

Wednesday, 6 September 2017

**Media contacts:** Winner: Sarah Hazel 0430 353 661  
1st Runner up: Stefan Anesbury 0434 390 466  
2nd Runner up: Kate Fairlie 0448 248 598  
Award Coordinator: Peter Angus 0408 826 009

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## Agricultural teacher named State Rural Ambassador

An agricultural teacher from Orroroo in the Southern Flinders Ranges has been announced as the winner of the 2017 State Rural Ambassador Award – as the awards program reaches its milestone 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

Sarah Hazel, 26, representing the Northern Region was named winner at the State Rural Ambassador Awards dinner run by the SA Country Shows Association last night.

As an agricultural teacher at Orroroo Area School, Ms Hazel is passionate about rural education and has brought her class to this year's Royal Adelaide Show to participate in several exhibitor classes, including the school dairy program.

At school, she provides her students with enriched learning experiences including the Wool4School design competition, preparing led animals to take to the Royal Adelaide Show, the Cows Create Careers program, the South Australian Living Arts exhibition and many more activities.

Ms Hazel grew up on a fifth-generation family farm in Kapunda and although she lives in Orroroo, she keeps actively involved in the Kapunda and Light Agricultural Show Society, having been named the show's Young Rural Ambassador in 2010.

With a keen interest in agriculture and environment, she has contributed significantly to the show's committee helping them continue to build the show's offerings, including a new 'community corner' and newsletter.

### Background

The Rural Ambassador Award, which began in 1998, is run by SA Country Shows and is open to people aged between 20-30 who are committed to their local show and community, and highlights the importance of youth in the agricultural show movement.

2017 marks the 20 year anniversary of the Rural Ambassador Award program.

The runners up for this year's award are Stefan Anesbury (first runner up, Northern region) and Kate Fairlie (second runner up, South East and Border).

The finalists for this year's award are: Karina Marschall (Central), Nicole Filsell (Southern), Daniel Ryan (South East and Border) and Courtney Johnson (Eyre Peninsula).

The Rural Ambassador Award is sponsored by PIRSA, the Royal Agricultural and Horticultural Society of SA Education Foundation, Stock Journal, RM Williams and the Showmen's Guild of SA.

The winner and two runners up will go on a two-week overseas study tour as their major prize. In addition, the group of finalists will go to the Sydney Royal Easter Show in 2018.

#### **Quotes attributable to Jo Collins Executive Director Agriculture Food and Wine**

PIRSA is proud to support the State Rural Ambassador Award, which recognises the committed young people who are actively involved in their local communities through the agricultural show movement.

I congratulate SA Country Shows on the 20 year milestone anniversary of the award.

Over the past 20 years, this award program has made a significant impact on young people in agriculture and rural communities, providing ambassadors with a launching pad for many great opportunities in gaining leadership roles in their communities.

The finalists this year are high achievers dedicated to their communities and regions.

These young people are the future of our agricultural industries, are a core part of our regions, and are significant contributors to our economy.

Well done and congratulations to the winner, Sarah Hazel from Orroroo, and the runners up and finalists of this year's award.

#### **Quotes attributable to Rural Ambassador Award State Coordinator Peter Angus**

Over the past 20 years of the Rural Ambassador Award, hundreds of young people participated in the program at local show, association and state levels making substantial contributions to their communities.

Many are now connected through their careers, particularly in primary industries, and living in the same communities.

The state finalists this year are great examples of young people who are involved in their rural communities and passionate about their chosen careers and volunteer roles.

I am sure their skills and enthusiasm will be beneficial to the SA Country Show Movement as they network and bring back new ideas to their own shows.

#### **Quotes attributable to Rural Ambassador Award winner, Sarah Hazel**

I am truly honoured to represent such a motivated and passionate group of ambassadors and the show societies of South Australia.

I hope to highlight the current and future fabulous connections being made between country shows and royal shows, agriculture and education.

Over the past three days at the Royal Adelaide Show, I've experienced a behind the scenes look, meeting so many people and getting an insight into the generational history of those involved in the RAS.

I want to ask and encourage more young people to be involved in local shows, as sometimes it takes one person to approach another and invite them.

I am keen to highlight the amazing opportunities presented through shows, the Rural Ambassador Award, exhibiting and junior judging.