



SOUTHERN NSW Innovation Hub

SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE,
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Southern NSW Innovation Hub recognised as biosecurity leader at national awards

The Southern NSW Drought Resilience Adoption and Innovation Hub has been named a winner at the 2024 Australian Biosecurity Awards for a unique project with the potential to enhance biosecurity management systems and strategies across the country.

At a ceremony at Parliament House in Canberra yesterday afternoon, the Hub was awarded the top prize for the community category of the awards for its Managing Biosecurity Risks project, which commenced in 2022.

Hub Director Cindy Cassidy says the award is a testament to the project team's hard work, commitment and passion.

"The Southern NSW Innovation Hub is absolutely thrilled to receive this important award from the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry on behalf of the project partners who were integral to its success," she said.

"This is the first time we've entered in these national awards so it's very special. This formal recognition is truly a great endorsement of the Hub's ability to identify and develop truly impactful projects that enhance drought resilience and agricultural innovation."

The Managing Biosecurity Risks project involved collaboration with the community, high-value industry representatives and producers in southern NSW to find ways to increase the speed of tracking possible vectors to reduce, halt or eradicate biosecurity threats.

A key part of the initiative was a pilot of the Track & Trace system – a digital check in/check out app that was used by the NSW wine industry across the Tumbarumba, Canberra, Orange and Mudgee grape growing regions.

Cindy Cassidy said the Track & Trace program assessed whether tracking vectors (carriers of biosecurity risk) could be streamlined through access to live tracing data and what kind of effect that had on responding to potential biosecurity threats.

"NSW Wine, NSW Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development, Onside and the Hub team all came together on Track & Trace with an absolute commitment that we could achieve better biosecurity outcomes if we engaged the supply chain and community in preparedness activities," Cindy Cassidy said.

"The project demonstrated how we can create value and opportunity for community members to be more aware of biosecurity risks and be more active in managing them. The bonus was that through this initiative we recognised its national applicability."

Using local knowledge and facilitating collaboration across government, industry and communities was another key aspect to the project's success. "In the Orange region, we brought together stakeholders from across all levels of government, community groups, and locals from the tourism wine, horticulture and livestock industries to develop



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and test how communities could use the Regional Framework to ensure effective preparedness for biosecurity incursions.”

“I am delighted this award also acknowledges the Hub’s Biosecurity Preparedness in Southern NSW Investment Framework which highlights the need for communities to be actively involved in biosecurity and using local knowledge to develop and implement biosecurity activities.”

The Managing Biosecurity Risks was funded by the Australian Government’s Agricultural Innovation Hubs Program Grant with in-kind co-contributions from partners, stakeholders and participants in the project.

For more information about the Managing Biosecurity Risks and Track & Trace projects, visit the Southern NSW Innovation Hub [website](#).

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Media contacts:

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About Southern NSW Innovation Hub

Southern NSW Drought Resilience Adoption and Innovation Hub connects farmers and rural communities with practical, modern solutions to adapt to a changing climate. As part of a national network, we collaborate with trusted organisations, experts, researchers, and community groups to drive sustainable change, with the long-term goal of improved drought resilience.

Southern NSW Innovation Hub is one of eight Hubs established nationally through funding from the Australian Government’s Future Drought Fund. Southern NSW Innovation Hub works closely with its partners to create a skilled, flexible network that is able to identify and solve the challenges and harness opportunities posed by a changing climate. Southern NSW Innovation Hub partners include Charles Sturt University (Hub lead), Australian National University, NSW Local Land Services (LLS), NSW Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD), Rural Aid, University of Canberra, and the Farming Systems Groups Alliance.

Visit <https://www.csu.edu.au/research/southern-nsw-drought-resilience-hub/home> for more information.