



# The Hon Katrina Hodgkinson MP

## Minister for Primary Industries

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### MEDIA RELEASE

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Wednesday 18 February 2015

#### **SHEEP CAPACITY BOOST FOR CENTRAL WEST LIVESTOCK EXCHANGE**

Minister for Primary Industries Katrina Hodgkinson today officially opened the new addition to the sheep yards at the Central West Livestock Exchange near Forbes.

Minister Hodgkinson said the expansion allows for storage of stock after sale, prior to delivery to buyers, which will enable more efficient movement of stock within the selling yards.

“This new infrastructure provides capacity for an additional 30000 sheep, bringing total capacity of sheep at the facility to 70000,” Ms Hodgkinson said.

“The facility – which is Australia’s second largest for sheep sales – will now be able to accommodate higher volumes and cope with recent demand.

“The extensions have further cemented this centre as one of the nation’s most advanced auction facilities.

“The growth of the yards is important for local producers, but also provides additional employment for the broader industry including livestock transporters, stock agents and other staff.

“What a vital addition to the local economy to have this facility available for buying and selling premium quality sheep and lambs, as well as cattle and pigs.”

Ms Hodgkinson said the \$230,000 investment by Forbes Shire Council to expand this facility represented a clear commitment to the livestock industry which is echoed by the NSW Government.

“The NSW Government has worked with industry to develop a clear vision for growth for our \$2.2 billion livestock sector, which is set out in the Agriculture Industry Action Plan,” Ms Hodgkinson said.

“We have been continuously supporting the sheep industry with world class research and development to increase the profitability and productivity of producers, while ensuring that these industries are squarely focused on their consumers and the needs of the supply chain.

“The research plan for the sheep and wool industry for 2014-19 includes a significant investment of \$28.8 million. This research and development is delivered by 27 dedicated researchers, technical staff and development officers,” said Ms Hodgkinson.

Research and development staff are focused on improving eating quality; sheep genetics; influencing gender via ewe nutrition; improving survival rates; reducing methane emissions from sheep; improving grazing management health and traceability and better planning and drought preparedness.