



Media Release 16th June 2009 **Wimmera region wins *Next Gen Farmers Grant***

The Wimmera Southern Mallee LLEN, (WSMLLEN), in association with the Co-Founders of the Tomorrow's Leaders for Sustainability (TLfS) Program, has been successful in receiving a Next Gen Farmers Grant.

- Training Program covering a range of topics from leadership knowledge and information, sustainability issues, communication and presentation skills, teamwork, project management and career and vocational information.
- Student Projects that are based on local industries, issues and situations.
- Leadership Forum where a select group of 50 students from the Wimmera TLfS program will work alongside 50 students from Melbourne TLfS program in a 3-day / 2-night leadership event.
- Community of Practice Manual where all the findings from the project's action research and evaluation will be used to compile a compendium so that other communities can learn from the Wimmera experience.
- Promotional Video to showcase the program and its impact on all participants, the local community and the local environment.

The Australian Government's *Next Gen Farmers Grant* offers support for projects to improve the leadership and representative capacity of young people entering or involved in primary industries, particularly in the context of the challenges and opportunities in these industries as a result of a changing climate. This project is supported by funding from the Australian Government Department of Fisheries and Forestry under Australia's Farming Future initiative.

Jane Stewart, one of the Co-Founders of the TLfS program says, "It is important to understand the challenges and opportunities faced by all industries as a result of a changing climate. The TLfS program helps young people understand and appreciate the key issues of sustainability while also gaining the knowledge and skills to become leaders in their chosen career. Our goal is to help young people understand the world around them while also helping them develop the ability to think for themselves, communicate their thoughts and feelings, act on their own beliefs and help others act in an ethical and socially responsible way."

The local LLEN is a keen supporter of the program and sees the value of a leadership program embedded in the context of sustainability. Jo Devereaux the Executive Officer of the Wimmera Southern Mallee LLEN says "Our job is assist young people to make a successful transition into education, training, employment in the community and we believe the TLfS Program will enhance our current programs. We are thrilled to receive this Next Gen Farmers Grant and look forward to implementing it in schools within the Wimmera"

For more information about the *Next Gen Farmers Project* contact:

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(Note: LLEN - Local Learning and Employment Network)