

PO Box 1385, Griffith NSW 2680  
T 02 6964 6600 F 02 6964 1605 enquiries@nuffield.com.au www.nuffield.com.au  
A.B.N. 33 092 327 396

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Embargoed to midday Friday 5 October AEST

5 October 2007

## Nuffield scholarship for Port Hedland export cattle producer

Export cattle producer Annabelle Coppin from Port Hedland, Western Australia, will tonight be awarded Australia's leading farming scholarship, a Nuffield Australia Farming Scholarship.

Ms Coppin is one of only 16 Australians to receive a 2007 Nuffield Scholarship. She will be presented with her award tonight at the Innovative Farming Australia awards dinner, part of the Nuffield Australia Spring Tour being held in Fremantle, WA.

Nuffield Farming Scholarships, each worth \$25,000, give young Australian farmers the opportunity to travel internationally and explore agricultural issues and opportunities in a global context. There are about 1300 Nuffield scholars worldwide.

Ms Coppin will use her scholarship, jointly sponsored by Cooperative Bulk Handling and CSBP Limited, to investigate the Australian live export cattle trade and to develop a sound understanding of the marketing chain beyond the farm-gate.

She will study major export chain trends and future directions, including consumer preferences underpinning demand for beef in destination countries and infrastructure issues. She will also research major competitors, exploring how the Australian live trade competes with cheap 'wet market' imports from India and South America, and will examine the role of governments, representative bodies and major shipping lines.

Ms Coppin is a station overseer and head stockperson at East Pilbara Cattle Company, a family business that runs 5,500 Droughtmaster cross-breeders on a 500,000 hectare pastoral lease in Western Australia's north-west. Sale animals are finished on separate properties further south and 90 per cent are sold to South East Asian and Middle Eastern markets.

"We rely heavily on the live trade market, but I believe we need to develop a stronger understanding of the entire supply chain, and its impact on final product quality, in order to predict demand, improve processes and maintain competitive advantage," Ms Coppin says. "As feedback is limited in the live export trade, international research will advise any changes necessary to drive a stronger, more responsive industry.

"As producers we must also boost our image and educate politicians, animal welfare groups and the public about the value of the live export trade to ensure its sustainability."

Nuffield Australia CEO Mr Jim Geltch says many Nuffield Scholars go on to become active leaders in agriculture and the community. "For many, the scholarship experience changes their lives by opening their eyes to the wider world and giving them the confidence to pursue their goals," Mr Geltch says.

The 16 2007 Australian Nuffield Scholars will leave Australia in either February or June 2008 for a compulsory Global Focus Program. This will involve travel to China, North America, South America and Europe investigating agricultural marketing and trade issues, environmental issues and experiencing the different social and cultural aspects of each region.

Following the initial six-week program, the scholars will go their individual ways to pursue specific study programs in the country or countries of their choice. Ms Coppin hopes to travel to the Middle East, Indonesia and South America.

**Further information:**  
Jim Geltch  
CEO, Nuffield Australia  
T +61 (0)3 5480 0755

**More information: Annabelle Coppin, 08 9176 4954,  
0428 956 692, tamungunyahfarm@bigpond.com**