



Rabobank

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Rural women gather in Perth for grain grower summit

Around 130 women from across WA's wheatbelt gathered in Perth recently for the inaugural Inspire Summit, designed to upskill female farmers in the grains industry.

Hosted by Partners in Grain (PinG) WA with support from summit partner Rabobank, the event held at Pagoda Resort & Spa on April 6 and 7 has been hailed a huge success.

Providing a rare opportunity for rural women across WA to come together, the two day conference showcased the crucial role women play in their businesses, communities and families, and focused on sharing advanced farm business skills and knowledge.

"Women wear many hats in their farming businesses, and are often integral in not only the day-to-day running of the business but the financial management, human resources and marketing," said Rabobank acting state manager for Western Australia Steve Kelly.

"The Inspire Summit focused on enhancing these skills, which can not only be applied back into the business, but in community and industry initiatives."

Featuring a line-up of high calibre speakers, the sessions covered topics including the global future of agriculture, boards and governance, technology and social media, succession, farm safety, advanced business management skills and influential communication.

Sue Stead from "West Lort", a mixed cropping and livestock enterprise near Cascade, travelled 700 kilometres to attend the summit.

Sue said she was motivated to attend the event to network with like-minded women.

"Working in isolation, events like these are so important," she said, "to provide the opportunity to talk to other women who understand the diversity of what we do – from lodging the BAS to running hot meals out to the paddock during harvest."

Susanne said many of the sessions, particularly around succession planning and farm business financials, highlighted the importance of implementing tools and knowledge into practice.

"Sometimes you need to switch off from the farm to gain an insight into what you can do better in terms of running the business," she said, "and you couldn't help but leave the conference feeling inspired."

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