

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY ESTIMATES COMMITTEE A

Date of Hearing: Thursday, 23 May 2019

Daily *Hansard* page No: E114

Division 15: Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation — Service 1, Science

[Supplementary Information No: A45]

Question:

Mr V.A. CATANIA asked the minister for an update on the status of grants under the Agriculture and Aquaculture Entrepreneurship Program in 2018-19.

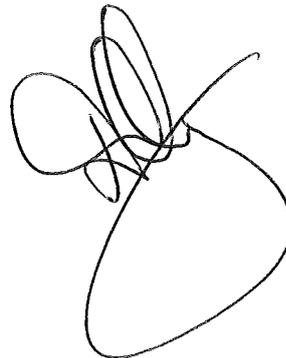
Answer:

The Department of Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation has advertised a round of grants in each of the four years of the Science and Agribusiness Connect initiative. In Rounds 1, 2 and 3 there have been 13 grants awarded. Round 4 of the program is currently under assessment and these grants will be announced in July or August 2019.

There were six new grants awarded in 2018-19 under Round 3 of the Agriculture and Aquaculture Entrepreneurship Program. These Round 3 funded projects were provided to:

- Jonathan Bilton from Athair Aquaculture Pty Ltd to travel with Glenn Dibbin and Roger Barnard to New South Wales to access leading expertise in bivalve culture, and will work with experts to identify Western Australian sites and methods for cultivating Doughboy scallops, a local species that has good potential for aquaculture. They will record their learnings in a report that will be available to other Western Australian farmers who are interested in growing the Doughboy scallops.
- Dr Sofie de Meyer from MaldiiD Pty Ltd who will visit inoculant manufacturing companies and quality control laboratories in Canada, USA, South America and Europe to access international expertise to build a prototype for an inoculant quality test. This quality test will help farmers to know quickly and reliably if their inoculant is of good quality before they use it on their legume crops. Sofie will share the science through research publications and directly with Western Australian industry, including growers.
- Robert Kelly from Livestock Systems Pty Ltd to travel to the eastern states in Australia to identify interstate best practices for buying livestock, which will be used to further develop an online platform for the Western Australian wool and meat supply chain, including farmers. The prototype for the platform will be developed with input from Western Australian industry.
- Kelly Pearce to travel nationally and internationally to seek out data integration and farm business intelligence experts to help with the development of a data integration platform for Western Australian farmers. Kelly is looking for new ways to bring together farm financial, paddock records, market information, weather, inventory and historical farm data to drive real time business intelligence. This will help farmers to make better decisions and improve farm efficiency and profitability.

- Adam Wilson from Great Southern Truffles to seek out experts in key European truffle production markets, to find better ways to create value-added products with truffles, particularly through preservation techniques like canning, blast freezing and freeze-drying, flavour manufacturing and new truffle products. Western Australian truffle farmers are key producers of the Black Winter Truffle 'Tuber melanosporum Vitt' which is suited to the climate of the southern forests. Adam will work with Western Australian farmers to share best practice techniques in truffle processing and value-adding to support a more profitable local industry.
- Luke Wheat from Future Green Solutions Pty Ltd to travel to Europe to seek out the expertise needed for commercial scale black soldier fly farming and the production of proteins and oils for stock feed. Luke will investigate separation technologies, best practice insect husbandry and packaging methods. Luke will work with Western Australian industry associations, universities, growers and farmers to share knowledge on black soldier fly farming, which may offer horticulture and agriculture businesses with a new method for treating waste streams.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several overlapping loops and a long, sweeping tail that curves back towards the main body of the signature.