

NUFFIELD AUSTRALIA NATIONAL CONFERENCE 2018

‘PRODUCE CHANGE’

18–20 SEPTEMBER 2018
CROWN METROPOL, MELBOURNE

2019 SCHOLAR
PRESENTATIONS
AND AWARDS DINNER

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NUFFIELD'S FLAGSHIP EVENT FOR SCHOLARS, INVESTORS AND THE BROADER INDUSTRY

www.nuffield.com.au



WE THANK OUR 2019 SCHOLARSHIP INVESTORS:





Awards Dinner Program

TUESDAY 18 SEPTEMBER 2018

TIME	ACTIVITY	SPEAKER
6.00pm	Pre-dinner drinks	
6.45pm	Seating of guests	Adam Jenkins, 2011 Nuffield Scholar and Master of Ceremonies
7.00pm	Welcome	Andrew Fowler, 2000 Scholar and Nuffield Australia Chairman
7.15pm	Presentations to Nuffield Scholars	Andrew Fowler, 2000 Scholar and Nuffield Australia Chairman
7.20pm	Entrée served	
7.40pm	George Wilson Oration	To be delivered by Barry Irvin AM, Executive Chairman, Bega Cheese Limited
8.05pm	Main course served	
8.30pm	Presentation of 2019 Scholarships	Adam Jenkins, 2011 Nuffield Scholar and Master of Ceremonies
9.15pm	Dessert served	
9.30pm	Presentation of 2019 Scholarships	Adam Jenkins, 2011 Nuffield Scholar and Master of Ceremonies
10.15pm	Closing remarks	Andrew Fowler, 2000 Scholar and Nuffield Australia Chairman
10.30pm	Guests depart the venue	

George Wilson A NUFFIELD ACHIEVER

George Wilson was the Australian Nuffield Farming Scholars Association founding chairman when the organisation was formed in 1976. He served in the role for 16 years, creating a lasting legacy for agriculture in Australia.

After serving in the A.I.F. from 1942 to 1945, Mr Wilson returned home to the family property in Berwick, Victoria. In 1951 he was awarded a Nuffield Scholarship to study beef and general farming and, with fellow Nuffield recipient Pat Meredith, he travelled by boat to England in 1952. On arriving in England, the two Australian Scholars were given bicycles so they could travel the countryside on their study tour. Australia continued to send two Scholars per year, rotating around the six states, for the next 20-plus years, funded by the United Kingdom by the Nuffield Foundation.

When Robert Beggs returned from his scholarship in 1970, he spoke with Mr Wilson and Carl Foster about forming some sort of Nuffield organisation in Australia to look after visiting Scholars from other countries.

The Australian Nuffield Farming Scholars Association was subsequently formed, with Australian Scholars each contributing \$150 to set it up. This forward thinking meant that in 1976, when representatives from the UK Nuffield Foundation came out to Australia to inform the Australian Nuffield alumni there would be no further recurrent funding from the foundation to support the scholarship, Australia was well placed to continue the program.

The foundation generously gifted £7,000 to the Australian Nuffield Farming Scholars Association as a start-up fund for a locally administered organisation. From this Mr Wilson started the Nuffield Australian Fund, and during his time as chair there were a number of major benchmarks including:

- The first Nuffield International Conference in Victoria in 1980
- The fostering of the talents of another Nuffield lion, Harry Perkins, AO.

As with most Nuffield Scholars, Mr Wilson recognised that Nuffield changed his life and he wanted other Australian farmers to share his experience. He had terrific business and agricultural connections and used them for the everlasting benefit of Nuffield. It included those contacts Mr Wilson made during his own scholarship, such as Peter Jones and Emrys Jones. Peter became the head of the British equivalent of the Department of Primary Industry and Emrys [later Sir Emrys] headed the highly regarded Welsh Plant Breeding University at Aberystwyth. Mr Wilson had a loyal group of essentially Victorian Nuffield Scholars, who helped him “run the show”.

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His wife, Faye Wilson, supported Mr Wilson and Nuffield all the way, helping Scholars and their partners in day-to-day problems as well as supporting Mr Wilson in his endeavours on behalf of Nuffield, even while he ducked off to the UK, twice at his own expense, chasing his dream of the Australian Nuffield Farming Scholars Association.

Mr Wilson loved a good time — in 1988 when NSW organised the annual meeting of the association, they asked Mr Wilson what he wanted to see. He answered “I want to see good agriculture and I want a drink in our hands at 5.30”.

Mr Wilson had many achievements in his lifetime:

- Chairman of the Victorian Inland Meat Authority
- President of Victorian Royal Agricultural Society
- Council Member of Monash University
- Member of the Victorian Economic Development Corporation
- Honoured as a Commander of St Michael and St George.

Ian Macintosh took over the Nuffield chairman’s role from Mr Wilson for six years and was followed by Harry Perkins — who had been encouraged into the job by Mr Wilson and Ron Baillieu. Mr Perkins realised that Nuffield needed to change to be relevant to the times and he initiated the Miller & Inall External Review of Nuffield. This review became the catalyst for Nuffield as we know it today, and although Mr Wilson was not initially comfortable with the direction the review suggested, he had made peace with the changes before his death in 2003 at the age of 85.

In the past 15 years there has been a considerable expansion of the Nuffield program in Australia, and this could not have happened without the foundations laid by Mr Wilson. He led the way in serving this association at no cost to the group; an ethic that many Nuffield Scholars have followed.

The Board of (the now) Nuffield Australia have implemented the perpetual George Wilson Oration to mark Mr Wilson’s contribution to all our lives.

The tenth George Wilson Oration will be delivered by Mr Barry Irvin AM.



GUEST SPEAKER

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Barry Irvin AM

EXECUTIVE CHAIRMAN – BEGA CHEESE
CHAIRMAN – GIANT STEPS

Barry Irvin is Executive Chairman of Bega Cheese. After a period of time in the banking industry Barry returned to his dairy farming roots in the Bega Valley in the early 1990's, and immediately became involved with the Bega Co-operative Society where he became Chairman in the year 2000.

The Bega Cheese dairy business has domestic and international sales exceeding \$1.2 billion, produces approximately 230,000 tonnes of cheese, milk powders, infant formula and nutritional products, and exports to over 40 countries around the world, employing approximately 2,000 people.

Since 2002, Barry has chaired the charity Giant Steps, who provide services to children and young adults with autism spectrum disorder.

Barry has received the honour of being made a member of the Order of Australia (AM) for his services to the dairy industry and children with disabilities, he was also named NAB Monash University Agribusiness Leader of the Year and Rabobank Agribusiness Leader of the Year.



2019 SCHOLARS

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Renée Anderson QUEENSLAND



PHONE: 0448 125 156 **EMAIL:** renee.nuffield@gmail.com

Renée Anderson, an irrigation farmer from Emerald, Queensland, receives a Nuffield Scholarship with support from **Cotton Australia** and the **Cotton Research and Development Corporation (CRDC)**.

Renée's research will focus on highlighting better management practices that not only improve the social, environmental and economic sustainability of agriculture, but also clearly communicate positive farming practices to consumers and drive broader community support for the industry.

Renée grows mixed irrigated crops, including cotton, chickpeas and popcorn, across her 455 hectare operation. She also works one day a week as the Central Highlands Regional Manager for Cotton Australia.

Having worked in agronomy for 20 years, Renée has observed many barriers to effective adoption of better environmental management practices and consumer communications, and is motivated to research strategies to overcome these barriers.

"Urban and rural communities alike have a keen focus on environmental, welfare and sustainability issues, and these issues can directly impact farm management and consumer purchasing decisions," Renée said.

"Building the capability of our industry to demonstrate the benefits of modern agriculture, and drawing connections between practices, communication and social licence for the industry is critical."

Renée will meet with experts in agricultural research and communications throughout Europe, the United States and Canada on her study tour.



COTTON
AUSTRALIA



CRDC

SUPPORTER INFORMATION:

Cotton Australia is the peak body for Australia's cotton growing industry, supporting over 1500 cotton farming families in NSW, Queensland and now into Victoria.

WEBSITE: cottonaustralia.com.au **FACEBOOK:** @CottonAustralia **TWITTER:** @CottonAustralia

The Cotton Research & Development Corporation (CRDC) invests in and manages research, development and extension projects for the Australian cotton industry.

WEBSITE: www.crdc.com.au **TWITTER:** @CottonResearch

Anthony Close VICTORIA



PHONE: 0437 085 217 **EMAIL:** anthony@kurrawirra.com.au

Anthony Close, a mixed livestock producer from Culla, Victoria, receives a Nuffield Scholarship with support from **Australian Wool Innovation (AWI)** to research ways that the Merino can once again become a prominent feature of the Australian farming landscape.

Anthony works on his family farm, running 7,000 self-replacing Merino ewes to produce wool, prime lambs and breeding rams. Anthony's family also run a large cattle operation, comprising a commercial Red Angus herd and Red Angus and Senepol stud cattle.

Acknowledging the shrinking size of Australia's sheep flock throughout the past 20 years, Anthony said his focus will be researching the range of factors that have caused this reduction, comparing the industry with those overseas to gain a better understanding of what makes progressive industries grow and prosper.

"In 1992 the national sheep flock was 150 million head, and produced 4.75 million bales of wool. In 2018, the flock is 70 million head, and will produce two million bales," Anthony said.

"Cropping, on the other hand, has grown from 12 million hectares planted to 19 million hectares planted.

"Given the impact that this reduction in flock numbers has on both sheep meat and wool production, it's important to understand how we can reverse this downward trend in order to secure the sustainability and relevance of the industry."

Anthony's research will take him to New Zealand, South Africa, Uruguay, the United Kingdom and the United States as he investigates ways that the Merino can once again become a prominent feature of the Australian farming landscape.



SUPPORTER INFORMATION:

Australian Wool Innovation Limited (AWI), the owner of The Woolmark Company, is a not-for-profit company that invests in research, development and marketing for the Australian wool industry.

WEBSITE: www.wool.com **FACEBOOK:** [@TheWoolmarkCompany](https://www.facebook.com/TheWoolmarkCompany) **TWITTER:** [@woolinnovation](https://twitter.com/woolinnovation)



Rebecca Comiskey QUEENSLAND



PHONE: 0419 776 249 **EMAIL:** beccomiskey@gmail.com

Rebecca Comiskey, a beef producer from Central Queensland, receives a Nuffield Scholarship with support from **The Yulgilbar Foundation**.

Rebecca will be using her scholarship to research modern technologies that can be incorporated into beef production systems to increase the rate of genetic gain and enhance key profit drivers such as fertility, market compliance and production efficiencies.

Her experience as co-operator of Melton Grazing, an 8,500 hectare cattle business near Alpha, has seen Rebecca focus on rigorous breeder management, marketing and improving the eating quality of progeny sold with several niche market accreditations including MSA, Grasslands, Organics and European Union.

While her focus has been running a profitable business, Rebecca also holds a philosophy of working with nature and using cattle to improve soil and water health, and is keen to discover emerging methods for improving the productivity and sustainability of beef businesses.

"If we can't measure it, we can't manage it, and I am excited by the benefits open to producers through technologies like genomics, that can provide information on hard to measure traits and enable more targeted seedstock selection," Rebecca said.

"I'm looking forward to exploring beef production methods around the world and learning more about the opportunities that better data and modern technologies can bring to our industry."

Researching businesses that are experiencing rapid genetic progress to meet breeding objectives, Rebecca will travel to Ireland, South America, the United States and South Africa.



The Yulgilbar Foundation

SUPPORTER INFORMATION:

The Yulgilbar Foundation is a family run Private Ancillary Fund and was established in 2001 by Baillieu and Sarah Myer. The Yulgilbar Foundation's area of focus is rural, regional and remote Australia and more specifically, on education, environment, capacity building and Alzheimer's research. The family have had a long standing involvement in the rural industry, particularly in Northern NSW and are passionate to see rural and regional Australia prosper.

WEBSITE: www.yulgilbar.com.au

2019 SCHOLARS

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Alistair Corr QUEENSLAND



PHONE: 0429 962 150 **EMAIL:** wirranda1@bigpond.com

Alistair Corr, a cattle producer from Moura, Queensland, receives a Nuffield Scholarship through the Northern Pastoral Scholarship, supported collectively by **Australian Agricultural Company, Consolidated Pastoral Company, Elders, North Australian Pastoral Company** and **S. Kidman & Co.**

A desire to investigate the correlation between better animal wellbeing and objective, measurable production traits will see Alistair use his Nuffield Scholarship to research the effect that a range of wellbeing factors before, during and after transport can have on the production value of cattle.

Alistair manages a 12,100 hectare corporate aggregation turning off around 1,200 steers and 1,000 heifers each year, as well as running his private herd of around 250 cattle. As both the owner of a small scale trading operation and manager of a large intensive grazing, backgrounding and breeding business, Alistair sees huge potential for productivity and wellbeing outcomes to improve simultaneously.

"The measures that producers take to look after their animals are rarely discussed and there have been few attempts to quantify the benefits of better welfare practices," Alistair said.

"By researching international best practice and objectively quantifying the benefits of animal wellbeing in terms of weight, fertility, or productivity, we can have a more structured and robust discussion around how to improve animal wellbeing outcomes and make a clear case for the benefits of doing so."

Seeking to learn more about both subjective and objective animal wellbeing assessments, Alistair will travel throughout Western Europe, where livestock producers operate in a well-developed animal wellbeing framework, and then across North America, Canada and South America where he will explore the data driven feedlot industries.



SUPPORTER INFORMATION:

The Northern Pastoral Scholarship was launched in 2018 by Australian Agricultural Company, Consolidated Pastoral Company, Elders, North Australian Pastoral Company and S. Kidman & Co.

Recognising the need to foster the Northern Australian pastoral sector, these five iconic agricultural companies joined forces to create the scholarship with the aim of enabling recipients to becoming leaders in their field.



Thomas Green SOUTH AUSTRALIA



PHONE: 0447 160 238 **EMAIL:** operations@iranda.com.au

Thomas Green of Tintinara, South Australia, receives a Nuffield Scholarship with support from **Rabobank**.

Thomas will research ways to build consumer confidence in intensive agricultural systems through implementing best practice in animal welfare. His research will focus on two key areas — existing Australian feedlot animal welfare practices and an investigation of how industry improvements can be better communicated to stakeholders.

As the General Manager of Thomas Foods International's Iranda Beef and Southern Cross Rural operations, Thomas oversees the operation of a 17,500 head feedlot and 15,000 hectare farming and backgrounding property running 1,400 Angus cows.

"Animal welfare is very topical across all animal production industries, and I think it's important that we look outside the industry to find examples of businesses that have improved practices and then gone on to successfully enhance consumer understanding to ensure acceptability and sustainability of their industry," Thomas said.

"Comparing what we do in Australia with other intensive industries globally will reveal practices that can help our industry become more sustainable and profitable for all stakeholders."

Thomas will travel throughout North America and Europe as he seeks to better understand how intensive agriculture is conducted on a large scale in the United States and by world leaders in animal welfare practices in Austria, Switzerland, Germany and the Netherlands.



Rabobank

SUPPORTER INFORMATION:

Rabobank Australia is a part of the international Rabobank Group, the world's leading specialist in food and agribusiness banking. Rabobank has nearly 120 years' experience providing customised banking and finance solutions to businesses involved in all aspects of food and agribusiness.

Rabobank operates in 40 countries, servicing the needs of approximately 8.7 million clients worldwide through a network of more than 1,000 offices and branches. Rabobank Australia is one of the leading rural lenders and is a significant provider of business and corporate banking and financial services to the Australian food and agribusiness sector. Rabobank has 94 branches throughout Australia and New Zealand in all major agricultural regions.

WEBSITE: www.rabobank.com.au **TWITTER:** @RabobankAU

Christina Kelman NEW SOUTH WALES



PHONE: 0424 948 813 **EMAIL:** christina.kelman@gmail.com

Organic horticulture producer from Wallacia, west of Sydney in NSW, **Christina Kelman** receives a Nuffield Scholarship supported by **Hort Innovation's Vegetable Levy**.

Motivated by the need to produce more with less, Christina will research ways the horticulture industry can increase outputs while reducing inputs and farming sustainably. She'll also be investigating the role that experimentation and innovation can play in achieving this in the organic horticulture industry.

Working and managing her family's business, Rita's Farm, Christina grows certified organic leafy greens, legumes, citrus, root vegetables and fruit-bearing crops including tomato, zucchini, capsicum and eggplant over 25 hectares.

As a vertically integrated business, Rita's Farm participates in wholesaling, farmers markets, online delivery and supermarket supply, requiring Christina to grow large amounts of produce across up to 100 lines at any one time.

"Running an organic farm means we constantly have to be in touch with the requirements of our consumers, scale our market garden production and reduce our inputs and costs wherever possible," Christina said.

"I'm looking forward to researching innovative ways that producers can do more with less, and how we can grow sustainable urban food production into the powerhouse it can be for the Sydney market and beyond."

Christina will use her Nuffield Scholarship to travel throughout Europe, the Netherlands, India and Canada as she researches innovative and productive sustainable food systems.

**Hort
Innovation**

SUPPORTER INFORMATION:

Hort Innovation is a not-for-profit, grower-owned Research and Development Corporation for Australia's \$9 billion horticulture industry. Hort Innovation invests more than \$100 million in research, development and marketing programs annually.

WEBSITE: horticulture.com.au **FACEBOOK:** @hortinnovation **TWITTER:** @Hort_Au



Kerri-Ann Lamb QUEENSLAND



**Hort
Innovation**

PHONE: 0448 647 100 **EMAIL:** kerriann@wickhams.net

Kerri-Ann Lamb from Killarney, Queensland, receives a Nuffield Scholarship with support from **Hort Innovation**.

Kerri-Ann will research emerging trends, risks and opportunities in the fresh cut potato, sweet potato, onion and pumpkin market, to determine what the industry should be doing now to prepare itself for the future.

As an owner and manager of Wickham Farms, Kerri-Ann grows, packs and value-adds to hard vegetables that are delivered to supermarkets, wholesalers, restaurants and food manufacturers throughout Australia.

Founded in the 1950s, Wickham Farms is now one of the largest potato growers and processors in Queensland, employing over 85 people and supplying to Coles Supermarkets as well as significant food businesses like Lite n' Easy, Sizzlers, Red Rooster and Oporto.

"As part of a third generation farming family, I have seen many changes in the potato industry which have been driven by wholesale customers, major growth in the fresh cut industry and a big focus on reducing food waste," she said.

"I look forward to exploring emerging trends and opportunities for vegetable production around the world, and how these can lead to better value adding and waste management practices at home."

Researching ways to improve the sustainability and productivity of the horticulture industry, Kerri-Ann will visit the large scale potato processing nations of the Netherlands and the United Kingdom, as well as operations across other parts of Europe.

SUPPORTER INFORMATION:

Hort Innovation is a not-for-profit, grower-owned Research and Development Corporation for Australia's \$9 billion horticulture industry. Hort Innovation invests more than \$100 million in research, development and marketing programs annually.

WEBSITE: horticulture.com.au **FACEBOOK:** [@hortinnovation](https://www.facebook.com/hortinnovation) **TWITTER:** [@Hort_Au](https://twitter.com/Hort_Au)

Richard Leask SOUTH AUSTRALIA



Wine Australia

PHONE: 0419 942 011 **EMAIL:** richard@leaskagri.com.au

Richard Leask from McLaren Vale, South Australia, receives a Nuffield Scholarship with support from **Wine Australia**.

Richard will research best practice regenerative farming systems across the wine sector in order to understand how to successfully transition from more chemically intensive models. He will explore the key drivers that initiated transitions, the role and availability of education and training and any associated impacts on farm management and resourcing requirements.

Richard owns and operates a 75 hectare family vineyard in McLaren Vale. He also provides viticultural management services to a number of premium wine brands, and is co-owner of Hither and Yon, a dynamic wine label that produces around 10,000 cases per year.

“Increasingly, we are seeing a shift towards more sustainable and less chemically-reliant systems in wine production in Australia and internationally,” Richard said.

“Sustainable practices benefit the wine sector in many ways, including reduced chemical use and providing a deeper understanding of vineyards, plants and soils and an exciting, authentic story to take to Australian and international markets. In these times of change, it’s important that we find and implement the best systems and approaches to transition that we can.”

Richard will visit leading wineries and agricultural businesses around Australia and New Zealand, as well as the United States and France as he conducts his research.

SUPPORTER INFORMATION:

Wine Australia supports a competitive Australian wine sector by investing in research, development and extension (RD&E), encouraging growth in domestic and international markets, protecting the reputation of Australian wine and administering the Export and Regional Wine Support Package.

WEBSITE: www.wineaustralia.com

FACEBOOK: @WineAustralia

TWITTER: @Wine_Australia



Ellen Litchfield SOUTH AUSTRALIA



PHONE: 0438 757 792 **EMAIL:** litchfielde10@gmail.com

Ellen Litchfield from Marree, South Australia, receives a Nuffield Scholarship supported by **Westpac Agribusiness**. Through her research, Ellen will investigate the impacts of climate change on red meat production and profitability in arid and semi-arid rangelands.

Ellen is a third-generation farmer from the northern pastoral area of South Australia. Together with her family, they run an organic production system with 5,000 predominantly Angus cattle and 10,000 Dorper sheep.

Currently completing her master's in sustainable agriculture, Ellen is passionate about bridging the knowledge gap between leading research institutions, producers and industry bodies on the effects of climate change, and delivering solutions for a stronger, more sustainable red meat sector.

"On farm, we face very unpredictable rainfall patterns which means innovation has to be a key part of our business. The effects of climate change are being realised and it's becoming increasingly important to research ways of ensuring resilience in this changing environment.

"Through my Nuffield Scholarship, I hope to link in with the Australian Beef Sustainability Framework and focus on key priority areas such as consumer confidence, managing climate risk and profitability across the value chain, and deliver these findings to industry bodies and producers on my return."

Ellen will also investigate the resilience of red meat producers against production barriers and how the industry's journey towards a more sustainable future is being conveyed to the consumer in order to meet changing demands.

On her study tour, Ellen will travel to Sub-Saharan Africa, which has a similar climate to northern South Australia, as well as the United States, Brazil and New Zealand, to investigate best practice examples across the red meat sector with a focus on organic production methods.



SUPPORTER INFORMATION:

For more than 200 years, Westpac Agribusiness has shared a rich history and association with rural, remote and regional communities of Australia. It is committed to sharing the journey with the industry and ensuring it is strongly supported and positioned for continued growth now and into the future.

WEBSITE: www.westpac.com.au/business-banking/industries/agribusiness/

FACEBOOK: @Westpac **TWITTER:** @Westpac

Frank Miller NORTHERN TERRITORY



PHONE: 0428 532 488

EMAIL: fmiller@africanmahoganyaustralia.com.au

Frank Miller from Rapid Creek, Northern Territory, receives a Scholarship supported by **ANZ** and **Northern Territory Government**. He will investigate ways to realise the optimal value of Northern Australian timber investments.

Having worked extensively in Australia's forest and timber industries, Frank is CEO of African Mahogany Australia, where he oversees the largest plantation of its kind in the world, in addition to running a substantial fodder cropping operation in the Northern Territory.

Frank's study program will specifically focus on African mahogany plantations and examine how diversification can benefit investment, as well as identify emerging market opportunities for the product, both in Australia and abroad.

"The African mahogany industry is showing great promise here in the Northern Territory. My research aims to increase knowledge for the industry by exploring ways to enhance value through smart land-use management, especially during the plantation's growth phase," he said.

"On my travels, I plan to visit a range of plantations in the Asia-Pacific region as well as Brazil, which is rapidly becoming a hub for African Mahogany plantations, and where integrating land uses, such as various food crops and grazing beef cattle within plantations, are being developed.

"On return from my Nuffield study tour, I look forward to sharing my learnings and recommendations to help improve the investment decision-making process regarding African mahogany plantation development."



SUPPORTER INFORMATION:

ANZ is one of the five largest listed companies in Australia and is the number one bank in New Zealand. ANZ was named Canstar's Agribusiness Bank of the Year for a third consecutive year, in recognition of their quality products and services, as well as their ongoing commitment to the agriculture sector and to regional Australia's long term growth.

WEBSITE: www.anz.com.au **FACEBOOK:** @ANZAustralia **TWITTER:** @ANZ_AU

The Department of Primary Industry and Resources was established by the Northern Territory Government on 12 September 2016. The department brings together many of the key functions that drive economic development on Northern Territory (NT) lands, coastal areas and inland waterways.

WEBSITE: dpir.nt.gov.au/about **FACEBOOK:** @ntgovernment



Thomas Moore NEW SOUTH WALES



PHONE: 0417 085 139 **EMAIL:** tom_moore94@hotmail.com

Thomas Moore from Tenterfield, New South Wales, receives a Nuffield Scholarship supported by the **Royal Agriculture Society of NSW Foundation (RASf)**. Through his research, he will investigate innovative housing methods to promote the growth of Australia's free-range egg industry.

Together with his wife, Thomas owns and operates a free-range egg business, which runs 8,000 layer hens and produces around 3,500 dozen eggs per week, in a modern and open group 'colony' system split into four ages.

Currently, the free-range egg industry is faced with several key challenges. The most notable of these are rising production costs and a changing public perception of what it means to be truly free-range. This has prompted Thomas to pursue global research for the betterment of the entire industry.

"There is a lot of debate on the stocking density of free-range, which is currently 10,000 birds per hectare. It's a key sticking point for industry and the public alike. As such, I'd like to look into a housing system that not only keeps our birds happier, but also provides reassurance of animal welfare to customers."

"For the scholarship, my focus will be largely on Europe and the UK as the world-leaders in cage-free egg production and alternative housing systems. Having access to this knowledge will not only help accelerate my business, but the industry more broadly."



SUPPORTER INFORMATION:

The Royal Agricultural Society of NSW Foundation (RASf) was created in 2007 with a mission to support the development of sustainable and resilient regional and rural communities across New South Wales. Together with generous donations from supporters, the RASf provides community grants and educational scholarships to promote individual and community growth.

To date, the RASf has supported over 400 rural scholarship students to reach their educational dreams and awarded vital community building funding to 45 organisations.

WEBSITE: www.rasnsf.com.au/foundation **FACEBOOK:** @RASofNSW **TWITTER:** @RAS_NSW

Jake Newnham TASMANIA



PHONE: 0437 710 927 **EMAIL:** jake7026@msn.com

Jake Newnham from Campania, Tasmania, receives a Nuffield Scholarship supported by **Woolworths**. Through his research, he will investigate how to advance Australian cherry production, most notably post-harvest packaging and handling procedures.

Located in Tasmania's picturesque Coal River Valley, Jake is Orchard Manager of the family's owned and operated cherry and apricot business, which produces up to 175 tonnes of fruit every year on a site totalling 23 hectares.

Jake's scholarship will focus on cherry production in one of the world's premium growing areas in Chile, where cherry producers have advanced in leaps and bounds from a technological point of view.

"Cherry producers in Chile grow and handle fruit with the added challenge of a 20 plus day journey to market destinations in Asia. Even with the significant transport time, their fruit arrives in very good condition, which I believe is something Australian growers could learn a lot from," he said.

"Chile and Tasmania share similar climatic conditions, as well as export markets. Unfortunately, we're faced with much smaller margins here in Australia, so I'm looking to unearth new techniques that could improve our fruit quality while retaining the premium price bracket.

"On farm, we're producing up to 100 tonnes of cherries per annum, which we want to double and largely export in the next ten years. Looking longer term, the plan is to take over as Director of the business, and the Nuffield Scholarship provides me with an invaluable platform to meet leading producers and develop professionally."

As part of his research, Jake will travel to several key growing regions in Chile, most of which are located to the south of capital, Santiago, in a province called Maule. He will also visit key cherry production areas in the United States and Canada.



SUPPORTER INFORMATION:

Woolworths is proud to sponsor the Nuffield Australia Farming Scholarships program. Woolworths sees its relationships with suppliers as a huge part of its success. This is why these relationships are nurtured, and Woolworths gives back where it can. These positive relationships will provide Australia with the best possible produce, in the most sustainable way.

WEBSITE: crs.woolworthsgroup.com.au **FACEBOOK:** @Woolworths **TWITTER:** @Woolworths



Clare Peltzer TASMANIA



PHONE: 0439 908 214 **EMAIL:** clarepeltzer@gmail.com

Clare Peltzer from Evandale, Tasmania, receives a Nuffield Scholarship supported by **Meat & Livestock Australia (MLA)**. She will investigate how the agricultural sector can attract and retain the appropriate talent through better alignment with schools and ag-education programs.

Clare is the Livestock Manager at Logan, Evandale, where she oversees a prime lamb production system finishing the majority of its 9,600 lambs under irrigation. With a 7,700 self-replacing ewe flock on 4,250 hectares, the business is focussed on livestock management, genetics and marketing.

Outside the farm, Clare is also a part time secondary agriculture teacher at Scotch Oakburn College and has recognised the need for industry to have a stronger interface with schools to demonstrate a clear career path to attract and retain students in the agricultural sector.

“It’s time to rethink the agricultural workforce issue. Today, the range and number of jobs within farming has clearly surpassed the number of programs to attract students, so my research seeks to address how we can make that shift to realign these two co-dependent paths,” she said.

“People are our most precious resource. As a sector, we must continue to upskill our staff and invest in those from non-farming backgrounds through a range of school-based education programs, which harness a range of different skills, knowledge and perceptions of farming.

“As part of my research, I plan to visit some of the leading agricultural universities in the world including Wageningen University, Netherlands; the University of California and Cornell University, Unites States; Agro ParisTech, France; and China Agricultural University, Beijing.”



SUPPORTER INFORMATION:

Meat & Livestock Australia Limited (MLA) delivers marketing and research and development services for Australia’s cattle, sheep and goat producers.

WEBSITE: www.mla.com.au **FACEBOOK:** [@meatlivestock](https://www.facebook.com/meatlivestock) **TWITTER:** [@meatandlivestockaustralia](https://twitter.com/meatandlivestockaustralia)

Andrew Sargent SOUTH AUSTRALIA



PHONE: 0400 179 956 **EMAIL:** asarge@westnet.com.au

Andrew Sargent from Crystal Brook, South Australia, receives a Nuffield Scholarship supported by the **Grains Research & Development Corporation (GRDC)**. He will investigate how farm sensors and the Internet of Things (IoT) can improve the efficiency and profitability of cropping and mixed farming enterprises.

A fifth-generation farmer with an eye on the future, Andrew runs a continuous cropping grain enterprise comprising wheat, barley, lentils, canola and oaten hay production across 2,000 hectares of owned and leased land about 200km north of Adelaide.

As someone who cares for and manages the land, Andrew is particularly focussed on how new sensor technologies can allow for better weather observations and inform the decision-making process when it comes to climate variability, as well as reduce staff costs and monitoring times.

"To increase the scale of our operation, we'll need to utilise new technologies to bolster current practices. There's a lot of interest from Australian farmers in sensor technology, but we're lacking the knowledge and confidence to implement it successfully on farm," he said.

"Through my research, I plan on travelling to the Netherlands, which is leading the way in the free roll out of IoT networks currently used for smart city and environmental monitoring, as well as leading research institutions in Europe and agtech start-ups in the United States.

"Sensor technology opens up a host of benefits for the food and fibre supply chain, from grains right through to livestock and viticulture. I look forward to presenting my findings to industry, which I hope will provide insights that farmers can use to collect more regular and accurate data to inform decision-making."



SUPPORTER INFORMATION:

GRDC is one of the world's leading grains research organisations responsible for planning, investing in and overseeing research, development and extension to deliver improvements in production, sustainability and profitability across the Australian grains industry.

WEBSITE: www.grdc.com.au **FACEBOOK:** @theGRDC **TWITTER:** @theGRDC



Natasha Shields VICTORIA



PHONE: 0430 007 972 **EMAIL:** Tash@peninsulafresh.com

Natasha Shields from Baxter, Victoria, receives a Nuffield Scholarship supported by the **William Buckland Foundation**. She will investigate alternative packaging options and shelf-life outcomes for fresh produce in the current drive to minimise the use of plastics in Australia's retail environment.

Natasha and her husband own a Certified Organic Vegetable growing business that spans 190 acres across three properties in Victoria and New South Wales. The business employs 25 full time staff and sells a wide range of organic produce to retailers and wholesalers, as well as key overseas markets.

She believes that the community – particularly her organic customers – are increasingly concerned about current packaging options, and are demanding material that's biodegradable or has a minimised its impact on the environment, while at the same time extends the shelf life of the produce.

"The fact is that good looking vegetables on a shelf sell, whereas tired and dehydrated or wilting produce is either marked down or thrown out, which results in fewer sales for the retailer and fewer orders for growers like us.

"Despite plastic extending the shelf life of organic produce, our broad customer base is telling us they want another solution. Through my research, I hope to uncover new materials being utilised by companies and producers around the world, and bring those learnings back home."

On her Nuffield Scholarship, Natasha will travel to countries in Western Europe and the United States to explore their advanced organic retail markets, and to key export markets such as China, Singapore and Dubai.



SUPPORTER INFORMATION:

William Buckland was a highly successful pastoralist who had a great love of the land and agriculture. His suggestion that his Trustees, in administering funds from the Foundation, "give preference to agriculture and related pursuits" has been instrumental in developing the Advancing Agriculture Program for the Foundation.

The William Buckland Foundation, through its Advancing Agriculture Program, supports initiatives which focus on strengthening the resilience and capacity of regional and rural communities. This includes the support of innovative approaches to farming that increase yield and/or reduce damaging environmental impacts as well ensuring that rural leaders are equipped to inclusively address the challenges and embrace the opportunities that arise through change.

WEBSITE: williambucklandfoundation.org.au

Johanna Tomlinson WESTERN AUSTRALIA



PHONE: 0429 960 810 **EMAIL:** tomlinson_ag@bigpond.com

Johanna Tomlinson from Kalgan, Western Australia, receives a Nuffield Scholarship supported by the **CBH Group**. She will investigate global soil and production management strategies with a focus on how soil acidity has become a significant threat to Western Australia's broadacre industry.

Together with her husband Wayne, Johanna runs third generation family business, Tomlinson Agricultural, on 4,000 hectares situated on the south coast of Western Australia. The enterprise produces prime lambs, wool, beef and broadacre crops such as barley, wheat, lupins and canola.

Soil health and improving overall grower understanding of soils is a key priority for Johanna, who hopes to assess global soil acidity and management techniques on her scholarship. She will also investigate how different lime sources and supplies are being managed around the world.

"Having worked in farming and natural resource management for almost 20 years, I believe soil acidification is a critical issue for the sector and, quite frankly, a sleeping giant. It's impacting on current production and will have dramatic impacts if a long-term plan is not put in place," she said.

"Soil acidity is an issue we are working to manage on our own farm, but we also recognise the need for further and continued lime applications around the region to ensure that lime can be applied at the rate required to recover and maintain production capacity.

"I see the outcomes of my Nuffield Scholarship being delivered back to our community on the south coast through grower and natural resource management groups. I would also like to see the findings incorporated into current and future work on soil acidity throughout Western Australia.

On her study program, Johanna intends to visit broadacre regions with similar farming systems throughout North and South America and Europe to understand their soil acidification management techniques.



SUPPORTER INFORMATION:

The CBH Group is Australia's largest co-operative and a leader in the Australian grain industry, with operations extending along the value chain from grain storage, handling and transport to marketing and processing.

WEBSITE: www.cbh.com.au **FACEBOOK:** [cbhgroup](https://www.facebook.com/cbhgroup) **TWITTER:** [@cbhgroup](https://twitter.com/cbhgroup)



Tamara Uebergang QUEENSLAND



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Tamara Uebergang from Miles, Queensland, receives a Nuffield Scholarship supported by the **Sylvia and Charles Viertel Foundation**. Through her research, she will investigate alternative fuel sources and energy solutions for Australia's agricultural sector.

Having trained at Marcus Oldham, Tamara is the farm manager at her family's property, Berwyndale Pastoral. The operation grows a rotation of cotton, wheat, chickpeas, sorghum and mung beans, as well as a small herd of cattle.

Berwyndale co-exists with resource extractions, most notably CSG, and has engaged with various energy companies for more than 20 years. Tamara said this interaction has yielded many great lessons, compromises and mutual benefits.

"As farmers, it is our responsibility to ensure judicious use of such finite resources and to conduct a thorough investigation of sustainable approaches to farming," she said.

"Compounded by public discussion and media headlines, I'm interested in exploring alternative energy sources such as solar, waste to energy and hydrogen. Currently, our biggest farm expenses include diesel and synthetic fertiliser – and I believe that there must be another way forward.

"Farmers work hard to maintain a social license through continued engagement and best practice management. I look forward to visiting the UK and Europe, where the renewable energy market is booming, as well as India, which is a key customer for our cotton and chick peas industries."

The
**Sylvia &
Charles
Viertel**

Charitable Foundation

SUPPORTER INFORMATION:

Charles Viertel established the Sylvia and Charles Viertel Charitable Foundation in his Will. The Foundation was established for the benefit of charity; in particular, to benefit organisations or institutions involved in medical research into diseases, and the alleviation of hardship of the aged and the sick.

Charles also directed that money be given to charities with low administrative expenses. Other than its funding for medical research the Foundation almost exclusively directs its funding to Queensland-based charitable organisations or for the benefit of the Queensland community.

WEBSITE: viertel.org.au



www.nuffield.com.au

