



# Media Release

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## Swapping Riding Boots for Lab Coats Young Farmers Tackle Gene Technology

Twenty young farmers from across Australia will participate in a hands-on workshop this Thursday and Friday (20-21 September) in an effort to help them better understand the key issues surrounding gene technology.

"We believe such opportunities are critical to assist rural industry make informed decisions about this new production tool, particularly as it relates to individual industries and commodities," said Paula Fitzgerald, Executive Manager, Agrifood Awareness Australia.

"The workshop examines how a genetically modified (GM) product progresses from a scientific concept to a commercial reality, including the testing and assessment process, and in the case of GM crops, the role of field trials," she said.

"Participants will partake in a mixture of hands-on laboratory work, including gene isolation, as well as formal lectures," she said.

"The workshop aims to provide participants with an understanding of the research involved, the advances currently provided by gene technology, and an insight into future research opportunities," she said.

The two-day course, sponsored by Agrifood Awareness Australia, is being held at CSIRO laboratories, and conducted by a combination of young teaching staff and senior scientific researchers.

To date, Agrifood Awareness Australia has put over 50 participants through the gene technology course, including farmers, industry stakeholders and journalists. This gene technology workshop follows on from the successful National Farmers' Federation Young Farmers Forum held earlier in the week.

-Ends-

**For further information contact:**

Paula Fitzgerald on 02 6273 9535 or 0418 160 943.

**The workshop will be held at CSIRO's *Discovery Centre*, Clunies Ross Street, Black Mountain, Canberra. Photo opportunities are available.**