

QUEENSLANDER TAKES OUT TOP AG SCIENCE STUDENT AWARD

Friday 27th May 2016

Chelsea Stroppiana from Queensland has today been announced in Adelaide as winner of the Ag Institute Australia (AIA) National Student Award for 2016.

The prestigious AEV Richardson Memorial National Student Award, sponsored by Peracto, is competed for annually by undergraduate students who have completed an Honours research project as part of an agricultural science (or related) degree.

Each AIA state division selects a finalist to compete nationally with a written submission on the background of their project and a 15-minute presentation on the outcomes to a judging panel.

Ms Stroppiana impressed judges with her honours project into the compounds released from the roots of Australian native species and how they affect the breakdown of nitrogen in soils (nitrification).

The long-term implication of the project is to model synthetic nitrification inhibitors to improve nitrogen use efficiency in cropping systems.

"I'm very honoured to have received this prestigious award - agriculture is an essential industry and it's great to see the AIA and Peracto promoting high-level science in this area.

"I'm encouraged by the quality of the research being undertaken by my peers, and hope that as the next generation, we can continue to innovate and advance agriculture in Australia," Ms Stroppiana says.

The award was presented in Adelaide at AIA's Innovation Conference, where delegates heard from Australia's Chief Scientist in his first official visit to Adelaide,

Dr Alan Finkel outlined areas of innovation for the agricultural sector to target in what he termed 'three boundless plains'.

The three areas were to 'boost yield', 'boost the dollar return' and focusing on 'selling what we know, as well as what we grow'.

"We've cracked the challenge of farming in six different climatic zones, from temperate to equatorial to desert.

"So why not profit from that expertise and win investment at the same time in local research, local skills and local firms?" Dr Finkel asked the audience.

In other news from the conference, a new chairman of AIA was appointed, Andrew Bishop from Tasmania.

Mr Bishop, who is Chief Plant Health Manager for the Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment (Tasmania) says taking the helm of an organisation such as Ag Institute Australia at a time of such innovation in the sector was an honour.

“It’s an exciting time in agriculture, as was made obvious by our guest speakers discussing innovation in all aspects of agriculture at our conference in Adelaide today.

“We heard from both ends of the innovation pipeline, from policy to on-farm benefits, and when you add in the enthusiasm and passion of the Student Award finalists, it certainly highlighted the challenges and, more importantly, the opportunities ahead,” Mr Bishop said.

Mr Bishop and Ms Stroppiana are available for interviews on request – please contact David Cussons from CussonsMedia on david@cussonsmedia.com.au or 0404 853 827.

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Editors note:

Ag Institute Australia is the peak industry body for agricultural and natural resource management professionals. The organisation is committed to advancing the profession, and the application of science and technology, for the sustainable development of agriculture and natural resource management in Australia. Ag Institute Australia members are engaged in a wide range of activities including research, education, government, agribusiness and private consulting.
