

AUSTRALIAN YOUNG AGRIBUSINESS LEADERS SUMMIT

Arresting the decline in young people entering agriculture and agribusiness will be the focus of a summit for those who are interested in arresting this trend to be held at the Melbourne Showgrounds on Wednesday, 18 August.

Recent surveys indicate rural industries need to attract at least 15,000 people a year to fill newly created positions and to cover losses from attrition and retirement. These jobs are in a ratio of 3 into production and 2 into agribusiness, consulting etc. However, only approximately 2,000 people are currently being trained for these careers.

Tertiary educated young people will be required to fill challenging and exciting opportunities in agribusiness. However most reports indicate there is a major decline in students undertaking agricultural science and related courses. Any graduates with these qualifications are very highly sought after.

Sam Inglis, Director of Corporate Training at Marcus Oldham College, Geelong who is one of the co-conveners of the summit said "We have a model which we think can be applied in Australia. The planning committee has been working closely with the management of the New Zealand Young Farmers Contest with a view to establishing a similar flagship event in Australia that will portray young people involved in agriculture as multi-skilled, highly intelligent operators in a very innovative industry where productivity gains have been double those of other industries".

The New Zealand model has been refined over 40 years and brings the winners from regional contests to a nationally televised final event which involves a practical skills competition as well as requiring participants to demonstrate a wide range of agribusiness skills. The New Zealand competition has grown in stature over the 40 years of the competition to the point where nearly \$500,000 in prize money is available to the finalists with a first prize of over \$100,000 awarded to the New Zealand Young Farmer of the Year

"The committee firmly believes a similar competition is required in Australia to alter the perception of agribusiness and the people involved in this vital industry. From an activity such as this will develop the next generation of leaders to manage the challenges which Australia's rural industries will face in the future". Mr Inglis said.

A summit such as this underlines the importance of developing rural leadership and illustrates how sponsorship by organisations such as ANZ Agribusiness, the Australian Beef Industry Foundation and Marcus Oldham supports this goal.

Respected rural commentator Neil Inall OAM will be the facilitator for the summit.

The date: Wednesday, 18 August from 10.00 am

The venue: Melbourne Showgrounds

Participation in the summit from other interested parties is also invited and those wishing to be involved should register for the summit by contacting:

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