



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

STATE GOVERNMENT AND UNIVERSITY OF NEWCASTLE CELEBRATE NEW RESEARCH COLLABORATION

Closer ties between the NSW Department of Primary Industries (DPI) and the University of Newcastle (UoN) were formalised at a ceremony in Ourimbah on the NSW Central Coast today.

Minister for Primary Industries Ian Macdonald and Professor Nicholas Saunders, Vice Chancellor of the UoN, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for the relocation of NSW DPI Narara staff to the University of Newcastle's Central Coast Campus.

"The MoU puts in place an exciting collaboration between two great institutions with a track record of success in the field of research, development and extension," Minister Macdonald said.

"This includes the accommodation of more than 60 DPI staff and the construction of new state-of-the-art facilities at the Central Coast Campus.

"It will result in a critical mass of researchers focusing on key areas of importance to NSW - particularly in areas of mutual interest such as plant sciences.

"New technologies and research findings will reach the primary producers of NSW more quickly and efficiently under this new arrangement."

Mr Macdonald described staff from DPI's Gosford Primary Industries Institute at Narara as leaders in market access and greenhouse horticulture research.

"Examples of current research include greenhouse vegetable production, new green tea varieties, improved fruit fly management, and increased market access," he said.

Member for The Entrance Grant McBride welcomed the move.

"In addition to research efforts, these DPI staff will help supervise PhD students studying plant sciences at the Ourimbah campus," he said.

"Staff from both DPI and UoN will also be able to undertake research activities at the Somersby field station.

"While the new laboratory and technical facilities will be at Ourimbah, retaining the 67 ha Somersby field station will continue to attract and enable the continuation of scientific projects relevant to the Central Coast region."

Mr Macdonald said DPI has a strong track record of working effectively with universities such as Charles Sturt, New England, Southern Cross and Sydney Universities.

“Working together with such internationally-renowned universities has clear benefits and I look forward to continuing this collaborative approach with the University of Newcastle.”