



**Troy Grant**  
Deputy Premier

**Niall Blair**  
Minister for Primary Industries  
Minister for Lands and Water

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **HOME GROWN TALENT TAKES OUT RURAL WOMEN'S AWARD**

Central West food writer and farmer, Sophie Hansen has been crowned winner of the 2016 NSW-ACT Rural Women's Award.

Deputy Premier Troy Grant said Mrs Hansen, based in Orange, is a deserving winner whose work will have far-reaching benefits.

"Distance has not stopped Mrs Hansen creating a dynamic online community, showcasing the best produce of the Central West and the people behind it," Mr Grant said.

"She is an extremely talented woman whose ambition to help others grow their businesses is both inspiring and generous.

"Her project, My Open Kitchen, will empower others to embrace social media to gain new opportunities and reap long-term benefits to their farming businesses and rural communities."

Minister for Primary Industries, Land and Water Niall Blair said this year's finalists are great examples of women making outstanding contributions to their regional communities and it is fitting they are honoured on International Women's Day.

"Women play a pivotal role in the fabric of our regional communities and this award is so important in recognising the hard work of these women and all that they do for regional NSW," Mr Blair said.

"I congratulate Fiona Mead, Aimee Snowden and Hannah Wandel, who were selected from an exceptional field of nominees and are all leaders and role models for regional NSW."

Mrs Hansen will receive a bursary of \$10,000 and the opportunity to participate in the Australian Institute of Company Directors' course. The other finalists will each receive a \$1000 NSW Department of Primary Industries Leadership Bursary for skills and leadership development.

Mrs Hansen will compete for the National RIRDC Rural Women's Award on 12 October at Parliament House, Canberra.

The Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation award is coordinated by NSW Rural Women's Network, through the Department of Primary Industries, and supported by NSW Farmers, Office of Environment & Heritage, The Country Women's Association of NSW, and Career & Life Matters.