



# MEDIA RELEASE

## Riverina Grower Wins Phil Watters Award



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*High resolution copies of the above image are available by contacting Jo Pippas, Communications Manager at the Almond Board of Australia on +61 8 8582 2055 or email [jpippas@australianalmonds.com.au](mailto:jpippas@australianalmonds.com.au)*

The 2013 Australian Almond Industry Phil Watters Award was awarded to Riverina almond grower James Callipari at this year's Australian Almond Conference held in Glenelg, South Australia, at the end October.

"The Award is an opportunity to assist industry members with an interest in an area of production or processing to enable them to increase their knowledge and then to share this with the wider industry." said Almond Board of Australia CEO Mr Ross Skinner.

Mr Skinner said the Award is presented every two years and that past recipients had undertaken overseas study tours to learn about soil biology, irrigation technology and supply-chain improvements.

The Phil Watters Award recognises service to the Australian almond industry, in particular a dedication to research, development and the improvement of almond production, adoption of best practice and promotion of horticulture to the community.

In accepting the Award, James advised the conference delegates that he felt very honoured to be the 2013 recipient of this industry Award which also carries with it a bursary of \$10,000.

"It is a privilege to receive this award in honour of a person whose dedication and hard work contributed significantly to the Australian Almond industry" said James.

After completing his Bachelor of Science in Agriculture at the Charles Sturt University in 2002 James returned to the family farm producing winter cereals, rice, vegetables and citrus. In 2006, James and his father Jim made the decision to enter into the almond industry and jointly purchased a property, completely transforming it with plantings over the next three years.

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James really embraced the new challenge and resulted in several innovations. James liaised with harvest equipment manufacturers to produce a cost effective sweeper capable of reducing passes, fuel and labour inputs. James also adapted and implemented GPS auto-steer equipment for installing sub-surface drip; and designed and manufactured equipment to form and reshape tree mounds.

James has interacted with industry and promoted it at every available opportunity, hosting field days, undertaking media interviews and other activities.

The Almond Board of Australia selection committee for the Award noted James' drive and innovation had contributed significantly to him achieving his goal of excellence in his almond orchard.

James will use the prize to fund travels domestically and abroad where he will investigate more advanced production systems that deliver an earlier and more attractive return on investment through increased yield, improved quality and reduced costs of production.

The Award is part funded from a trust administered by the Almond Board of Australia (ABA) and is part funded by Horticulture Australia. It is dedicated to the memory of Phil Watters, a respected individual and dedicated technical officer in the almond industry.

**For further information contact:**

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*For further industry information and local contact information please see the accompanying Press Kit.*

*The Almond Board of Australia (ABA) is a non profit, membership based organisation representing the interests of Australian almond growers, processors and marketers.*

*As the Australian almond industry's peak industry body, the ABA facilitates further growth of the industry, seeks to maximise its profitability and ensure its sustainability, by providing a platform for industry members to collectively respond to industry-wide issues, invest in research and marketing, share knowledge and interact with government and other stakeholders.*

*Key almond growing areas are located in Sunraysia (Victoria), the Riverland and Adelaide (South Australia) and the Riverina region (New South Wales).*

*For more information visit [www.australionalmonds.com.au](http://www.australionalmonds.com.au) or email: [admin@australionalmonds.com.au](mailto:admin@australionalmonds.com.au)*