

Media Release



Date 15 November 2010

Sunbeam Future Farmers Fund to go again in 2011

Enthusiasm for the Sunbeam Future Farmers Fund has guaranteed the scheme – which provides \$1,000 each to farmers and their apprentices – will grow stronger in 2011.

Rural Skills Australia (RSA), in conjunction with Sunbeam, is delighted to announce that the Sunbeam Future Farmers Fund, launched in October 2009, will continue in 2011. This year, 27 employers from across Australia, together with 43 of their Production Horticulture Australian Apprentices, were successful in securing sponsorship payments under the Sunbeam Future Farmers Fund.

“The RSA-Sunbeam partnership is designed to assist the next generation of Australians on the land to expand their skills by providing financial support to their employers,” RSA Executive Director Geoff Bloom said. “Full-time, part-time or school-based Production Horticulture Apprenticeships are eligible.”

“Experience shows that enabling young people to develop their practical skills through on-the-job training is critically important to making sure the skills of employees coming into the workforce matches the needs of the sector.”

Once again Sunbeam will donate \$1,000 to each approved farmer under the Future Farmers Fund, which can go towards the cost of their apprentice. In addition, Sunbeam will commit another \$1,000 bonus payment payable to each participating apprentice on the successful completion of their Production Horticulture Certificate II, III or IV qualification.

“We’re excited to be renewing our relationship with such an iconic Australian company,” Mr Bloom added. “Sunbeam has a rich history of providing high quality dried fruit from its established network of over 500 growers.”

“Through the Fund, Sunbeam recognises the value Australian farmers provide to local rural communities and delivers tangible, practical stimulus to farms and rural economies and, of course, contributes to the development of youth and skills within these communities.”

Applications will be accepted from employers of Production Horticulture Certificate II, III and IV Australian Apprentices from anywhere in Australia – closing on 30 April 2011. The program is open to all growers, not just those within the Sunbeam network. However, those successful in receiving sponsorship in 2010 are not eligible to reapply.

RSA will have an active role in marketing and promoting this initiative, and help Sunbeam with the management and coordination of the Fund during 2010/11. More information, including 2010/11 Application Forms, is available online at: www.sunbeamfoods.com.au or www.ruralskills.com.au. Prospective applicants can also contact Rural Skills Australia on 1800 647 798.

[ENDS]

Media Contact: Geoff Bloom on (02) 6273 2308.

Background: Since its inception in 1995, Rural Skill Australia – working in conjunction the National Farmers’ Federation and its member bodies – has fostered improved rural involvement in education and training with a view to enhancing the skills and capacities of new entrants, existing workers and primary producers alike. Over time RSA has contributed significantly to increasing the number of rural and related traineeship and apprenticeship commencements each year, with a view to combating an ageing rural workforce and shrinking rural communities, and equip the next generation of rural workers with transferable, recognised and valued skills.