



# Barry O'Farrell MP Premier of NSW Minister for Western Sydney

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## MEDIA RELEASE

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16 July 2012

### **\$57 MILLION BIOSECURITY CENTRE TO SAFEGUARD NSW**

Premier Barry O'Farrell and Minister for Primary Industries, Katrina Hodgkinson today opened Australia's most modern biosecurity laboratory located at the NSW Government's Elizabeth Macarthur Agricultural Institute (EMAI) at Menangle in Sydney's south-west.

"NSW is now home to the \$57 million Centre for Biosecurity which will spearhead our efforts in safeguarding the State's \$9 billion primary industries sector from devastating pests and diseases," Mr O'Farrell said.

"More than 180 staff, including some of the country's leading researchers will be employed at the new laboratory.

"The new secure laboratory precinct allows us to test for diseases such as swine flu, equine influenza, Hendra virus and citrus canker that have the potential to devastate industry and communities.

"Hundreds of thousands of tests on samples from across NSW and Australia will be conducted at this centre annually."

Ms Hodgkinson said the new facility is crucial in maintaining the Department of Primary Industries' capability to quickly diagnose exotic and emerging animal diseases.

"NSW has an enviable disease-free status that gives us an advantage in international markets," Ms Hodgkinson said.

"The new Centre for Biosecurity will play a key role in maintaining that status through scientific research and disease diagnosis, control and prevention."

Key features include;

- New high level quarantine containment facilities to expand EMAI's capacity to handle large scale emergency animal disease outbreaks like horse flu
- Plant biosecurity facilities capable of handling large scale emergency plant disease outbreaks

- World class virology, bacteriology, microbiology and molecular biology laboratories
- Upgraded animal and plant health facilities to meet current regulations and standards
- Upgrades to site infrastructure including waste management, power, gas, site security and stormwater management

It took about 90 weeks to complete construction of the new laboratory with up to 100 site workers on the job at any given time, with a range of local companies used to supply services and materials.



Pictured at the official opening of the new centre for biosecurity:

Minister for Primary Industries Katrina Hodgkinson, DPI Director General Richard Sheldrake, Premier of NSW Barry O'Farrell and EMAI staff member Marly Jones.