



Scholarship feeds Rozzie's career hopes



WHEN SHE FINISHES her Bachelor of Animal Science degree at the end of 2014, Rozzie O'Reilly intends to work as a nutritionist, combining knowledge from genetics and animal nutrition to optimise livestock production.

But unlike a lot of university students, Rozzie already has in-depth experience of her chosen career path, and agriculture in general, thanks to a Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation Horizon Scholarship. As well as providing an annual bursary of \$5000, the scholarship has exposed Rozzie to industry placements and filled her contact book with the names of peers and mentors from across Australia.

Particularly influential was a placement she undertook at a 32,000-head feedlot in Glen Innes, New South Wales. "I believe that this placement truly cemented my passion to become a nutritionist, as it showed me just how influential nutrition is to production," Rozzie says. Although she grew up on a small farming enterprise in Narrandera, New South Wales, this placement opened her eyes to more intensive production practices.

"I have since completed work experience at another two feedlots, completed a feedlot management unit at university, and recently attended the 2013 Australian Lot Feeders Association biennial conference, 'BeefWorks'."

The University of New England student credits another placement, at Moxey's Dairy Farm in Forbes, New South Wales, as providing insight into an aspect of agriculture of which she previously

had little experience. "And this dairy is no ordinary dairy. Moxey's is the largest dairy in the Southern Hemisphere, and while I was there they were milking just over 2000 cows three times a day, producing 75,000 litres of milk per day. On returning home, I gained a job in a dairy farm closer to home, and worked there all Christmas holidays."

Lallemand Animal Nutrition, a company based in Maroochydore, Queensland, sponsors Rozzie's scholarship, and she recently spent three weeks travelling around the countryside with the company's technical service manager. The trip centred on "speaking to producers about Lallemand's products, and offering nutritional solutions to aspects of animal health that were limiting production."

She has found her sponsor to be particularly nurturing of her aspirations, with Lallemand's managing director now a mentor. "The best part of the Horizon Scholarship is all the networking that is made available through the program, and not only at the four-day Horizon conference held in Canberra each year."

Rozzie has seized other opportunities that have arisen through her university study, including being part of the 2013 Australian meat judging team, which travelled to the US on a four-week study and competition tour. She has also participated in multiple industry conferences such as the Young Beef Producers Forum and the Charlie Arnott workshop, largely supported by the Horizon Scholarship program.

As a result of her broad experience of agriculture, Rozzie is a passionate advocate for the knowledge and care applied by Australia food producers to their work.

"If producers didn't care for the welfare of their animals, their industries would not be sustainable, meaning they wouldn't be able to support their livelihood. The same principle applies to farming crops; if farmers don't crop their crops in a sustainable manner, then in the future there will be no agriculture industry." ●

The Horizon Scholarship is open to students entering their first year of university and studying a degree related to agriculture, such as agricultural science, rural science, livestock/animal science, veterinary science or agribusiness.

For more information and an application form visit the RIRDC website, www.rirdc.gov.au/horizon, or call RIRDC on **02 6271 4100**.

Horizon Scholarship sponsors are RIRDC, Australian Pork Limited, the Australian Egg Corporation Limited, Lallemand Animal Nutrition, the Grape and Wine Research and Development Corporation, Woolworths, Horticulture Australia Limited, Meat and Livestock Australia, the Cotton Research and Development Corporation, the Grains Research and Development Corporation, Australian Wool Innovation, Sugar Research Australia, McCaughey Memorial Institute and the Australian Department of Agriculture.

