

# 2008 Annual Conference

## 30 Years As One Voice

# Media Release



Tuesday 29 July, 2008  
PR/135/08

### Day 1 – Annual Conference Update

The first day of the three day NSW Farmers' Association Annual Conference has wrapped up in Sydney with around 450 of the State's top farming representatives debating issues of importance to agriculture and rural communities.

#### Some of the highlights of the day included:

- Walcha farmer Jock Laurie was re-elected unopposed as President of NSW Farmers' Association, and now enters an historic fourth year in the role.
- North Star farmer Richard Clark was re-elected as Senior Vice President of the NSW Farmers' Association, and Nyngan farmer Charles Armstrong was re-elected as Association Treasurer.
- In his opening speech, Jock Laurie called on the Australian community to help agriculture find a balance to meet future food production demands - at a time when many in the farming community are facing an uncertain future.
- Federal Agriculture Minister Tony Burke announced the Federal Government's *Farm Ready* program in his address to Annual Conference
- Delegates expressed the need for more research into carbon sequestration in the soil to quantify and value increasing soil carbon by all forms of pasture, cropping and forestry.
- Delegates voted to lobby State and Federal Governments to make agricultural freight a priority on the rail network and at ports.
- Over 500 people attended the Regional Food Fair, sampling fantastic produce from around the state.

#### The Annual Conference continues tomorrow, with highlights including:

- **Guest speaker:** NSW Minister for Department of Primary Industries Ian Macdonald will address Conference at 1pm, followed by the LandLearn launch
- The announcement of the 2008 Tertiary Scholarship winners.
- The Young Farmers' Forum.
- Debate over Exceptional Circumstance (EC) criteria and timeframe.
- Debate about a proposed Young Farmer Finance Scheme.
- The announcement of the 2008 Mackellar Media Award winners at the Association Gala Dinner.
- The announcement of the 2008 Farmer and Young Farmer of the Year.

The Conference is being held at Sydney Showground, with the theme *30 Years as One Voice*. The Conference will continue tomorrow.

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