



DR P. ARTHUR RICKARDS OAM

- Born:** March 20, 1942
- Wife:** Deidre M. Rickards, L.Mus A, MACE, ARCM, B.Mus.Ed. (Newcastle) B.Ed (Deakin), OAM, Music educator and performer.
- Children:** Alice M. Rickards, B.Mus, M.Mus (Royal Academy of Music, London) Violinist, Scottish BBC Symphony Orchestra, Glasgow.
Gareth A. Rickards, B.Perf, MA (U of Syd), Freelance actor, Sydney.
- Education:** B. Agr. Sc. (Hons 1), University of Queensland, 1964.
Dip. Ag. Ec, University of New England, 1967
Hon. D. Univ, University of New England, 2003

Career/Drivers: Dr Rickards is passionate about:

- The need for Universities to extend their activities to the benefit of the community at large,
- Australia becoming a significant exporter of technology products,
- Regional Australia having comparable cultural opportunities as metropolitan Australia
- Primary producers worldwide having easy access to first class information systems and technology that assists them to farm efficiently and profitably without subsidies and
- The development of an integrated international strategy of increasing food production to alleviate poverty and hunger despite the substantial increases projected to world population.

Career Map:

1968


Initial **Executive Officer** of the Farm Management Service Laboratory, University of Western Australia.

1968 – 70

Executive Officer, Farm Management Service Centre, University of New England.

1970 – July 17, 2011

Director then **Managing Director**, Agricultural Business Research Institute, University of New England. During this period Dr Rickards developed ABRI from a 3 person team to a team of 185 (including sub-contractors) that provides agribusiness information services to 80,000 farm businesses across 20 countries. In the field of performance recording and genetic evaluation of beef cattle records, the ABRI is the world market leader. Similar services are provided to other livestock industries including sheep, dairy cattle, alpacas, boer goats, deer and horses.



Dr Rickards has led major livestock improvement projects in Thailand and the Philippines which were funded by the Australian government.

ABRI's initiatives have propelled UNE into third place among all Australian Universities for commercialisation of technology in a survey recently published. This places UNE ahead of such giants as the University of Melbourne and the Australian National University.

July 2011 – Present

Business Development Consultant, Agricultural Business Research Institute.

1979 – 2010

Executive Director, Australian Registered Cattle Breeders Association Inc. This is the peak industry organisation for the cattle seedstock industry. Dr Rickards has played a powerful role in making the cattle breeding industry in Australia the envy of the world in terms of the technology available, education services and ongoing financial benchmarking.

2002 – July 2011

Director, International Livestock Resources and Information Centre Ltd (ILRIC), which came into being as a Major National Research Facility company and specialises in quality assurance for export of Australia's beef cattle for breeding. In June 2011, ILRIC was amalgamated with ABRI.

1989 – 1997

Put together the plan to establish UNE Partnerships Ltd, the University's commercial education company. Was a foundation Director and **Chairman** 1994–1997.

2012

Co-Chairman, International Beef Cattle Genetics Conference Beef Australia 2012.

2016 – Present

President, Australian Registered Cattle Breeders Association Inc.

In a 45+ year career, Dr Rickards has been heralded as one of Australia's leading agribusiness innovators. His achievements include developing financial benchmarking of farm businesses (1960's), establishing Australia's National Beef Recording Scheme (1972), playing a key role in the team that introduced electronic selling of livestock (1982), international commercialisation of the BREEDPLAN genetic evaluation system (1986), introducing advanced systems of dairy herd recording (1994), marketing of Omega 3 enriched foods (1990's), supervising development of advanced supply management systems allowing quality assured Australian beef to be marketed beneficially in overseas countries (2002), developing the infrastructure for international marketing of quality assured Australian cattle genetics (2007).

Through Dr Rickards untiring efforts, Armidale has developed a centre of excellence in livestock technology, particularly in cattle. For example, 24 breed associations have relocated their offices to Armidale to be part of the technology 'cluster'. In total around 400 of Armidale's population of 25,000 is associated with ABRI.

Dr Rickards has a proven track recording in brokering collaboration between researchers, the business sector and the community for public good projects. He has been a significant contributor to projects in Australia, New Zealand, Thailand, Philippines, USA, Canada, Brazil, Argentina, Chile, Uruguay, Hungary, United Kingdom, South Africa, Namibia, Botswana, Zimbabwe and China.

Awards/Recognition:

1963	A.F. Bell Memorial Medal , presented by Australian Institute of Agricultural Science, for best Undergraduate Thesis, Agricultural Science, University of Queensland.
1986	Howard Yelland Award , from Beef Improvement Association of Australia, for outstanding services to beef cattle industry (first recipient).
1994	Honorary Member , National Pedigree Livestock Council, USA.
1995	Chevalier Award , from Angus Australia for outstanding services to Australian Agriculture (awarded only twice in 3 decades).
1996	Top Ten , Rural Press Group ranked Dr Rickards in top ten achievers in Australian Agriculture. The citation read 'He is one of modern Agriculture's great achievers'.
1996	Medal of the Order of Australia , for outstanding contributions to Australia's livestock industries.
1996	Armidale Development Corporation Award , gold medal for making the most significant economic contribution to the New England Region.
2003	R.W. Vincent Award , presented by the Australian Registered Cattle Breeders Association, for outstanding services to the cattle breeding industry over a sustained period of time.
2003	Honorary Doctorate , University of New England, for outstanding achievements nationally and internationally in the research, development and commercialisation of agribusiness information systems.
2003	Excellence in Innovation Award , an award of the Commonwealth Department of Education, Science and Training for being part of the team that brought gene markers in cattle into the market place, presented by the Prime Minister of Australia.
2010	Golden Book Award , presented by the World Simmental Fleckvieh Federation for meritorious service to the Simmental breed internationally.
2011	Distinguished Graduate Fellow , University of New England.
2013	Red Meat Achiever of the Year , presented by Rural Press Group.

Community Service:



Dr Arthur Rickards OAM & Mrs Deidre Rickards OAM with Avan Yu, winner of the 2012 Sydney International Piano Competition.

2003 – 2016

Dr Rickards formed a working group to develop a charter for the New England Conservatorium of Music (NECOM). This was funded by the NSW Government in 2004. Dr Rickards became **Chairman**. NECOM now provides opportunities for private music lessons and performance to over 5,500 children (including indigenous communities and the disadvantaged) in the New England and adjoining regions.

A review of Regional Conservatoriums released by the NSW Government in 2009 praised the exemplary nature of the business model and operations established by NECOM.



Publications/Conferences:

Dr Rickards has authored many publications and in recent years he has addressed many international gatherings. For example, in recent years, international presentations/representations included:

May 2012	With Don Nicol co-chaired the International Beef Cattle Genetics Conference at Beef 2012 Rockhampton and co-presented the paper “What Australia offers as a Source of World Genetics and Genetic Technologies”.
June 2012	“Australian Report”, ICAR 2012 Conference, Cork Ireland. “BREEDPLAN Information for Profitable Beef Production” ICAR 2012 Conference, Cork Ireland. “Organisational Models for Beef Recording and Genetic Evaluation in Australasia, the Americas and Southern Africa”, co-authored with Dr R. Banks, ICAR 2012 Conference, Cork.
November 2012	“ARCBA’s Financial Benchmarking – an evaluation of the trends since 1992 and the 2010 Analysis”, LRF Workshop for Breed Societies, Irene, South Africa. “The Future of Breed Societies”, LRF Workshop for Breed Societies, Irene, South Africa. “An Australian Perspective on the Pitfalls of Investing in Genomics for Australian Beef Herds”, Livestock Genomics Workshop, Pretoria, South Africa.

Sporting Achievements:

1957	Queensland State champion and record holder 1 mile footrace, Under 16.
1959	National rifle shooting champion, Air Training Cadets.
1956 & 2000	One of just 30 Australians to carry the Olympic Torch in both Olympic Games held in Australia.

