

## RCC SUB REGION 15 NOMINEE PROFILES

### Amanda Burchmann



I live on the Darling Downs in South East Queensland with my young family. I am excited to share my passion for promoting better practices in the livestock industry and to put forward my application to promote better practices in the livestock industry starting at the basics. I have extensive experience in administration, business management, bookkeeping, and operations. I have worked across various industries, including managing a franchised pharmacy, working as a paralegal, establishing a conveyancing business unit in a legal practice, and running my own businesses, plus I have my own hands-on experience in cattle beef backgrounding and breeding. This has given me first-hand insight into the challenges and opportunities within the livestock industry.

In my spare time my mission is to spearhead sustainable growth and success among the livestock industry. I am committed to supporting producers by helping them understand the importance of following protocols and procedures. Areas such as record-keeping, ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) standards, business planning, compliance, and environmental management are close to my heart, as I believe they are pivotal for the industry's long-term health and prosperity.

**Why are you seeking a position on the RCC?** I am deeply committed to the livestock industry and have accumulated extensive experience over the years. I want to get my passion and drive out in the industry. By living on the Darling Downs, I have a strong connection to the region and its agricultural community.

With my workforce background and hands-on experience in cattle beef backgrounding and breeding, I have witnessed firsthand the challenges and opportunities within the livestock industry. My role as business manager at ABDI has further honed my skills in managing procedures, policies, and financials, which I believe are crucial for driving sustainable growth and success.

My mission is to support livestock producers, particularly in Sub-Region 15, by promoting better practices and ensuring compliance with industry standards.

**How will you represent the interests of the grass-fed cattle industry as a representative on the RCC?** As a representative on the RCC, I intend to leverage my extensive experience and deep commitment to the livestock industry to effectively represent the interests of the grass-fed cattle industry.

On the Darling Downs, I have a strong connection to the region and its agricultural community. I'm always seeking to listen and gain firsthand experience in the industry by talking to other producers and those in the supply chain, through to attending educational events, conferences and webinars.

My background in administration, business management, bookkeeping, and hands-on experience in cattle beef backgrounding and breeding has provided me with a comprehensive understanding of the challenges and opportunities within the livestock industry.

## Caitlin McConnel



I work remotely for Australian law firm Clayton Utz as a strategic legal advisor on ESG and sustainability reporting, environment and sustainable development, and climate litigation / greenwashing, and in July 2024 was recognised as one of the most influential lawyers aged under 40 who have had an extraordinary impact on the profession or society for my work in this area. I also specialise in agriculture, food and water legislation and policy, biosecurity, water, import/export, and human rights law.

In conjunction with my role at Clayton Utz, I am a sixth-generation farmer with the day-to-day management of my family property near Toogoolawah (beef, agrivoltaics, horticulture and agritourism). I am the incumbent Subregion 15 Representative on the Cattle Australia Regional Consultative Committee (RCC), a member of the Cattle Australia Sustainable Resilient Beef Systems Working Group, Non-Executive Director and Chair of the Future Farmers Network, a member of the Queensland Law Society Water and Agribusiness Law Committee, the Agribusiness Australia Queensland State Council, and the Queensland Department of Agriculture & Fisheries ESG Working Group, and was a 2024 Zanda McDonald Award Australian Finalist.

**Why are you seeking a position on the RCC?** Our statutory response to climate change in Australia has been predominately focussed on mitigating the impact of human-induced climate change on the environment. However, it was a little-known fact until recently that the issue of food security is on equal footing with climate change as being a fundamental global challenge.

Significantly, the voluntary and mandatory sustainability reporting frameworks designed to date are focussed on promoting environmental protection through increased (or prolonged) market access and social license; and are all underpinned by a goal to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in accordance with the Paris Agreement. However, sustainability reporting is now placing organisations, industry, and Government at increased risk of litigation by regulators or activists, for claims challenging the ambition of climate policy responses, misleading consumers or investors (greenwashing), or failing to consider human rights.

In circumstances where the Paris Agreement explicitly states that achieving the stabilisation of greenhouse gas emissions should occur without threatening food production, Cattle Australia has a world-first opportunity to follow UN-backed guidance and demonstrate the fundamental role agriculture has, and must play, in relation to not only environmental protection and associated sustainability reporting, but also our satisfaction of the obligations imposed by the Paris Agreement.

**How will you represent the interests of the grass-fed cattle industry as a representative on the RCC?** I will continue to use my platform as a young leader in Australian agriculture and law to ensure that grassfed cattle producers are recognised as being fundamental to satisfying our obligations under the Paris Agreement, and in mitigating climate change and food insecurity.

## Nigel Tomkins



Dr Nigel Tomkins joined Roam Agricultural Pty Ltd as senior research scientist - methane, bringing his skills and experience in ruminant nutrition, animal production systems, methane measurement and mitigation technologies.

Previously he managed the MLA grassfed beef program, a portfolio of producer levy and Commonwealth Government-funded activities across northern and southern Australia delivering applied R&D outcomes for extensive grazing systems. Nigel was a ruminant research scientist with CSIRO for 15 years in Rockhampton and Townsville where he managed the only four open circuit respiration chambers in Queensland, which contributed to a number of R&D outcomes under the National Livestock Methane Program. For leading the CSIRO team in the discovery and development of the red seaweed *Asparagopsis* as a source for bromoform for enteric methane mitigation, he was a finalist in the Australian Museum Eureka Awards (2021). His publications extend across scientific and industry journals capturing R&D for a productive and sustainable beef industry and he is an adjunct professor with the Institute for Future Farming Systems Central Queensland University, Rockhampton. He holds a Bachelor of Agricultural Science (animal production), PhD in ruminant nutrition, and postgraduate Diploma in Education from the University of Queensland. In 2022 he completed his MBA with Queensland University of Technology to balance the science with application in commercial environments.

**Why are you seeking a position on the RCC?** I continue to maintain a keen interest in the industry, particularly extensive production systems and a number of R&D activities intended to support a viable red meat supply chain. I believe with my research background and current working situation, combined with seven years with MLA as project and program manager directly working with regional beef research committees, producer groups and individuals, I bring a balanced approach to the RCC in terms of research understanding and hurdles to adoption.

**How will you represent the interests of the grass-fed cattle industry as a representative on the RCC?**

I am encouraged by the September CA media release supporting the report confirming that "cattle can't be climate scapegoats". I believe the narrative on demonising the beef industry particularly with respect to emissions needs to change significantly and I am keen to be part of that debate - albeit contributing through my research experience and understanding of what can be achieved if key actors want change.

My representation on the RCC is based on my applied science background firmly positioned with the beef sector and grassfed systems, and my experience managing one of the largest levy-funded programs of MLA and the network with producers that also included the Northern Beef Research Council and associated regional committees.

These combined skills allow me to take an objective view to change the current narrative and make a contribution to Cattle Australia in supporting the industry