

**MEDIA RELEASE**

**EMBARGOED until Monday, 2 September 2024, 8pm AEST**

## **Drought resilience a key focus in 2025 Nuffield scholarships**

From ESG reporting to lychees; regenerative agriculture to beef – Nuffield Australia’s latest crop of 25 scholarship recipients will bring wide-ranging benefits to the agriculture industry.

The new scholars were announced at a gala presentation dinner at the Grand Chancellor Hotel in Launceston, Tasmania, this evening.

They will spend 15 weeks over the coming 18 months travelling the world, researching the latest developments in their industries before sharing their findings with their peers.

Nuffield CEO and 2013 Scholar, Jodie Redcliffe, expressed pride in the calibre of this year’s scholars.

“Our 2025 scholars represent the future of Australian agriculture,” she said.

“Their dedication to improving farming practices and their eagerness to learn from global leaders will undoubtedly lead to significant advancements within our industry.

“We are excited to see how their experiences will shape the future of agriculture in Australia.”

Five scholarships funded by the Australian Government’s Future Drought Fund are among those announced tonight. These scholars each have a research topic that will help farmers adopt new ways of managing dry conditions for longer.

“We know droughts have a huge impact on farms, but they also have a significant bearing on the health of rural communities more broadly,” Jodie said.

“The Future Drought Fund’s scholars announced tonight will tackle the challenges drought poses across rural Australia.”

Each 2025 Nuffield Scholar receives a \$40,000 bursary to invest in travel and research. They will visit, learn from, and collaborate with some of the world’s leading agricultural businesses and research institutions.

“For more than 70 years Nuffield Scholars have travelled the world, bringing home the latest intelligence, farming practices and developments to share with their peers. Their scholarship is an investment in themselves and their capacity to lead their business, their community and their industry by widening their knowledge and networks,” Jodie said.

## **2025 Nuffield Scholars**

### **NSW**

- **Jock Barnett** from Delungra, near Warialda. Supported by the Future Drought Fund, Jock will study how expanding and diversifying farming enterprises affects drought preparedness.

- **Campbell Chesworth** from Rawsonville, near Dubbo. Supported by RASF and Nuffield Australia's NSW Alumni, Campbell will study ways to build sustainability into farms' bottom lines by embracing circular economy innovations.
- **Nikki Gilder** from Merriwa. Supported by the Yulgibar Foundation, Nikki will study ways to empower women to be on-farm decision makers, strengthening the productivity and climate resilience of Australian farms.
- **Maggie Jarrett** from Orange. Supported by Agrifutures, Maggie will study how small businesses in the agriculture industry can capitalise on environmental, social and governance (ESG) reporting.
- **Alice Jorgensen** from Myall Creek, near Bingara. Supported by Woolworths, Alice will study ways to help farmers transition from annual fodder cropping to perennial pasture systems to boost their farm's resilience to climate variability.
- **Kate Lumber** from Moree. Supported by Cotton Australia and the Cotton Research and Development Corporation, Kate will study ways Australia's cotton industry can use water more efficiently to help strengthen resilience in a changing climate.
- **Iain MacLennan** from Orange. Supported by Hort Innovation's Apple and Pear Fund, Iain will study how apple orchards can operate profitably and sustainably when accounting for carbon.

#### Northern Territory

- **Kari Moffat** from Darwin. Supported by the Future Drought Fund, Kari will study the influence sustainability commitments have on agricultural business decision making to thrive in the face of drought and other pressures.
- **Trudi Oxley** from Katherine. Receiving a Northern Pastoral Scholarship, Trudi will study ways to build soil organic matter in tropical environments.
- **Tarun Richards** from Darwin. Supported by ANZ and the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation, Tarun will study ways for farmers to share the costs and benefits of environmental, social and governance (ESG) reporting with the supply chain and first nations communities.

#### Queensland

- **Cailan Byrnes** from Tolga. Supported by Meat and Livestock Australia, Cailan will study developing cost-effective beef grading systems with innovative technology to optimise eating quality.
- **James Carter** from Brisbane. Receiving a Northern Pastoral Scholarship, James will study how technology has the potential to drive profit for producers and processors in a collaborative approach.
- **Krystal Caton** from Yaamba, near Rockhampton. Supported by the Sylvia and Charles Viertel Charitable Foundation, Krystal will study post-harvest opportunities for lychees.
- **David Woods** from Toobeah, near Goondiwindi. Supported by GrainCorp, David will study why, despite increasing investment, rural Australia's mental health challenges are not improving.

#### South Australia

- **Claire Catford** from Halbury. Supported by the Grains Research and Development Corporation, Claire will study thriving farmers and vibrant communities.
- **Lucy Dodd** from Bordertown. Supported by the Future Drought Fund, Lucy will study how the free-range poultry industry can be better supported in Australia for on-farm diversification for resilience.
- **Paul Evans** from Streaky Bay. Supported by the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation, Paul will study whether a consistent supply of higher quality oysters can be achieved by combining farming methods and technologies.

## Tasmania

- **Connor Wass** from Kingston. Supported by PSP Investments, Connor will study what roadblocks exist for smaller farms to invest in technology and help develop a digital technology roadmap.
- **Tom Youl** from Killiecrankie, on Flinders Island. Supported by the Tasmanian Institute of Agriculture, Thomas will study alternative fodder conservation methods and other ways to make farms more resilient.

## Victoria

- **Joe Druce** from Baynton. Supported by the William Buckland Foundation, Joe will study how various capital options can enable sustainable business growth in the mixed livestock sector.
- **Tom Polkinghorne** from Dunkeld. Supported by the Natural Resources Conservation Trust, Tom will study how livestock producers, under increasing pressure to be productive and efficient, can rise to this challenge while achieving environmental outcomes.
- **Hamish Robertson** from Hamilton. Supported by the Future Drought Fund, Hamish will study whether wool production could be more efficient to promote resilience in dry times.
- **Thanh Truong** from Melbourne. Supported by Rabobank and Nuffield Australia's Victorian Alumni, Thanh will study the opportunities social media can bring to Australian growers, researching its best practice uses in marketing strategies to increase engagement with the sector.

## Western Australia

- **Tyson Cattle** from Perth. Supported by the Future Drought Fund, Tyson will study whether the \$500-600 million Australian agriculture spends on advocacy and representation each year is money well spent, and what lessons the industry can learn from the rest of the world.

## ACT

Nuffield Australia and CSIRO have an established partnership that promotes understanding between Australian scientific research and the agriculture industry. In 2025, Dr Jonathan Richetti will be the eighth CSIRO scientist to participate in key components of the Nuffield program: the Awards Dinner and National Conference, the Contemporary Scholars Conference (CSC) and the Global Focus Program (GFP).

## More information, interviews and photos

More detailed biographies of the 2025 Nuffield Scholars are available [here](#).

Photos of the Scholars can be downloaded [here](#).

**For more information or to organise an interview with the 2025 Nuffield Scholars, contact: Peter Somerville at [peter@curriecommunications.com.au](mailto:peter@curriecommunications.com.au) or 0403 868 984.**

## About Nuffield Australia

Nuffield Australia has been supporting Australian agriculture for more than 70 years. Nuffield Australia awards scholarships each year to primary producers and people in closely associated industries, to foster personal development and build industry capacity. A Nuffield scholarship lets Australian producers interact with leading and innovative businesses across the globe to find ideas and forge connections that improve our food and fibre value chains, keeping our industry one step ahead.

To learn more about Nuffield Australia, visit [www.nuffield.com.au](http://www.nuffield.com.au) or follow us on [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#), [Instagram](#) and [X](#).