



Royal Agricultural Society of NSW



MEDIA RELEASE

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UNIQUE OPPORTUNITIES FOR RURAL YOUTH AS RAS FOUNDATION ROLLS OUT ROUND 3 OF FUNDING GRANTS

The Royal Agricultural Society of NSW Foundation (RAS Foundation) has announced its third round of education grants, assisting five rural and regional communities to significantly enhance the educational opportunities of their youth.

The small schools from **Merriwa** in the Upper Hunter, south to **Gundagai** and **Ulladulla**, west to **Booligal** and **Corinella** have shared in funding grants totalling more than \$20,000, which has been distributed under the Foundation's *E³ Grants* program.

Mr John B Fairfax, AM, RAS Acting Chairman says the latest round of funding supports a variety of projects.

"This current round of *E³ Grants* will help implement a range of programs for young children, from home readers, to a creative writing competition and a much needed new children's library for a pre-school in Ulladulla."

Grants Awarded;

- **Booligal** P and C Association: new home readers - \$5,298
- **Gundagai** Regional Enhancement Group Inc: The Spirit of Place Creative Writing Project - \$3,650
- **Corinella** P and C Association : Corinella - Where Literacy Meets Numeracy - \$5,710
- **Merriwa** Central School Public School: Little Sprouts Community Reading Day 2008 - \$3,690
- **Ulladulla** Children's Centre Inc: Ulladulla Children's Centre Library - \$2,000

Mrs Kylie Austin from Merriwa Central School says their grant of \$3,690 will make a huge difference to the 2008 Merriwa Community Reading Day to be held in October.

"The day sees the whole town get involved in raising awareness of the importance of reading. Everyone from the fire brigade to the butcher, the newsagent and the baker will take part in reading to groups of children."

"Basically it's a day where the whole town stops to read. It gets the message across that reading to children, talking to them, and singing to them is so important in developing their literacy skills, and also showing them how much fun it can be," said Mrs Austin.

The grant has also assisted in securing children's author David Legge to conduct workshops on the day, and all children will receive a book to take home."

Foundation Manager Maria Chilcott says the latest funding round will see the Foundation provide unique educational opportunities to young children in several agricultural communities in NSW.

"The grants will provide support for projects that otherwise wouldn't be available to these rural communities. They make an enormous difference, especially to smaller towns such as Booligal, and that's what's exciting about what the Foundation can achieve."

Since the Foundation's launch at the 2008 Sydney Royal Easter Show, more than \$65,000 has now been distributed to rural and regional communities. Further information; www.rasf.org.au

Philippa Lampe, RAS Media & Public Relations Manager - P: (02) 9704 1453

Royal Agricultural Society of NSW

ABN 69 793 644 351

Sydney Showground

1 Showground Road Sydney Olympic Park NSW 2127

Locked Bag 4317 Sydney Olympic Park NSW 2127

Telephone (02) 9704 1111

Facsimile (02) 9704 1122

Email: info@rasnsw.com.au

www.rasnsw.com.au