year. And it's a really seasonal side of things. It's really seasonal, as far as a lot of people like to sell their cattle after the wet season. So any innovation that we can use or drought proofing of country, whether that's supplementary feeding or whether it's moving cattle around the turgid places where there are grass, such as the floodplain. It's all really helpful to get an annual supply of cattle, which is important for our customers.

Patrick Underwood:

I've basically spent my whole life in the industry. I was born and raised on cattle stations 900 kilometres south of Darwin, on the edge of the Tanami Desert. So grew up there as a third generation pastoralist. Most of the territory has a very long dry season. So there was an average rainfall, down there, of about 20 inches. It tended to rain most years that we were there. My grandfather bought it in 1957. We sold it in 2013. We averaged that sort of rainfall.

Patrick Underwood:

But it's interesting in the last four or five years quite a lot of the territories missed out on a good wet season. And the wet season that just finished saw probably 80% of the territory get an under average wet season. Which is disappointing for them, because if you don't get rain by April in the territory, you're not going to get your next lot of rain until October, November. Winter rain is rare and useless.

Jed Matz:

Collaboration is a massive part of the Hub's role. There are already great organisations within the territory, in Northern Western Australia, working with producers. So our role is not to come in and duplicate that work, ours is to coordinate and share information across those groups, get them working more closely together.

Will Evans:

This year's the 150th anniversary of the pastoral industry in the Northern Territory. And I think what we're really doing this year is talking about well, what do the next 150 years look like? I think what the Hub's provide, is this is the first time this group of people has sat around a table together and said, "Look, let's dedicate our resources, let's dedicate our time, our expertise, our knowledge and our networks to really trying to build what is a unique opportunity for everybody in the area."

Tom Dawkins:

In anything we do, the more that we share ideas, it's a fast track to success when you're collaborating and you're sharing knowledge. So in Australia, we've got these funny state borders that get in our way sometimes and create some unnecessary tunnel vision. At a commercial level, our industry is a great example of where those state borders really don't exist. We look across into Western Australia where some of the cropping is more well-established and other opportunities to value add, to grow our market options. I think that the Hub's a really good place to house a lot of that conversation. And it brings together stakeholders that are pretty diverse, but that all share a very common objective.

Simon Smith:

We'll have to clean it out, this one. Don't we? I guess one of the frustrating things, particularly being in the north, often you feel very isolated, not just for inputs for farming and so forth, but also on knowledge. It's difficult to get to some of the bigger conferences. So having a hub that brings together that knowledge, that looks at innovation, looks at drought resilience, is super important because there's a lot of knowledge out there. And our role as, I guess, a farming advocacy group and member base group will be to filter that down to the farmers. To give them the best opportunity to be drought resilient, going forward.

Jed Matz:

Hopefully, over the next five years, we've established ourselves as a integral part of the ecosystem of extension and adoption in this region. We've built capacity within our member organisations and created more extension and adoption capacity within those groups. That the producers in our regions are starting to implement new technology and becoming more resilient businesses and are more prepared for changes that are predicted to come our way.

[Video ends]

**Acknowledgement of Country**

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of Australia and their continuing connection to land and sea, waters, environment and community. We pay our respects to the Traditional Custodians of the lands we live and work on, their culture, and their Elders past and present.

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