

MEDIA RELEASE



November 4, 2009

Time running out to register for young farmer event

Young farmers are running out of time to register for an exciting two-day forum in Goondiwindi on economic, environmental and social issues with a guest speaker line-up that includes National Farmers' Federation CEO Ben Fargher.

The Queensland Murray-Darling Committee's Cameron O'Neil said the forum, on Wednesday and Thursday, November 11 and 12, was a chance for young agricultural industry members to learn more about a host of issues that impacted on their businesses, communities and industries.

This project is supported by funding from the Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry under Australia's Farming Future.

"It's also a chance for the next generation of primary producers and rural business people to hear from both their peers and those who have been involved with regional industries for a little longer," Mr O'Neil said.

"Opening the event will be former Australian Deputy Prime Minister John Anderson who as a strong advocate of agriculture and the next generation having a voice, will touch on his own experiences working on agricultural and environmental policies.

"He will also highlight the importance of young agriculturists, be they graziers, agribusiness consultants or natural resource management officers, to become leaders and forge a sustainable agricultural future.

"We have a truly quality line-up of speakers to give our young rural industry members the chance to learn from the best."

Mr O'Neil said this included FutureFood Qld Co-Chair Geoff Hewitt, QMDC CEO Geoff Penton, QPIF Strategic Directions business unit Sustainable Agriculture Director Brett de Hayr, National Farmers' Federation CEO Ben Fargher, CW Psychology Psychologist Dr Lisa Wright, Agroclim Australia Principal Dr Jeff Clewett, Agrifood Skills Australia CEO Arthur Blewitt and many more.

"It's well recognised that we live in changing times and there are certainly a great many challenges out there as we work toward sustainable agricultural outcomes, improving our natural resources, anticipating the impact of climate change and deal with industry issues such as labour shortages and local, state, national and international economic conditions," he said.

"As we all work toward sustaining the region's natural resources, this forum will focus on providing information on the environmental, economic and social benefits of working collectively.

"QMDC, as a natural resource management organisation, has a strong focus on Sub-Catchment Planning – that is, instigating management changes at the sub-catchment level for the benefit of the entire Queensland Murray-Darling Basin.

"While property level changes are a key foundation stone, as residents of the Basin we can achieve so much more for our enterprises and our communities by working together."

The two-day function also includes a networking dinner with guest speaker Sam Bailey, a farmer, pilot, inspirational speaker and best selling author. Participants can then dance the night away with Goondiwindi band "The Local Lot".

For more information, visit www.qmdc.org.au/about-qmdc/nextgen.html or call Rebecca Fing on 4671 0723.

Media contact/s

More information: QMDC Maranoa-Balonne Catchment Team Coordinator
Cameron O'Neil 0427 500 187

Released by: QMDC Regional Communications Officer Lisa Yorkston, ph 4637 6234