



Adam Marshall
Minister for Agriculture
Minister for Western NSW

MEDIA RELEASE

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FOUR NSW FINALISTS ANNOUNCED FOR PRESTIGIOUS RURAL AWARD

Minister for Agriculture and Minister for Western NSW Adam Marshall today announced the four finalists for the 2019 NSW-ACT AgriFutures™ Rural Women's Award. The finalists were selected for their potential to drive positive change in rural communities and primary industries.

This year's finalists are Ellen Downes from Canowindra, Lisa McFadyen from Condobolin, Jo Palmer from The Rock and Karin Stark from Narromine.

"The four finalists are all fantastic role models and a strong reminder that rural NSW is in great hands," Mr Marshall said.

"Each applicant has submitted a project which is innovative, shows strong leadership and serves to drive regional communities and primary industries' sustainability, growth and prosperity.

"I congratulate Ellen, Lisa, Jo and Karin on becoming finalists in this year's awards."

Westpac Agribusiness Regional General Manager for Southern NSW Sam Gaston said this year's finalists were opening doors to new possibilities and empowering other women along the way.

"Women are often the cornerstones of regional industries, businesses and almost always are the backbone of regional communities," Mr Gaston said.

"We believe rural and regional women should be celebrated and elevated, and we believe the Awards create a platform for opportunity so that Australian women can use and develop their skills to benefit their industries and their communities."

The NSW-ACT winner will be announced at a ceremony at NSW Parliament House and will compete for the national award later this year. The winner will receive a \$10,000 Westpac bursary to implement their ideas, along with access to business, leadership and mentoring opportunities. The three finalists will receive a \$1,000 Department of Primary Industries Leadership Bursary for skills and business development.

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2019 finalists

Ellen Downes, Canowindra

Ellen is using her own experience of forced succession to ensure farming families have the appropriate planning, business structures and inclusive collaboration in place, to ensure a thriving Agriculture sector for generations to come. Ellen's project is to empower women to become more actively involved in farm businesses through involvement in AgEDGE, a not-for-profit company in which peer businesses share their own first-hand experiences to support others to successfully navigate the agricultural landscape.

Lisa McFadyen, Condobolin

Lisa is the founder and CEO of Secure Impact, a Rural Property and Agri Asset Marketplace for Australian farmers. Committed to changing the perception around farm transition, Lisa's award project will provide farming families and businesses with resources, education and assistance to help them shift from a 'reactive' approach, to a proactive approach, where more opportunities are created to drive their farm and business forward in a viable and sustainable manner.

Jo Palmer, The Rock

Jo is the founder and Managing Director of Pointer Remote Roles, an online business that facilitates remote work opportunities by connecting employers with suitable candidates, regardless of where they live. Her award project is an online portal that supports women to work remotely and provides access to online resources and training. It will facilitate remote work opportunities by connecting businesses all over Australia with talented professionals living in regional, rural and remote regions.

Karin Stark, Narromine

Karin is harnessing her passion for conserving the natural environment to raise awareness of the opportunities and benefits of renewable energy for sustainable agriculture. Her project, the inaugural 'Renewables in Agriculture Conference & Expo', will raise awareness of the opportunities and benefits of renewable energy and facilitate the adoption by farmers. It will build and strengthen networks to secure long term partnerships between industry, government and farmers to drive this emerging industry forward into the future.