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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 Walebing producer

Walebing grain grower and wool producer Brendon Tierney, from Western Australia, will tonight be awarded Australia's leading farming scholarship, a Nuffield Australia Farming Scholarship.

Mr Tierney 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 Tierney's scholarship is sponsored by the Kondinin Group, a farmer-owned and directed organisation, and Australia's leading provider of independent agricultural information. He will investigate the way capital is employed within farm businesses and whether there are more efficient ways to use this capital, including land and equipment.

He will study how farm businesses are structured in other countries and how those structures have evolved, including the separation of land ownership and farm management and development of equipment cooperatives.

Mr Tierney operates an 1800 hectare mixed farming enterprise in partnership with his father and uncle near Moora, north-east of Perth. Typically a third of the property is cropped to wheat each year, and they run a self-replacing fine-wool Merino flock on improved pastures.

"In the Western Australian medium rainfall zone more than 70 per cent of the value of a farm business can be tied up in the land itself," he says. "While rising property prices are rewarding landholders, it has also made future expansion of farm businesses more difficult.

"If we can identify ways to use the capital in farm businesses more efficiently then the returns generated on the capital from farming would improve, and the long term viability of farm businesses would be more certain."

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 Tierney hopes to travel to the United Kingdom, the US and Canada on his individual tour.

More information:

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