

FINAL REPORT

DAQ00125

Conference Sponsorship - QPIF Hermitage Research Station Schools' Plant Science Competition

PROJECT DETAILS

PROJECT CODE: DAQ00125

PROJECT TITLE: CONFERENCE SPONSORSHIP - QPIF HERMITAGE RESEARCH STATION SCHOOLS' PLANT SCIENCE COMPETITION

START DATE: 01.01.2009

END DATE: 22.05.2009

SUPERVISOR: KERRIE RUBIE (ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER)

ORGANISATION: QPIF HERMITAGE RESEARCH STATION

CONTACT NAME: KERRIE RUBIE

Summary

Conference title: QPIF Hermitage Research Station Schools' Plant Science Competition

Date(s) of conference: January 2009 - 22 May 2009 (Presentation Day 30 July 2009)

Location of conference: Nation wide, based from QPIF Hermitage Research Station

Theme of conference: There's a grain in my food - a focus on grains used to feed humans and animals

Total number of conference delegates: The competition attracted over 15,000 students from Queensland , New South Wales , ACT, South Australia & Western Australia . Over 190 students and invited guests attended the annual Presentation Day held at Hermitage Research Station on 30th July 2009.

Breakdown of industry sectors represented:

Government 5% Scientific/Research 5% Other 90%

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Outcomes

Detail the major outcomes of the conference.

The 2009 competition attracted 106 schools, the highest number in its 13 year history. An estimated 15,840 students from Queensland, New South Wales, ACT, South Australia & Western Australia (Prep to grade 12) participated in the competition, gaining more skills and knowledge in the areas of scientific report writing, mathematics, team work, communication and agricultural science, specifically in the area of grains and food production. Through the competition, we aim to develop children's interest in agricultural science by providing interesting, hands-on science experiments that are relevant to the real world and current research projects at Hermitage Research Station. QPIF staff also promote agricultural science as a great career path during visits to schools and the annual Presentation Day. QPIF staff visited schools from Warwick, Killarney, Toowoomba and Brisbane to check the progress of competition experiments and provide general support. 193 students, teachers and family members together with QPIF management staff and competition sponsors attended the annual Presentation Day to formally recognise competition prize winners. A tour of the Hermitage Research Station was included in the day's program, further promoting our current plant science research, products and services.

The following feedback was provided by teachers from participating schools, after completing the competition: "Just to compliment you again on the competition. I use it every year as it has good value in the students education and it compliments my curriculum (or I make it so). The students get significant value in both theory and application. It has also proved a valuable tool for introduction of numerous concepts so I get double value out of it." and "We have enjoyed participating in this competition and thank you for providing the materials required and the support you have offered. We look forward to future opportunities from the QPIF Hermitage Research Station to develop our knowledge, our skills and understanding of the role science plays in the real world."

Achievement/Benefit

Detail how these outcomes will benefit the Australian grains industry.

- The competition gives students the opportunity to participate in a stimulating, hands-on science project relevant to current QPIF research. Students do experiments, analyse their findings and discuss these in relation to current issues

affecting agriculture today such as coping with variable climates, the need to increase productivity and reduce chemical use and better meet end-user markets.

- Children get a better understanding of the issues facing Australian farmers and agricultural produce exporters and become more aware of the importance of maintaining and developing future markets for Queensland businesses.
- A broad range of agricultural science studies and careers are promoted to students by DEEDI staff during school visits and the annual Presentation Day with the aim to encourage students to pursue further studies or a career in agricultural science.