

# MEDIA RELEASE

NEWS FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA

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ATTENTION: Chiefs of Staff, News Directors

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## Tasmanian science students report on test-driving career paths

Tasmanian students who have been given the chance to test-drive their future career paths in primary industry will share their experiences **tomorrow** (Thursday, January 29) in a three-way video conference between UTAS' three campuses – Burnie, Launceston and Hobart.

From monitoring animal health and walnut production to pyrethrum research and soil science – more than 40 senior secondary students recently spent a week working in an agricultural industry, with a variety of placements being held across the State.

The video conference will also link up with interstate students who have participated in the program, now being run in Western Australia, South Australia and New South Wales.

“The work placements offer a number of experiences to students, whether it is participating in cutting-edge science experiments, to taking on a scientific project of their own,” UTAS School of Agricultural Science program co-ordinator Dr David Russell said.

“In fact, one student this year had the chance to experience the agricultural industry across the State, travelling from Scamander to Huonville with his host organisation.”

The work placement is part of the Primary Industry Science Scholarship Program, designed to connect students to career opportunities in the primary industries through practical projects and activities.

Operating for more than a decade, the annual program begins in December with a camp on the North-West Coast, before the industry placements are held during January.

“The agricultural industry is a key driver in the national economy and research shows that the industry is going to be in a dire need of professionals in the not-to-distant future,” Dr Russell said.

“Science is part of our everyday lives and this program offers a hands-on, practical opportunity for students to explore a career path.

“The program’s own ‘graduates’ have gone on to study and work in industries in Tasmania.”

The program is co-ordinated by the Primary Industry Centre for Science Education (PICSE), and funded by the UTAS School of Agricultural Science and the Grains Research & Development Corporation (GRDC).

Some examples of students and their work placements include:

- Chase Devereaux (Hobart) – Tasmanian Alkaloids
- Danielle Button (Launceston) – DPIW, Mt Pleasant
- Alexander Best (Cradle Coast) – Botanical Resources Australia (BRA)

(As part of the program, Kate Russell from Hobart College, participated in the Western Australia camp.)

\*\*\*\*Best times for interviews/photos – 12.45 – 1.15pm at each location\*\*\*\*

Locations/contacts at University of Tasmania:

Launceston campus: Sir Raymond Ferrall Centre, Video Conference Room X117.

Contact: Dr David Russell 0427 304 923.

Burnie campus: Video conference room, B159.

Contact: Anna Osborne 0439 665 734.

Hobart campus: “The Underground”, Video Conference Room B102.

Contact: Paul O’Halloran 0409 336 721.

**For more information/interviews contact:**

Dr David Russell, program co-ordinator, 0427 304 923

**Information Released by:**

**The Media Office, University of Tasmania**

**Phone: 6226 2124 Mobile: 0417 517 291**

**Email: [Media.Office@utas.edu.au](mailto:Media.Office@utas.edu.au)**