



Horizon helps Tiffany bridge science and production

TIFFANY HUNT SEES a future for herself in helping to bridge the gap between advances in agricultural science and more efficient, productive and profitable farming. And she already has a foot in both camps, as it were – the result of a farm upbringing, her university studies and connections she has made through the Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation (RIRDC) Horizon Scholarship program.



Tiffany said. “The professional skills and industry exposure gained from the workshops has been very useful.”

One of the greatest benefits of the program for Tiffany has been the support of mentors from her university and industry, who have helped to give her direction and to stay on track with her studies. “This has been really valuable, particularly in my first two years,” she said.

Her Horizon sponsor is the Grains Research and Development Corporation (GRDC), and she has already established a network of contacts within the GRDC and with grower-led research and extension groups. This has given her exposure to the opportunities and advances within crop sciences, and has also helped to refine her career direction towards agronomy and extension.

Through the Horizon Scholarship program she was able to undertake a work placement with the grower-led extension group Southern Farming Systems, based in Victoria, helping with research for the national GRDC-funded Grain & Graze program. From there she has put together an honors project for the final year of her degree, experimenting with dual-purpose cropping and sowing times on the NSW Northern Tablelands. She said the project links in with several other research projects supported by the Grain & Graze 2 program.

Maintaining her connection with people living and working in rural communities is important to Tiffany and as an agronomist she hopes to help producers and rural communities remain sustainable and competitive, through innovation and the adoption of new technologies. ●

Tiffany grew up on her family’s property near Warialda in northern NSW, a mixed cropping and livestock operation, which has now become a specialised beef cattle enterprise. For the past three years she has been studying a Bachelor of Rural Science at the University of New England, which she expects to complete this year.

To assist with her studies, Tiffany was awarded a RIRDC Horizon Scholarship and is one of the program’s first scholars. She says being part of the Horizon program has provided her not only with financial support, but also with career guidance and personal development.

“The Horizon program is the only one of its kind for students studying agricultural sciences,” Tiffany said. “It offers a \$5000-a-year bursary, but it is the academic mentoring, work placements, professional development workshops and industry exposure that makes this program unique. I would encourage anyone who is passionate about food production and the future of agriculture to apply to the program.

“Over the past three years, through the annual workshops, we have received support and training, not just as students, but as young leaders in the 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.

Applications close on 1 February 2013 and scholarship recipients are announced in late March 2013. Application forms can be downloaded from the RIRDC website – or by contacting RIRDC on 02 6271 4100.

Sponsors of the Horizon Scholarship are Woolworths, Quality Silage Systems, the Australian Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, the Australian Egg Corporation, Australian Pork Limited, the Cotton Research and Development Corporation, the Grains Research and Development Corporation, the Grape and Wine Research and Development Corporation, Horticulture Australia Limited, Meat and Livestock Australia, the Sugar Research and Development Corporation and the Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation.

