

# The Australian Women's Register

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Entry type: Person  
Entry ID: PR00634

## Rose, Maria

(1959 - )

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**Born** 22 April, 1959, Williamstown Victoria Australia

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**Occupation** Public servant, Women's rights activist

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### Summary

In her role as an agricultural scientist with the Department of Primary Industries Victoria, Maria Rose was one of the femocrats whose work was vital in both empowering rural women, and supporting initiatives of the Women in Agriculture Movement, particularly the First International Women in Agriculture Conference, for which she was Program Co-ordinator.

### Details

The daughter of German and Ukrainian migrant parents, Maria Rose completed a degree in Agricultural Science in 1981, before joining what is now the Department of Primary Industries Victoria's Maffra office (in eastern Victoria), where she faced challenges because of her urban background and gender. In 1989, Maria joined the Office of Rural Affairs (ORA) in the Department, seeing the move as an opportunity to empower rural communities.

Women farmers were often hesitant to ask basic technical questions in front of male counterparts. When a colleague of Maria's in the Warragul district, Mick Maguire, began to run women-only courses, Maria extended them to more isolated areas, where she perceived an even greater need. In 1991 she brought the two groups of women together, in the first use of the term 'Women on Farms Gathering' which was later used for the annual gatherings of farm women across Victoria and then Australia.

In 1992 she was seconded to the Committee organising the First International Women in Agriculture Conference as program co-ordinator. With assistant Catherine Noy she organised 130 presenters, worked at the conference itself, authored a post-conference report for the Department of Agriculture, which made specific recommendations for future engagement with farm women, and was an editor of the proceedings. She attended the second and third conferences, in Washington and Madrid, as a presenter, and participant, respectively.

Maria completed a Masters of Applied Science at the University of Western Sydney in 1993 and is completing a PhD on exploring social processes in farmer education methods focusing on water use efficiency. Her current role with the Department is with the Dairy Extension Centre as a practice change agent in irrigation water reform.

## Published resources

### Conference Proceedings

Women in Agriculture: Farming for Our Future, Women in Agriculture 1994 International Conference Committee Inc., 1995

### Resource

Farmers Best Teachers, Raston, Kate, 2003,  
<http://www.abc.net.au/rural/vic/stories/s893053.htm>

Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

### Report

Project Report: International Women in Agriculture Conference, Rose, Maria, 1994

### Site Exhibition

Brilliant Ideas and Huge Visions: ABC Radio Australian Rural Women of the Year - 1994-1997, Australian Women's Archives Project, 2011,  
<http://www.womenaustralia.info/exhib/rwya/rwya-home.html>

## Archival resources

### National Library of Australia, Manuscript Collection

[Papers of Mary Salce, 1976-2007 \[manuscript\]](#)

### Author Details

Janet Butler

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