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Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development

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Gawler Show's Mackenzie Wilson named Young Rural Ambassador for 2023

Mackenzie Wilson from Williamstown in the Barossa is South Australia's Young Rural Ambassador for 2023.

Mackenzie, who represents the Gawler Show and the Northern Show Region is studying for a double degree in Journalism and the Arts at the University of South Australia. She has been a very active volunteer for the Gawler Show, including as an office holder in the Youth Team. Mackenzie has a deep interest in the history of her region and is a leader by example for increasing youth participation in her community.

The runner up was Daniella Yates from the Kimba Show and Eyre Peninsula Show Association. Daniella is enjoying a gap year as governess at Inverleigh West Station before embarking on a Bachelor of Agriculture course. She has been committed to local shows since childhood with art collection entries to current volunteer work behind the scenes with a strong appreciation of the importance of the local show to the community.

The Young Ambassador Award, supported by the Department of Primary Industries and Regions, has been run by SA Country Shows for 25 years. While the award recognises the contribution made by these particular young people it also acknowledges the importance of strong youth participation to the agricultural show movement. The awards have become a valuable succession process for South Australia's country shows with entrants often assuming leadership roles within their respective show societies, communities and within agricultural industries.

The 2023 state winner and runner up were announced at a dinner on Friday 14 July at the Adelaide Showground.

2023 Young Rural Ambassador Award state finalists:

Winner, Mackenzie Wilson (Northern); Runner up, Daniella Yates (Eyre Peninsula); Brooke Woodfield (Central Districts); Tess Gerhardy (Northern); Bella Minge (South East and Border); Ryan O'Shaughnessy (South East and Border) and Nathan Lush (Southern).

Quotes attributable to Clare Scriven

The Young Rural Ambassador Award recognises the contributions made by young people to their local shows. Their work and commitment have such a positive effect on the wider community and is a great source of confidence for the future of agricultural industries and the strengthening of regional South Australia.

It is wonderful that the Limestone Coast had such a strong showing in these awards, with Bella Minge from Penola and Ryan O'Shaughnessy from Naracoorte both speaking very well about the importance of involvement in country shows. They are excellent representatives for our local areas.

Congratulations to Mackenzie on winning South Australia's Young Rural Ambassador Award for 2023 and well done to the other six finalists who represented their show societies with distinction. They are all exceptional individuals of whom their communities are rightly proud. I wish them all the best for their careers and all the promise that lies ahead.

Quotes attributable to Mackenzie Wilson

I am honoured to be acknowledged by this award. It's not a competition though as all finalists and entrants were worthy, but one had to be chosen. We all share the same commitment to our respective shows, and we are all great ambassadors representing young people from across regional South Australia.

I will make the most of this opportunity as the Young Rural Ambassador for South Australia to meet new people from across the state. I specifically want to learn more about the networks of organisations that support and develop local shows and wider primary industry that is so important to our regions and state.