

MEDIA RELEASE

Thursday, 30 April 2009

PRESIDENT'S MEDAL JUDGES VISIT RICHARD GUNNER'S FINE MEATS

Richard Gunner's Fine Meats in Coorong will next Tuesday show its ground-breaking retail network for gourmet branded meat is the way of the future for niche producers, as judges decide if it's the best of the best in Australian agricultural production.

Richard Gunner's Fine Meats is one of six finalists in the 2009 President's Medal, awarded by the **Royal Agricultural Society of NSW (RAS)** and Australia's only competition pitting award-winning producers from the food and wine industries against each other for \$10,000 in cash.

Richard Gunner's Hay Valley Lamb was named Grand Champion Branded Lamb Exhibit in the 2008 Sydney Royal Fine Food Show. From this the company was nominated as a finalist in the unique President's Medal, which is judged on a whole-of-company approach to production and marketing of their Champion product.

Judges Simon Marnie (ABC Radio) and Scott Davenport (NSW Department of Primary Industries Chief Economist) will visit Richard Gunner's Fine Meats operation to evaluate the producer's financial, social and environmental performance in their manufacturing and marketing processes.

Richard Gunner's is up against five other 2009 finalists: Bulla Dairy Foods (VIC); Gold Coast Marine Aquaculture (QLD); Gundowring Fine Foods (VIC); Paringa Estate (VIC) and wine giant Tyrrell's Vineyards Pty Ltd (NSW).

"Our strength is the close management of the quality and processing of our meat products from paddock to plate. We build the genetics through our own farm in Coorong to maintain the quality of our lambs, which is crucial in the branded meat market." Mr Gunner said.

"We're opening our sixth store to sell our top-quality branded cuts alongside our other products. We also market like wine – through the menus of top restaurants across Australia – to build our brands and maintain a constant stream of food-service interest in our products."

Glenn Dudley, President of the RAS said the President's Medal recognised the multifaceted approach to food production required in the competitive domestic and international market.

"The President's Medal raises consumer awareness and rewards producers who use sustainable practices to develop outstanding products. Judges will be looking at financial, social and environmental performance, market acceptance, and the passion, commitment and enthusiasm of the producer.

"The prestigious award is fitting recognition for Australia's world class food and wine industries and I congratulate Richard Gunner's Fine Meats on their nomination," Mr Dudley said.

The President's Medal will be presented at a gala dinner in Sydney on Wednesday 20 May 2009. It is proudly supported and sponsored by the NSW Department of Primary Industries and Woolworths Ltd.

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