



Rabobank

*Media Release
March 21, 2011*

“Young farmers cannot afford to sit still” – applications open for leading management program

The future decision-makers of the farming world cannot afford to sit still – keeping up with growing trends and technologies and better understanding the agribusiness industry are crucial matters prompting young farmers to apply for the **2011 Rabobank Farm Managers Program**.

Daniel Walker, 28, Longreach, Queensland, who completed the 2010 Farm Managers Program, says the course helped motivate him to take the family business to the next level with confidence and sound agribusiness knowledge.

“I wanted to keep up with growing trends and technologies and improve my understanding of the agribusiness industry – there is so much information out there that can help us better manage our business,” Mr Walker said.

“I really feel re-energised – the program was uplifting and being with other people around my age in a similar position to myself, who want to learn to drive their business to the next level, I’ve gained more self-confidence and direction in what I’m doing with our business.”

Mr Walker runs ‘Wakefield’ a sheep and cattle station in central-western QLD with his wife Brooke, in partnership with his brother and parents. Having taken on the management of his parents’ property, Daniel said the Farm Managers Program was relevant to his family business structure, where succession planning has been a key focus in managing the development of their operation.

The program, which is now in its sixth year, is modelled on Rabobank’s highly-respected Executive Development Program and aims to strengthen the operational and strategic skills of tomorrow’s farm managers, covering topics around leadership, business planning, financial and economic management, and succession planning. It is open to progressive young farmers from across Australia and New Zealand from a range of agricultural commodities and not limited to Rabobank clients.

“I feel more business-savvy now – we’re hungrier knowing the industry is needing growth to support the global demand for food and we are in a good position to get the work done to keep up with huge needs out there,” Mr Walker said.

“There’s a saying that a man standing still is actually a man going backwards.

“You need to keep up with change, get your hands on that information, get those skills, tap into changing technologies, because it gives you a confidence within yourself. You’re not just out with your sheep for the hell of it.”

Announcing the opening of applications for the 2011 Farm Managers Program, Rabobank group executive country banking Neil Dobbin said educating young farmers



Rabobank

**Media Release
March 21, 2011**

with the ability to successfully grow and build on their business management skills was the main focus of the program.

“Agriculture is a changeable industry that has many influencing factors – such as extreme weather, changing markets, and technology improvements – translating these variables into profit and making the right business decisions, specialist knowledge and education is vital,” Mr Dobbin said.

“Young farmers beginning to take the management of their family businesses now will be the future decision-makers of our industry and we need to invest in them, support them, and equip them with the tools to make informed choices going forward.”

Mr Dobbin said issues such as global trends, higher demand for food in Asia, price volatility, gaining access into new markets, and even taking advantage of marketing techniques to strategically position farm businesses are dealt with in the program.

Applications for the 2011 Rabobank Farm Managers Program are open until 29 April with the number of participants limited to 36. The program will be held at Clear Mountain Lodge in Brisbane 20-24 June.

Producers interested in an application form or any further information on the Rabobank Farm Managers Program should contact Rabobank business programs manager Nerida Sweetapple on 02 8115 4139 or email bmp@rabobank.com.

<ends>

Rabobank Australia & New Zealand is a part of the international Rabobank Group, the world’s leading specialist in food and agribusiness banking. Rabobank has more than 110 years’ experience providing customised banking and finance solutions to businesses involved in all aspects of food and agribusiness. Rabobank is structured as a cooperative and operates in 48 countries, servicing the needs of approximately 10 million clients worldwide through a network of close to 1600 offices and branches. Rabobank Australia & New Zealand is one of Australasia’s leading rural lenders and a significant provider of business and corporate banking and financial services to the region’s food and agribusiness sector. The bank has 83 branches throughout Australia and New Zealand.

Media contacts:

Denise Shaw
Public Relations Manager
Rabobank Australia & New Zealand
Phone: 02 8115 2744 or 0439 603 525
Email: denise.shaw@rabobank.com

Jess Martin
Public Relations
Rabobank Australia & New Zealand
Phone: 02 8115 4861
Email: jess.martin@rabobank.com