



NEW SOUTH WALES

# MEDIA RELEASE

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**Ian Macdonald**

Minister for Primary Industries, Minister for Energy,  
Minister for Mineral Resources, Minister for State Development

## **\$3.5 million research boost to cut greenhouse gas emissions and lock up carbon in soil**

Research into reducing greenhouse gas emissions and locking up carbon in farm soils has received a major boost with the announcement that NSW has secured more than \$3.5 million in Commonwealth and industry funding, Minister for Primary Industries Ian Macdonald said today.

Minister Macdonald said the NSW Department of Primary Industries (DPI) received funding for several projects led from Armidale under the Federal Government's Climate Change Research Program, supplemented by additional industry funding.

"The projects have been funded as part of the national research effort to reduce agriculture's greenhouse gas emissions," Minister Macdonald said.

"They join a long list of studies being undertaken by NSW DPI into ways to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, lock up carbon and adapt to changing climatic conditions.

"This funding bolsters the Department's research in the theme area of climate, water, soil and forests where State Government scientists are working on around 100 projects across NSW."

Member for the Northern Tablelands Richard Torbay welcomed the news.

"This is a great boost for the local community," he said.

"Armidale and the University are playing a vital role in climate change and this is further evidence of that.

"This funding guarantees that critical research projects will be maintained despite the global financial crisis and local industry can rest assured the NSW Government remains committed to delivering on its promises in this area."

The new projects are:

### **Clean cow research**

A study of genetic variation in beef cattle herds that differ in methane production has received \$1.04 million to evaluate the potential for breeding cattle with reduced methane emissions without compromising animal performance.

Research into techniques for reducing methane production in ruminants by eliminating microscopic organisms called protozoa from the rumen and through the use of dietary supplements has received a funding contribution of \$540,000.

Meat and Livestock Australia will supplement both studies with \$60,000 for each project.

### **Soil carbon research**

NSW DPI has received \$1.05 million towards a project to measure carbon levels in the soil, being undertaken in conjunction with the University of New England and the NSW Department of Environment and Climate Change.

It will be supplemented with a further \$400,000 from the Grains Research and Development Corporation (GRDC).

“The project will measure current carbon levels in a range of soils under different farming systems,” Country Labor MLC Christine Robertson said.

“This is a vital step in understanding carbon storage in the soil and could have a significant impact on greenhouse gases by leading to practical methods of locking up vast amounts of carbon within the soil.

“Sampling will be done at 20 long term trial sites and a further 25 sites on private land to define carbon amounts and variations, in different combinations of land use and soil type.

“The GRDC has contributed a further \$400,000 to NSW DPI to work with the Universities of New England and Melbourne to measure nitrous oxide emissions from winter cereals.

“The goal of this research is to identify the impact different row placements and crop rotations have on nitrous oxide emissions.”