

MEDIA RELEASE

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Minister Joyce launches RUN Precision Agriculture Flagship

The Regional Universities Network (RUN) today welcomed the launch of its new Precision Agriculture Flagship by the Minister for Agriculture, the Hon Barnaby Joyce MP, at the University of New England in Armidale, NSW.

The Chair of RUN, Professor Peter Lee, said that the initiative, under the RUN Regional Futures Australia banner, would further the network's collaboration to boost the development of regional Australia.

"We are delighted that Minister Joyce has launched this important initiative which brings together the strengths of RUN universities in precision agriculture. A key dimension of farming will be the increasing role of the technology and data sector which is facing the challenges of a variable climate, volatile and discerning markets, a diminishing workforce and changing demographics.

"The Precision Agriculture Flagship is our response and commitment to meeting the needs of this essential sector by building capability and providing the research outcomes for sustainability and growth in the long term," Professor Lee said.

"RUN universities have a strong, vibrant, innovative, connected and growing pure and applied research effort that must continue to be supported to maximise the contribution to research and innovation in regional Australia."

Speaking at the launch, the Executive Director of RUN, Dr Caroline Perkins, said research undertaken at regional universities provided a unique perspective, embedded in the regional Australian community.

"RUN universities are research leaders in precision agriculture, and agriculture more broadly. It makes sense for the network to pool its resources and expertise and collaborate in this important and emerging area," Dr Perkins said.

"RUN's Precision Agriculture Flagship strongly aligns with the proposed food research priority which will be considered by the Commonwealth Science Council in April.

"Regional universities have a fundamental contribution to make in this and other research priority areas."



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