

QUESTION ON NOTICE
No. 809
Asked on Tuesday, 23 May 2006

MS MALE asked the Minister for Primary Industries and Fisheries (MR MULHERIN)-

QUESTION:

How does the Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries support women working in Queensland's primary industries?

ANSWER:

There are over 23,000 women working in agriculture, fishing and forestry in Queensland or 31 percent of the workforce. The Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries has a unit dedicated to supporting and promoting the work of these women.

For the past seven years the Women in Rural Industries unit has provided a diverse range of information and professional development services, including:

- electronic newsletters distributed to over 1700 women and men across the state - 85% of whom are primary producers;
- scholarships for women to attend Australian Institute of Company Directors courses; and
- management of the prestigious Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation's Rural Women's Award.

I am pleased to advise that a Queensland producer, Martha Shepherd, was named the first ever Australian winner of this Award in Canberra on 23 May 2006.

Martha represents a growing band of women working in primary industries who are establishing niche food and fibre businesses on-farm and making important contributions to regional economic development in Queensland.

In October 2006, the Department will profile 40 of these gourmet growers and their families to the media, chefs, distributors, government trade and business advisors and the general public at the third Enterprising Women in Rural Industries Trade Show in Brisbane. Products on show will include specialty organic meats - goat, duck, chicken, venison and beef; seafood, wine, baked goods, oils, cheeses and other dairy products, nuts, and much more.

This trade show not only supports and profiles these producers; it also highlights the tremendous diversity and quality of Queensland food.