

For immediate release

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Riverlink Awards recognise staff and industry contributions

Kevin Cock, an essential industry representative, Kristen Pitt, a great communication link to growers and the 'Citrus rootstock and scion germplasm acquisition and evaluation team' have all received regional science industry Riverlink awards.

Riverlink Communication and Development Officer, Lee Byrne, congratulated the award winners on receiving the valuable recognition to their work, "Research in the Sunraysia-Riverland region is important to ensure progression for all horticultural industries. The Riverlink Awards aim to recognise research agency staff and industry contributions to regional collaboration, research and extension."

Winner of the Riverlink Industry Award 2007, Kevin Cock, previously Riverlink Council Chair and citrus industry representative, has been integral in the development of the Riverlink Strategic Plan and has devoted much time and energy towards advancement of the Riverlink Major Research Initiatives, across-industry research projects.

Kristen Pitt, winner of the Riverlink Individual Staff Award 2007, is a table grape research officer with the Victorian Department of Primary Industries, Mildura. She has developed strong industry relationships through projects such as 'Best management production manual for Australian table grape varieties' and the ongoing 'Causes and prevention of table grape berry collapse'.

The 'Citrus rootstock and scion germplasm acquisition and evaluation team' have demonstrated excellent skills in working as a collaborative team to win the Riverlink Team Award 2007. Researchers from CSIRO Plant Industry, Merbein, and the New South Wales Department of Primary Industries, Dareton, have worked together to investigate citrus germplasm acquisition, conservation and evaluation for over 10 years.

The value of the ongoing project to Australian citrus growers has been to introduce new rootstock, identify particular tolerances in a range of varieties and improve production knowledge.

Riverlink is a unique network of five federal and state government horticultural research agencies, located in four research stations throughout the Sunraysia-Riverland region. These research agencies work together, sharing resources and expertise, to improve research and development services provided to Australian horticultural industries.

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