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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 Parkes grain grower

Grain grower Bruce Watson from Parkes, NSW, will tonight be awarded Australia's leading farming scholarship, a Nuffield Australia Farming Scholarship.

Mr Watson is one of only 16 Australians to receive a 2009 Nuffield Scholarship. He will be presented with his award tonight at the Innovative Farming Australia 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 Watson will use his scholarship, sponsored by Macquarie Agricultural Services, to investigate factors influencing grain prices and long-term price trends.

He will also study risk management options for growers to better manage price volatility.

Mr Watson is a director of his family farm business, at Parkes, cropping 3500 hectares of winter cereals, oilseeds and pulses using no-till and controlled-traffic farming techniques. He is responsible for the finance, marketing, risk management and agronomy aspects of the business.

"I want to gain a greater understanding of the reasons behind the recent spikes in global grain prices to determine whether this is a one-off event, or a long-term trend, as it has been for hard commodities," he says.

"I also hope to compare the competitive advantage of the Australian grain growing industry with those of other countries, including the different production and marketing systems and their ability to respond quickly to changing global demand.

"Given the recent volatility in both production and grain prices in Australia, I would also like to identify low-risk hedging alternatives that may be being used overseas in different commodities."

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 Watson hopes to travel to Europe, the US, Canada, Brazil, Argentina, China and India.

More information:

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