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**PRESS RELEASE: Seven secondary schools awarded a unique entrepreneurial learning program for Year 9 and 10 students thanks to AgriFutures Australia.**

**AgriFutures Australia and startup.business have joined forces to deliver an exciting education program that teaches school kids in rural and regional Australia to solve the problems facing agriculture using innovation and an entrepreneurial mindset.**

After receiving applications from rural and regional public high schools:

QLD	Gympie Secondary High School
WA	Boddington District High School
NSW	Kempsey High School
NSW	Ulladulla High School
SA	Loxton High School
VIC	Pyramid Hill College
TAS	Wynyard High School

Problems to be addressed include:

Food security

Business growth

Disruptive Ag Tech

Skills capacity shortage

The AgriFutures™ startup.business pilot program will show young people how the skills and mindset of entrepreneurs can allow them to create their own jobs. The Problem Based Learning (PBL) concept naturally reflects the way people learn and develop in real life. Presenting problems (not the solutions) to facilitate learning, will work in conjunction with skill development and awareness activities, presented in the form of modules.

“We have been able to cover the length and breadth of regional and rural Australia to provide access to schools for the AgriFutures™ startup.business Pilot Program,” says startup.business co-founder Jo Burston. “These seven lucky schools will embark on solving some of agriculture’s toughest problems and in the process adapt the learning and mindset of entrepreneurship. We cannot wait to see the innovations, ideas and solutions they present at the end of the program. This is serious impact in the making.”

There are currently four jobs in agriculture for every university graduate studying an agricultural-related degree (Pratley, 2017). However, there are barriers to entrepreneurship in rural and regional areas that education in entrepreneurship aims to overcome. AgriFutures™ startup.business’ unique approach enables students’ passion for, and interest in, business to be integrated into large scale solutions for local problems.

“We are thrilled with the response to this pilot program and are really excited to follow all the schools journeys throughout the program. This is a perfect opportunity to expose high school students to different ways of approaching national rural issues, and importantly expand their horizons in terms of what a career in agriculture could look like”, said AgriFutures Australia Managing Director, John Harvey.

“We can’t wait to see what the students come up with, and will certainly look at how we may be able to grow and expand the program once we are able to understand the impact and results from the initial pilot venture.

## **ABOUT US:**

**AgriFutures Australia** invests in research, leadership, innovation and learning to support industries that do not have their own research and development function, new and emerging industries, and the issues that affect the whole of agriculture. The vision of the organisation is to grow the long-term prosperity of Australian rural industries, which includes partnering and delivering programs and initiatives that attract people to a career in agriculture, building the capability of future rural leaders, and supporting change makers and thought leaders.

**startup.business** was co-founded by Jo Burston and the late Dr Richard Seymour, former Programme Director of Entrepreneurship & Innovation at The University of Sydney, on the premise that entrepreneurship is important for us all, as it’s been shown that entrepreneurial firms account for the clear majority of employment growth. The youth of today will probably end up working for entrepreneurial firms (if they don’t go out and start their own). Startup.business brings entrepreneurial learning in action into classrooms, with programs designed for 10–17 year olds to equip the next generation to create real social and economic impact.

## **CONTACT:**

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