



## Our Australian Rice Industry

Growing Rice to Feed the World

### MEDIA RELEASE

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#### Renewed Focus on Agricultural Education and Training Welcome

The Ricegrowers' Association of Australia Inc. (RGA) has welcomed the New South Wales (NSW) Government's renewed focus on the importance of agricultural education and training in the state.

Yesterday, NSW Education Minister, Adrian Piccoli, and Minister for Primary Industries, Katrina Hodgkinson, announced their response to a report written by Professor Jim Pratley which identified a number of actions to deliver improvements to agricultural education and training to better meet the workforce needs of the agricultural sector.

Rice grower and RGA Mirrool Branch President, Hayden Cudmore, said he is pleased the government has recognised the important role the agriculture industry plays in the NSW economy, and has committed to strengthening its future through their acceptance of 26 of the 27 recommendations from Professor Pratley's report.

"Professor Pratley has undertaken a very comprehensive review into the appropriateness of agricultural education and training in NSW. His review has also examined some of the challenges faced by the industry in being seen as an attractive career option for high school graduates," Mr Cudmore said.

"He found children have a lack of knowledge about where their food and fibre comes from and that there are perceptions that agriculture doesn't offer a secure career path. This is then unfortunately perpetuated by some careers advisors who discourage students from considering agriculture as a career choice."

"The report makes a number of sound recommendations about incorporating agricultural education in the school curriculum and improving the provision of advice about careers in agriculture in NSW schools," Mr Cudmore said.

While the report made 27 recommendations to the NSW Government, Mr Cudmore has acknowledged there are also 15 recommendations to industry.

"Industry certainly has a significant role to play in improving children's understanding of agriculture and we must shoulder some of the responsibility for building better workforce capacity," Mr Cudmore said.

"The rice industry will review the industry recommendations in detail over the next few months and determine how we can best contribute to their implementation."

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