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Guy Barnett, Minister for Primary Industries and Water

## Tasmanian Women in Agriculture Gathering heads to the Clouds

Women play an integral role in Tasmanian agricultural and today their innovation will be on show as the annual Tasmanian Women in Agriculture (TWiA) Gathering heads to the Cloud.

Today's TWiA state-wide webinar event, replacing the annual weekend Gathering, offers support and educational resources for rural women and features a range of high-level guest speakers and virtual farm-visit tours.

This event is the cornerstone of the TWiA annual program and will feature host of ABC Landline Pip Courtney as the keynote speaker.

Today we are at the re-opened Launceston Harvest Market and the family stall of the 2020 Tasmanian Women in Agriculture Award winner Karen Brock.

Karen is a specialist in plant tissue culture and received a \$10,000 bursary to assist with her important work in delivering improvements to the food production and cut flower sectors.

I also applaud the efforts of researcher and producer Louise Morris from Derby, who took out the 2020 Tasmanian Women in Agriculture Encouragement Award. Louise has started Australia's first farm focused on producing insects for human consumption.

Development Awards, supported by Tasmanian Women in Agriculture, were also recently won by regenerative farming practices advocate Celia Leverton, from Franklin, and community change specialist Robyn Eversole, from Natone.

In its quest to stay connected and inform members, TWiA has also set up a weekly online "Paddock Talks" inviting speakers to address current issues in the agriculture sector.

The Tasmanian Government has provided a total of \$120,000 to TWiA over four years to support a range of programs that build personal and community leadership skills and empower Tasmanian rural women.

Today's TWiA online Gathering will also discuss the sectors response to COVID-19 and the recently released White Paper on the *Competitiveness of Tasmanian Agriculture for 2050* which sets a framework for the Government to work with the agricultural sector to build on the State's strengths, manage risks and respond to significant disruptions and change.

*The contribution women make to Australia's rural industries and regional communities is a vital one and The Tasmanian Liberal Government hopes today's TWiA Gathering in the Cloud is a great success.*