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## **AUSTRALIAN EGG INDUSTRY AWARDS ANNOUNCED IN SYDNEY**

**Three Australians who have made a significant contribution to national egg production have been honoured for their work at the 2023 Egg Farmers of Australia industry recognition awards in Sydney.**

The prestigious annual awards program recognises the work of people connected to the Australia's important commercial egg sector – which has one of the lowest carbon footprints of any food protein.

The winners are:

- South Australia's Days Eggs employee Jessica Spencer who was named the ***Egg Farmers of Australia Young Egg Industry Achiever of the Year***.
- Former Queensland United Egg Producers' Executive Officer John Coward who received the ***Egg Farmers of Australia Industry Leader Excellence Award*** - for extensive service to the nation's egg industry.
- Australia's Chief Veterinary Officer Dr Mark Schipp who was presented with the ***Egg Farmers of Australia Collaborative Recognition Award***. This award is presented to a government official in appreciation of their assistance to the nation's egg industry.

Egg Farmers of Australia CEO Melinda Hashimoto said eggs were the most affordable sources of protein for Aussie families and that the industry awards recognised the efforts of those who help to supply them.

"Aussie egg farmers and the people they employ all work very hard to maintain a consistent and clean supply of fresh eggs for Australian families - and the awards show that we value their efforts," Ms Hashimoto said.

Commercial egg farmers produce 17.9 million eggs daily - totalling 6.3 billion eggs a year.

The awards are sponsored by Specialised Breeders Australia (SBA) which supply chicks to egg farms across Australia.

- **Photos attached:** Jessica Spencer (SA), John Coward (Qld), Dr Mark Schipp.
- **Media Contact:** CEO Melinda Hashimoto 0434 999 600

## ABOUT THE WINNERS

**Jessica Spencer** has been an employee of Days Eggs (South Australia's largest egg producer) for over eight years. Jess holds a senior management role and is recognised as a hands-on leader. She manages livestock health, quality assurance, workplace health and safety, leadership training and farm liaison.

More recently Jess has been involved in providing information to egg industry stakeholders and visitors with tours of Days Eggs. To further her work in the industry, Jess completed a Bachelor of Science in Animal Welfare and a Diploma of Agriculture.

The work Jess undertakes ensures that any issues that may arise with Days S.A flocks can be identified and rectified very early on, ensuring the long-term health of each laying hen.

**John Coward** has been involved in the egg industry as the former Executive Officer of Queensland United Egg Producers since 2012 and was as the Queensland Director of Egg Farmers of Australia until his retirement in 2023.

John has provided valuable input into the industry through his biosecurity and food safety knowledge and his relationships with all levels of government. He was a member of the Biosecurity Queensland Ministerial Advisory Council (BQMAC) group.

John helped to set up Egg Farmers of Australia as a national voice for the nation's commercial egg sector.

**Dr Mark Schipp** is the Australian Chief Veterinary Officer and an advocate for the Australian egg industry. He values the importance of preparedness for threats to the national egg and poultry sector such as Avian Influenza (AI).

Dr Schipp is Australia's Delegate to the World Organisation for Animal Health (known as WOA). He also leads Australian agriculture's response to the global threat of antimicrobial resistance (or AMR).

More recently, Dr Mark Schipp spoke about Avian Influenza and the concern about the impacts on Australia at the annual Animal Health Australia Forum. He continues to be a strong advocate to assist the egg industry in many fields related to his national role.