



MINISTER FOR PRIMARY INDUSTRIES
MINISTER FOR ENERGY
MINISTER FOR MINERAL RESOURCES
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MEDIA RELEASE

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NSW farmer takes out national award

NSW 2006 Farmer of the Year Gary Johnston was last night honoured with a New Technology Award at the National Farmers' Federation and Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry 2009 Innovation in Agriculture Awards.

NSW Minister for Primary Industries Ian Macdonald and NSW Farmers' Association President Jock Laurie have both extended their congratulations to Mr Johnston, a mixed irrigated lucerne and livestock farmer from Forbes in the State's Central West.

"One of the key criteria in the NSW Farmer of the Year Awards is innovation, so we are certainly not surprised to see a former winner taking out an Award for invention on the national level," Minister Macdonald said.

"Gary's invention, the Johnston Water Management Outlet, is designed to deliver more water, measured more accurately, to save up to 30 per cent in efficiency.

"Given the ongoing nature of drought, the critical water shortage facing farmers and the growing world food shortage, this type of invention will help farmers do more with less.

"It is this type of critical thinking that has seen Gary excel on both a State and now a National level," Minister Macdonald said.

NSW Farmers' Association President Jock Laurie says Gary's 2006 Farmer of the Year win held him in good stead for this Award.

"The Farmer of the Year judges were extremely impressed with Gary's market-driven approach to the production of a range of crops in addition to his staple lucerne, including vegetables, oilseeds and cereals, and the establishment of a line of natural fertiliser and garden mulch products," Mr Laurie said.

"Gary has long demonstrated his commitment to efficiencies and his ability to think outside the square, and we congratulate him on his continued success in the agricultural arena.

"There is no doubt that Gary continues to be a leader in this field, and we are very proud that he is a former recipient of the Farmer of the Year Award," Mr Laurie said.

The 2009 Farmer and Young Farmer of the Year Award winners will be announced at the NSW Farmers' Association Annual Conference in July. The Awards are a joint initiative of the NSW Department of Primary Industries and the NSW Farmers' Association, with support from The Land and the Royal Agricultural Society of NSW.

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