# GRDC VIDEO or PODCAST TRANSCRIPT

**Agricultural study around the world: insights from a GRDC supported Horizon scholar**

[00:00:11] **Hilary Sims** Hi there. I'm Hilary Sims. The Agrifutures Horizons Scholarship Program provides a bursary of $5,000 a year during the final two years of a degree, along with professional development, work placements and networking opportunities. Supported by the GRDC, the scholarship program fosters the next generation of agricultural leaders who are interested in contributing to the Australian grains industry's success. In this podcast, we hear from Horizons scholarship recipient, Grace Moloney, on how the experience has opened doors for her professionally here in Australia and abroad. Here's Grace.

[00:00:52] **Grace Moloney** I'm from a broadacre property on the Yorke Peninsula and we're share farmers. So basically my dad's Uncle owns land and then we own the machinery and work the property. And then we go 50/50 in the profits at the end of the year. So for me, I always knew there was pretty much no farm to come back to. Dad always said, If I want to be a farmer, I have to marry a farmer or win the lottery. So really, there was no agriculture pathway for me there. So I went to boarding school for three years in Adelaide and it was a very high end, all girls school, and they really encouraged top careers, lawyers, doctors, that kind of pathway. And so I felt I was doing the right thing in jumping into nutrition exercise science. And so I did that for a year. And then during that time we did a farm to plate assignment looking at how your produce basically gets from the farm to your plate. And that's when I realised there was so much more to agriculture than just farming. And so I basically went to the Yorke Peninsula field days representing my college and the two ladies that were there with me, they say, look, you have like an agriculture gift. Why aren't you doing agriculture? You know, you can connect with all these people. And basically right then and there, I jumped ship, did my research at the field days. I went around to some stalls, spoke to some people, and then at the end of the year changed degrees into agriculture and pretty much haven't looked back. And that's where I am now. So I'm in my third year and final semester of science at the University of Adelaide.

[00:02:21] **Hilary Sims** And Grace, since your second year of study, you've been an Agrifutures Horizon Scholarship recipient. What have you gained from the program?

[00:02:30] **Grace Moloney** So the Horizon Scholarship has just been a once in a lifetime opportunity. I was so fortunate to be sponsored by GDC with the Horizon program. It's pretty much for your final two years of study. So we do two Summits. So I went to Cairns in my first year personal and professional development there, and then about a month ago we went to Wagga. In addition to that, we also do four weeks of placement that is sponsored by GRDC. I was fortunate to do a semester abroad at the University of Nottingham in the United Kingdom. So there I did six months of study doing agriculture at the university, but with my GRDC sponsor I got the opportunity through my contact to go to NIAB, which is the National Institute of Agriculture Botany in Cambridge, which was amazing. I mainly did genetics over there, so I was manning their wheat sector,, it also touched on chickpeas as well. So I spent a week exploring that and then when I got back I pretty much had a week at home before I went to Tasmania and I looked at agronomy over there with a dairy agronomist, a horticulture agronomist and a grains agronomist, which just really opened my eyes to the diversity that Tasmania holds. And that was truly great. I loved that placement. And then in just under a month I'm about to head to WA for harvest. So that's where my other placement is about to take place.

[00:03:50] **Hilary Sims** And what were some of your key learnings or observations from your time in the UK and their farming systems?

[00:03:56] **Grace Moloney** People always prepared me to say the UK was going to be cold, but I don't think I really realised how cold it was going to be until I got over there. So that was really a shock to the system. I think when we landed in London it was five degrees and everyone was at 4 degrees on the beach. So that was like, okay, well hold off here. But at uni we did a few farm tours. We were lucky enough to go to Wales with the university and then we also had a connection in Scotland. We went to a farm up there as well, family farm. They took us in for the week, which was really eye opening as well. But I think the biggest difference that I found was that the paddocks were so small. I mean, my dad rips out the fences, so we have paddocks like all joined together, which I think was just amazing. And I think the other thing that I learnt when I was in Scotland was the grain drying sheds. Obviously like being so cold they can't get their moisture down to the right temp so they have to put them in grain drying sheds and mix it up and I had never seen one of those before. So I think that was really an experience in itself.

[00:04:52] **Hilary Sims** And through the Agrifutures Horizon Scholarship program, you've been working on a project that's of special significance to you. Tell me about that.

[00:05:00] **Grace Moloney** There's something else that came from our Horizon program was a project called YCC, which is Youth Culture Connect. It is around building meaningful relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians. For me it was a connection that I want to pursue through having a lack of connection between Indigenous people, a lack of cultural education. And it was also around that I didn't know where to start the conversation respectively. Even though I wanted to learn, was curious about it. So our whole YCC project pretty much came about a year and a half ago from the Horizon summit in Cairns and there were 40 scholars and eight different tables with eight different questions. And myself and Imogen Morrison sat down at a table that was looking at how do you commercialise indigenous foods. After some deep conversations and discussing it with mentors, we realised that you can't do anything without building these relationships first. So this is where we met with Jack Wilson Smith and Nat Sommersville and collaborated to build YCC. So they're part of the Australian Rural Leadership Program and we're working on very similar projects. So that's why the collaboration came about. Since then, we've had a weekend getaway in Gubbi Gubbi country in the Sunshine Coast, where we brought together around 20 people, including youth and indigenous elders from around Australia and Torres Strait Island. And through those discussions, we came out with kind of five key values, which was around self-awareness, empowering values, relationships and connections, culture, education and creating a space for Indigenous and non-Indigenous people to connect, as well as having a space for Indigenous people to find identity and culture. Through this, the youth also created several different projects across different sectors, including agriculture, creative arts, education, digital tech, health and wellbeing, just to name a few. And through that it has been a journey of building connections and having transparent and respectful conversations. And to me it was also a journey of learning how to be a good ally as a non-Indigenous person. The interest from other people has taken off so quickly that we don't have a website or a social platform yet, but do look out for the next few months because we are hoping to get up and running so people can follow our journey.

[00:07:12] **Hilary Sims** And you're in your final year of study now Grace So what would you like to do once you finish?

[00:07:16] **Grace Moloney** So my plan for next year is to follow the harvest around. I've been lucky to make some contacts and I'm hoping to do a vintage in New Zealand and then do a harvest in Canada, just exploring some different sectors of agriculture and also just seeing how agricultural works across the world. Like I love my UK experience and I understand that there's different practices across the world, so I'd love to explore that a bit more. But my ultimate goal would be to do ag communications. I did a placement with AG Institute looking at their student compendium, which is a resource for students which compiles graduate programs, scholarships, internships, all in the one place. It's a one stop shop and it connects students to industry and industry to students. And I absolutely love that. So I was the first comms and socials interns that project. I think that has really opened my eyes to just having those connections. And I think for me as a student as well, like I would have really have valued someone having that to guide me into and that I would have something to add. I'm so great for the pathway I've done. So just really telling people that ag is so much more than farming would be my number one goal and just showing them that ag is anything for everyone, anywhere, pretty much.

[00:08:26] **Hilary Sims** And finally, what advice do you have for others currently studying that are thinking of throwing their hat in the ring for this scholarship?

[00:08:32] **Grace Moloney** Don't second guess it, just do it. I think for me it has been, like I said, once in a lifetime opportunity to open up so many pathways, so many doors. And I've met amazing people from all around Australia, like minded ag students, but not all of them are ag, smoe are environmental science. Some are marine biology. But just being able to have those connections like I'm heading off to harvest and there's two schools are there, so I'm going to hit them up and make connections. I don't think I would have ever had that opportunity if I didn't get the Horizon scholarship. But with those connections, I've also had a lot of professional development as well. I have got opportunity to speak at conferences and really work on my presentation skills and how to network and build the people that are going to really help you in industry.

[00:09:14] **Hilary Sims** Grace, best of luck and thanks for speaking with us today.

[00:09:17] **Grace Moloney** Thanks so much for taking time to chat with me.

[00:09:26] **Hilary Sims** That was Agrifutures Horizon Scholarship recipient Grace Moloney. More information on this topic can be found in the description box of this podcast or online@grdc.com.au. I'm Hilary Sims and you've been listening to a GRDC podcast.