

WOMEN ARE CHANGING THE FACE OF AQUACULTURE IN THE MIA

AUSTRALIAN agriculture has traditionally been dependent on women's off-farm work, much of which went unrecognised despite a significant contribution to the farm economy.

However, the latest research shows women make up close to 30 per cent of the workforce in the Australian agricultural industry – a positive sign the sector is evolving to embrace more female participation than ever before.

Better still, women are increasingly involved in key decision-making roles and their stories are being told through important initiatives such as The Invisible Farmer Project, the largest ever study of Australian women on the land.

While the government has been called on to initiate structural changes to prioritise women's involvement at all levels, the Riverina's Aquna Sustainable Murray Cod has been proactively providing opportunities for women to join their team.

"We're proud our dedicated team represents an almost even gender balance of talented men and women, who are committed to producing premium cod for domestic and export markets," Aquna managing director Mat Ryan said.

Three women contributing to the ongoing success of the Murray cod venture are Lizzie Moore, Vicki Gough and Rachael Allen.

Operations manager Lizzie joined the team in July 2018 and her attention to detail and problem-solving ability has been making a lasting impression.



AQUNA'S team of women (from left) Vicky Gough, Rachael Allen and Lizzie Moore.

The animal science graduate is enjoying working outdoors and on the water in her leadership role.

Vicki has been at Aquna since October 2018, deciding on a career change and bringing organisational skills from the retail sector into her role as team leader.

Responsible for feeding the fish and keeping the workplace tidy, Vicki loves the

variety of the role where she is learning how to conduct health checks on the fish, under the microscope.

Rachael studied animal science at university and has transitioned from the intensive livestock industry to aquaculture.

As an operations manager, the role provides the opportunity to learn something new every day in a team environment.

Mr Ryan said the almost even gender split across the business wasn't a specific strategy, but had evolved organically.

"Everyone in the business brings a particular skill set that seems to compliment what others have to offer," he said. "The girls have a real nurturing nature with the fish and have a particular attention to detail."



SUSSAN LEY MP

Federal Member for Farrer

"Right now the future of food production in the southern Murray Darling Basin is at risk.

Governments have invested hundreds of millions of dollars in irrigation, yet farmers still don't have enough water to run their irrigation channels, grow their crops and feed the nation.

The Basin Plan needs to be more flexible, to balance water for farmers and water for the environment.

Please support my push for a full independent review of the rules around water allocations and entitlements."

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