**Local rural leaders to claim up to $25,000 in Grants**

**Wednesday 28 October, 2015**

The Royal Agricultural Society of NSW (RAS) Foundation is on the search for young, motivated leaders in rural areas who are looking to improve their community through local projects.

Funding of up to $25,000 will be available for Community Futures Grants, a program for NSW residents aged 35 and under, which encourages young people in rural areas to take a leadership role in improving their local community.

Now in its eighth year, the Community Futures Grant has gifted over $425,000 to projects across NSW and will commit a further $90,000 in 2016. The majority of funds were raised during the Sydney Royal Easter Show, with a large portion coming from the sold out Ag Bag, the Foundation’s very own Australian produce Showbag.

RAS Foundation Executive Officer Kate Ross said the Community Futures Grants have the potential to galvanise a town and make a real difference.

“We’re proud to say at the Foundation we’ve genuinely been able to make a difference in rural NSW communities and bind them together with projects that provide tangible assets and outcomes,” said Ms Ross.

“Over the last seven years, we’ve granted 24 NSW communities with funding and now we’re on the search for the next leaders and towns with big and small aspirations. If you’ve got a great idea and would like to make a difference in your community, submit your application to us at the RAS Foundation,” Kate Ross said.

Applications for the Community Futures Grant will be judged on several criteria including innovation, impact on the community and plans for implementation. Applicants must identify an existing community organisation or group to partner with to deliver their project. Eligible entrants must be 35 years or under on 1 May, 2016 and projects must be located in rural or regional NSW.

Communities have greatly benefited from the Grant and some excellent projects have been funded, including a mobile agricultural workshop in Coonamble, a natural outdoor play space in Gulargambone, a community arts hub and street rejuvenation in Trundle, and construction of a multipurpose community building in Comboyne.

Interested applicants are encouraged to visit [www.rasnsw.com.au/grant](http://www.rasnsw.com.au/grant)s to find out more about the grant and to complete the online application form.

**Applications close at 5pm on 6 December, 2015** and the recipients will be announced at the 2016 Sydney Royal Easter Show.

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**About the Royal Agricultural Society of NSW (RAS) Foundation:**

The RAS Foundation is a charitable foundation that encourages educational opportunities and helps build strong and sustainable rural and regional communities through a range of targeted grants and scholarships.

Visit [www.rasf.org.au](http://www.rasf.org.au) for more information on the RAS Foundation.

**For further information, including high resolution images, please contact:**

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