



Katrina Hodgkinson MP

Minister for Primary Industries

Minister for Small Business

MEDIA RELEASE

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SUCCESSION PLANNING SPECIALIST WINS

A succession planner with skills in law, business and psychology has been awarded the State's top honour for rural women by the Minister for Primary Industries Katrina Hodgkinson.

Isobel Knight, from Loomberah near Tamworth, edged out Vivien Thomson AFSM (Australian Fire Service Medal), from Muttama in the Riverina, to win the 2013 NSW-ACT Rural Industries Research & Development Corporation (RIRDC) Rural Women's Award.

"Isobel was selected from an impressive field which displayed the resourcefulness, determination and creativity we have come to recognise as the hallmark of rural women across Australia," Ms Hodgkinson said.

"The success of the family farm often hinges on the strength of the family, so Isobel's skills have clearly been invaluable in this very challenging field.

"Isobel's company 'proAGtive' has worked with more than 400 individual families to navigate the complex field of succession planning and so her work has made a positive impact on many farming communities across NSW."

The RIRDC Rural Women's Award celebrates the important contribution of women to rural industries, and provides a bursary of \$10,000 to the winner to realise her vision for rural Australia.

Ms Knight indicated that she will use the Award bursary to develop a user-friendly online succession planning platform that is affordable, accessible and flexible. She hopes this will inspire farming families to start the succession planning process and encourage more young people to return to family farm businesses helping to sustain and create stronger, more vibrant rural communities.

Ms Hodgkinson also congratulated this year's runner up, Vivien Thomson.

"Vivien has a strong commitment to primary industries and rural communities, having been involved in the fire fighting industry for over 25 years," Ms Hodgkinson said.

"Isobel and Vivien are both deserving of recognition through this prestigious award and I congratulate them for their outstanding achievements and valuable contribution to Australia's agricultural sector," Ms Hodgkinson said.

Isobel will now compete for the national RIRDC Rural Women's Award to be announced in October in Canberra.