



MEDIA RELEASE

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New training opportunities to benefit rural communities

Rural training will take a leap forward in 2007 with the introduction of a host of new areas of specialization at the Australian Agricultural College Corporation (AACC).

AACC director Malcolm McKay said the college is responding to changing student and employer demands for more focused courses that give students real skills.

Mr McKay said the new areas of specialization will also strengthen AACC's reputation as a leader in agricultural training by enhancing graduate employability.

"The change means that each specialization area has now been carefully matched to the campus that offers the best resources to meet the current and future needs of students," he said.

"All of our campuses offer farm scale training and this gives our students the very best opportunity to learn skills in an on-the-job environment. For example, if you want to specialize in tropical beef cattle production you can gain practical, hands-on skills at the Burdekin campus's 4,500 hectare commercial breeder property. Best of all, students studying more than one course will now be able to move between campuses, get the best training available and experience more of regional Australia and the associated farming systems."

Mr McKay said AACC's course restructure is part of the college's move away from being five autonomous colleges to one strong community.

"We are setting up each campus as a centre of excellence in agriculture and training," he said.

"The new areas of specialization will go a long way towards keeping us at the forefront of rural education in Australia," he said.

The new areas of specialization include:

- Dalby campus – Integrated crop and livestock production, rural business management and farm engineering.
- Emerald campus – Beef cattle, irrigated cropping and horse breeding.
- Longreach campus – Arid zone livestock activities including stud and commercial beef cattle, horse breeding and training, sheep and wool production and farmed meat goats.
- Mareeba – Conservation and land management and production horticulture.

- Burdekin – Tropical beef cattle production, horse breeding, sugar production, production horticulture and engineering.

Media enquires, interviews:

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Photo attached.

Photo caption: AACC Director Malcolm McKay (middle) with two AACC students set to benefit from the College's new areas of specialization – John Williams and Holly Caskey.