

## **Are you the State's top farmer?**

First prize of \$10,000 is again up for grabs following the launch of the Annual Farmer of the Year awards by Minister for Primary Industries Ian Macdonald and NSW Farmer's Association President Jock Laurie.

These awards play an important part in recognising the sustainable farming practices farmers are using today – and how innovation is helping them stay profitable during tough times.

The annual awards are coordinated by the NSW Department of Primary Industries and NSW Farmers' Association, and supported by Rural Press and the Royal Agricultural Society. Watch this space for more information.

## **Farmers oppose electricity sell-off**

The NSW Farmers' Association is calling on the NSW Government to put in place rock solid guarantees for rural customers, before the privatisation of the electricity market.

Service, price and availability of electricity are all critical issues that the Association wants addressed. Click [here](#) for more information.

The NSW Government is currently considering the sell-off of the retail arm of the state-owned Energy Australia, Country Energy and Integral Energy to private operators. It is understood that distribution assets such as poles and lines will remain government owned.

## **Pork producers need Government's support**

The NSW Farmers' Association is calling for the Federal Government to support the Australian Pork Industry against trade distortions and cheap foreign products flooding the market.

According to Australian Pork Limited, the total local pig meat industry is now hemorrhaging \$2.59 million a week. Domestic processed pork production dropped 26% last financial year. Click [here](#) for more information.

## **Federal Government warned to consider fiscal policy**

The NSW Farmers' Association has urged the Federal Government to consider carefully its fiscal policy, following last week's interest rate rise by the Reserve Bank, by a quarter of a percent to 7.25%.

The Association has suggested that longer term investment in infrastructure would improve productivity, increasing Australia's international competitiveness, and would support longer term employment without the impact of a direct cash injection that would result from tax cuts. Click [here](#) for more information.

## **Central West and Northern NSW flood victims thrown a life-line**

Farmers affected by the recent floods in Central West and Northern NSW can now apply for the \$5000 Government flood grants using estimates for repair work, rather than bills.

Primary Industries Minister Ian Macdonald made the announcement last week and advised that the cut off date for applications is 28 March, 2008. Click [here](#) for more.

## **New website to broadcast fruit and vegetable prices**

The NSW Farmers' Association is investigating the possibility of establishing a website to display actual prices received by producers at the farm-gate for fruit and vegetables.

It's hoped this website would help with transparency in the industry and allow consumers, the purchasers of food, to see how much the farmer is being paid for their product.

No information would be displayed that would identify any place or organisation in the food chain. Click [here](#) for more information.

### **Pre-school kids should get a free ride**

The Executive Council of NSW Farmers' Association has voted to seek funding for transport and insurance for pre-school students.

The Association wants pre-school children in isolated areas to travel on existing school bus routes at no charge, giving them the same access to pre-schooling as young children in city area. Click [here](#) for more details.

### **Region 1 – North West**

20 March, Walgett – Chemical Card training, call the Training Department for further details  
26 March, Moree – Succession Planning Workshop, call the Training Department for further details  
27 March, Goondiwindi – Chemical Card training, call the Training Department for further details  
28 March, Inverell – 8.30am – 4pm, Inverell Town Hall – Climate Change Forum

For more information contact Region 1 Service Manager Alicia Wilson 0427 437 103

### **Region 2 – New England**

11 Mar – Barraba - Succession Planning Workshop 9-4pm FREE for members Ph Robyn 68848822  
12 Mar – Tenterfield - Soil, Health and Carbon Day Ph. Kylie on 67323443  
13 Mar – Glen Innes - Soil, Health and Carbon Day Ph. Kylie on 67323443  
21 Mar – Inverell - Climate Change Forum and Expo Ph 67211241  
1 April – Deepwater Pub 6.30pm “Young Farmers-the Future” Young at heart farmers are invited to a free dinner and hear Guest speaker, Young Farmer of the Year, Stuart Blake. Also Superannuation advice and meet our NSWFA Young Farmers Committee. Dinner provided by the NSWFA Deepwater Branch  
2/3 April Bingara – Landcare Adventure. “Rejuvenation with Water” Guest Speaker *Mr Martin Babakhan Climatologist, University of Newcastle and ABC Radio weather man* + A great line up of presenters subsidized to only \$55 for landholder (Cost includes bus travel, all meals, and award ceremony & twin share accommodation) Dinner is an extra \$35. Ph. 67241771

For more information contact Region 2 Service Manager Gennie Gittoes on 0429180560.

### **Region 3 – Central and Northwest**

10-13 Mar- Sydney – RSM Conference  
12 Mar – Nyngan – Stipa/ Water Supply Training- Free members, \$75 non-members.  
Contact Angela 6845 1044  
17 Mar – Online – Chemical Card – 1.00-4.00pm Contact Robyn 6884 8822  
28 Mar – Warren – Saltbush Establishment & Management – Merryanbone North- Members free, 6845 1044

For more information contact Region 3 Service Manager Rick Bremmner on 0427 773 495.

### **Region 6 – Central West Tablelands**

27 March - Chemical Card, Blayney.

For more information contact Region 6 Regional Service Manager on 0427 411 220.

### **Region 7 – Sydney Basin**

6 March – Cooranbong, Watagan AGM, PH: Mandy Allen 49 773 252  
25 March – Maitland, Chemical Card Training PH: 6884 8822

For more information on Region 7 events contact Regional Services Manager Frances Vella on 0428 228 818

### **Region 8 – Lower Central, West & Slopes**

12 March Grenfell – “Road to Recovery” mental health forum at Bowling Club. Contact Nevin Hughes on 6343 7144  
25 March Forbes – Sam Bailey Dinner and Inspirational talk – Forbes Inn. Tickets \$30. Ring 02 68519500  
31 March Orange –Vertebrate Pest Management Course at Orange Agricultural Institute – ForrestRoad. Ring 02 63913800  
April 2 Dubbo - Pork AGM at Services club. Contact Sarah on 82511809  
April 7Yass - Chemical Card training and re accreditation at Soldiers club. Contact Robyn on 6884 8822

April 7 Cowra - Farm Safety Management workshop. Contact Robyn on 6884 8822  
April 17Eugowra -Succession Planning workshop. Contact Robyn on 6884 8822  
April 29 Grenfell – Chemical card training. Contact Robyn on 6884 8822  
May 1 West Wyalong - mental health forum. Contact Chris Rigney on 6972 5265  
For more information on Region 8 events contact Regional Service Manger Geoff Knight on 0427773581

#### **Region 10 - Southern Central**

12 March –Coolamon – Grower GRDC Update, RSVP Farmlink - (02) 6924 4633  
13 March – Ganmain – Rotary mental health night, 7pm Ganmain Sports Club, free admission  
28 March – Wagga RLPB field day, Wagga Wagga

For information on any events in Region 10 contact RSM Deb Charlton on 6922 9297.

#### **Region 11 – Southern Tablelands, Monaro & South Coast**

10 April - Goulburn Branch Meeting, Goulburn Workers Club, 7.30pm  
24 April - Moss Vale Branch AGM, venue to be advised  
28 April - Bombala DC meeting with Jock Laurie  
29 April - Molonglo DC AGM with Jock Laurie  
29 April - Goulburn DC AGM with Jock Laurie  
Details on the DC meetings will be send out by fax and email once final details are confirmed.  
Claiming the date:

Region 11 Convention, Friday 20th June 2008 at the National Press Club, Canberra. Theme is *"Change - the stone age didn't end becaue we ran out of stone"*. An impressive and exciting line up of speakers is being arranged so don't miss this great day out - more details soon.

#### **Region 12 – Western Division**

10 April Region 12 Convention at Homebush. "Western Division Globally Focused" with a range of guest speakers. (Contact Dougall Roberts For more Information)  
12 April Bourke Show  
26-27 April White Cliffs Gymkhana

For information on any events in Region 12 contact Dougall Roberts on 0428 411 221