

PO Box 586 Moama 2731
T +61 (0)3 5480 0755 F +61 (0)3 5480 0233
E enquiries@nuffield.com.au W www.nuffield.com.au
A.B.N. 33 092 327 396

2009 SCHOLARSHIP SUPPORTERS

Australian Wool Innovation	Impact Fertilisers
Fisheries Research and Development Corporation	Landmark
Estates of the late RC and EC Cappur Webb	Macquarie Agricultural Services
Geoffrey Gardiner Dairy Foundation	Meat & Livestock Australia
Grain Growers Association	Rabobank
Grains Research and Development Corporation	Rural Finance Corporation
Kondinin Group	Sidney Myer Fund

Friday 10 October 2008

EMBARGOED UNTIL 10AM, FRIDAY 10 OCTOBER 2008

Nuffield scholarship for Toongabbie grain grower

Grain grower Benjamin Morris, from Toongabbie, Victoria, will tonight be awarded Australia's leading farming scholarship, a Nuffield Australia Farming Scholarship.

Mr Morris is one of only 16 Australians to receive a 2009 Nuffield Scholarship. He will be presented with his award tonight at the Innovation in Australian Farming awards dinner in Hobart, part of the six-day Nuffield Australia Spring Tour being held in Tasmania.

Nuffield Farming Scholarships, each worth \$26,000, 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.

Mr Morris will use his scholarship, sponsored by Rural Finance Corporation, to investigate ways to improve soils and produce higher yielding crops.

He plans to study the qualities of soils producing higher yielding crops and identify techniques Australian farmers can use to emulate these qualities.

Mr Morris manages farming operations across 540 hectares in Gippsland, including his own property, some leased and some share-farmed land, producing canola, winter cereals and legumes. Crops are grown using direct-drilled and controlled-traffic techniques. He also has a Border Leicester-Merino cross flock producing export-quality prime lambs.

"It's easy to blame the season for a poor crop or poor pasture growth," he says. "But every year there is a crop that gives an average yield when all the crops around it have failed, and it seems to me that soil health is the difference.

"I want to understand soils where wheat yields of 10 tonnes/hectare are common, to see how these soils have been improved and what farming methods are used. Many farmers are putting a lot of effort into improving their soils, but there might be better ways to do it if we can get a few chemical and biological fundamentals right."

Nuffield Australia CEO Mr Jim Geltch says many Nuffield Scholars go on to become active leaders in agriculture and the community, and sharing their research findings is an important part of the scholarship program.

"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 2009 Australian Nuffield Scholars will leave Australia in either February or June 2009 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. Mr Morris hopes to travel to Europe, the United Kingdom and the US on his individual tour.

More information:

Ben Morris, T 03 5148 9077, M 0421 987 486 E oakbank@wideband.net.au
Nuffield CEO Jim Geltch T 03 5480 0755 M 0412 696 076, E jimgeltch@nuffield.com.au

A high-resolution photograph of Mr Morris can be downloaded from the link www.coretext.com.au/communications_images.php