



The Hon Katrina Hodgkinson MP

Minister for Primary Industries

Minister for Small Business

MEDIA RELEASE

Monday, 24 October 2011

MINISTER ANNOUNCES SUPPORT FOR SOUTHERN NSW FARMERS

Farmers in southern NSW are set to benefit from the appointment of a new rural support worker to be based at Albury, Minister for Primary Industries, Katrina Hodgkinson and Member for Albury, Greg Aplin announced today.

“Di Pritchard has strong links to the local community and brings decades of experience to the important Rural Support Worker program,” Katrina Hodgkinson said.

“In her new role, Ms Pritchard will help farming families prepare their businesses for what could be around the corner including natural disasters such as droughts, floods and bushfires, pest incursions, and financial hardship.

“Prior to this role, Ms Pritchard held a range of positions supporting and helping rural communities. She worked as a rural family support worker with Centacare and project officer with the Victorian Department of Planning and Community Development.

“Ms Pritchard joins a team of rural support workers located in key farming regions across the State and will work alongside other community groups, Government agencies and emergency services.”

Honouring a pre-election commitment, Katrina Hodgkinson said the Rural Support Worker program has been strengthened to build on the work that had been undertaken during the drought.

“Australia is one of the toughest places in the world to farm and the strengthened rural support worker program is about working with farmers to build long-term resilience in our farming communities,” Ms Hodgkinson said.

“We need to move away from a reactive approach to one which focuses on helping farmers proactively prepare for adverse events and future challenges.”

Greg Aplin welcomed the announcement saying Ms Pritchard’s work was vital for the local community.

“I spoke with Minister Hodgkinson about this issue and am pleased that our local farming community will now be afforded the necessary assistance to ensure their growth and support in times of need,” Mr Aplin said.

Di Pritchard will be based out of NSW DPI’s District Office at Albury and will commence her role on 24 October.