

Media Release

Wednesday 18 July 2012

Entries open for 2012 NSW Farmer of the Year award

Applications are now open for the 2012 NSW Farmer of the Year, with a prize of \$5,000 and an overseas trip going to the winner.

Minister for Primary Industries Katrina Hodgkinson and NSW Farmers' Association President Fiona Simson are encouraging all farmers to nominate for the prestigious award.

Minister Hodgkinson, who will officially launch this year's awards at NSW Farmers conference tonight, said the annual awards recognise excellence in agriculture through management skills, innovation, profitability, environmental sustainability and community involvement.

"These awards recognise and pay tribute to the resilience and vision of NSW's 40,000 farmers," Ms Hodgkinson said.

"The common theme among past finalists is their determination to push the boundaries, to produce quality products and to run efficient, profitable and sustainable business.

"I am immensely proud of our State's primary industries sector, and awards such as NSW Farmer of the Year shine a spotlight on our best and brightest."

NSW Farmers President Fiona Simson said the finalists play an important part in promoting the sector and educating urban audiences about farmer's contributions on many levels.

"As land managers, the environmental and innovation credentials of farmers are sometimes overlooked, so we want farmers that can share their approaches with their industry peers, and also act as ambassadors to the broader community," she said.

"The Awards are a celebration of our industries' achievements and resilience, and I would strongly encourage our many talented farmers of NSW to enter."

Fourth generation Merino producer from Wellington Norm Smith, winner of the 2011 NSW Farmer of the Year title, has described the Award as a rewarding experience.

The Award is an initiative of the NSW Farmers' Association and NSW Department of Primary Industries, with support from The Land and the Royal Agricultural Society of NSW.

The Farmer of the Year wins a cash prize of \$5,000 plus joins an overseas farming related tour group, and the runner-up will take home \$5,000.

Application forms are available at www.nswfarmers.org.au or at www.dpi.nsw.gov.au, and entries close Friday 28 September 2012.