



Royal Agricultural Society of NSW



Media Release

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## RASF SEEKS ASPIRING YOUNG JOURNALISTS

### Applications now open for the JB Fairfax Award for Rural Journalism

The Royal Agricultural Society of NSW Foundation (RASf) is searching for young people with an active interest in rural affairs and a passion for writing.

Applications are now being sought for the second annual JB Fairfax Award for Rural Journalism.

**RASf Executive Officer Antonia Ruffell** says the \$10,000 scholarship will provide an amazing opportunity for someone who is dedicated to telling the stories of Australian agriculture.

"We are looking to unearth some talented young writers with the ultimate objective of benefiting the rural community," Ms Ruffell said.

The Award focuses on encouraging undergraduate or postgraduate students to pursue a career in rural journalism upon graduation.

In 2008 the Award received an overwhelming response from a quality field of students from around Australia.

**RASf Chairman Mr John B. Fairfax AO** says it is important to nurture the future voices of Australian Agriculture and ensure the quality coverage of rural and regional affairs by Australian journalists.

"The rural industry remains a vital part of Australia's economy and it is important that it is represented with understanding and enthusiasm," Mr Fairfax said.

"The Award is designed to attract people, who are not merely committed to rural Australia but who are anxious to unearth many of the rich stories that lie hidden within our regional and rural communities."

Each scholarship applicant is required to submit a feature article of up to 1200 words which explores a contemporary issue, trend or activity of interest to rural and regional communities.

**Recipient of the inaugural J B Fairfax Award for Rural Journalism, Brooke Hargraves** impressed the judging panel with her feature article "Emissions Omissions", which was later published in The North Queensland Register newspaper.

"Brooke's writing skills, passion for rural affairs and commitment to carving out a career in rural journalism was just what we were looking for, and I have no doubt we will be reading many of Brooke's articles in the near future," said Mr Fairfax.

Ms Hargraves said the Award provided her with many fantastic opportunities, including helping her live out her dream of securing a full-time job at a regional newspaper.

"I was able to meet Mr Fairfax and the Rural Press team and undertake work experience which was looked upon very favourably when I went for the interview at my current job. The editor saw the Award as an impressive achievement, said Ms Hargraves.

"The Award also gave me the financial security I needed to concentrate on my studies and also purchase text books and computer programs,"

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“It is generous donations like this that allow country students like myself to leave home and move to the city to attend university. It can be very daunting and expensive to move to the city and can prevent some young people from following their dreams.”

The award has been established through a private donation by Mr JB Fairfax, AO, and is managed by the RASF, in collaboration with Rural Press Agricultural Publishing.

The RASF is a philanthropic foundation which seeks to encourage educational excellence and foster sustainable rural and regional communities by supporting quality youth community programs.

Applications can be submitted on-line and can be found at [www.rasf.org.au](http://www.rasf.org.au)

**Entries close 13 November, 2009.**

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