



Troy Blackman 2016 Young Farmer of the Year

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New South Wales beef producer Troy Blackman has taken out the title of 2016 Case IH Young Farmer of the Year, as part of the 2016 Kondinin Group-ABC Rural Australia Farmer of the Year Awards.

The 27-year-old emerged as an outstanding farmer in his own right, with judges impressed by his ability to diversify his Waterfall Australia enterprise; a sustainable farming business Blackman created almost four years ago on the NSW Mid North Coast.

Spread over three properties in the Orara Valley, Waterfall first started as a Charolais stud before growing to include pasture-raised beef and egg components, as well as local contracting, farm retail shop, weekly market stall and farm tourism elements.

In the first year of full time farming, Blackman relished months of hard physical work on the properties to implement sufficient infrastructure and organically increasing pasture health.

Knowing it would take time to grow the stud, he worked on ideas gained from studying international farmers, and visiting small but successful independent farmers within NSW.

The 'chicken caravan' would soon become a critical piece of infrastructure for Blackman, housing chickens 24/7 in the field for pasture with outstanding results.

Waterfall Eggs have now grown to three chicken caravans moving around the pasture every week, with more than 1200 birds, and are now available at eight local retail outlets and on the menu at six local restaurants.

As Blackman saw increased benefits from new seeding and pasture management techniques, it allowed the farm to increase its stocking rates and develop a local grass-fed, sustainably-farmed meat brand.

There is a wide range of gourmet sausages, rissoles and schnitzels on offer as well as great quality beef available by the cut. This bold move has seen a huge increase in the profit margins of raising beef cattle for the farm.

Fast forward to 2016, and Blackman has not only built a sustainable farming operation, but also a profitable retail business.

His passion for animal welfare is well-known, and he has implemented practices around the farm that assist the health of the animals.





Roderick Binny was approached to consult Blackman when the enterprise was in its infancy, and he said Blackman was the “key man in the enterprise”.

Binny described Blackman as “a blank canvas” who consults widely and takes advice on everything.

“He does his research very well,” Binny said.

“He’s very methodical in his approach – he gathers all the facts and information available then puts it together and moves forward.

“He’s come so far so quickly and I see huge growth potential.

Binny said Blackman was a worthy recipient because of two key reasons: he did not grow up on a farm, but learned and innovated very quickly and successfully.

“It’s been quite the revolution, from a rundown coastal property into a highly productive pasture program and profitable business that suits the environment. Troy has done a lot of direct marketing for beef, eggs and the chickens.”

Blackman’s commitment to embracing sustainable and ethical farming has set him apart from his peers, according to sponsor and shortlist judge Bruce Healy from Case IH.

“Troy is an outstanding prospect in all facets of the industry,” Mr Healy said.

“He represents the modern face of farming, which is all about innovation, sustainability and looking to the future – values which are very important to Case IH.

“It’s these values that drive our desire to give back, to ensure the farming community remains strong for generations to come.

“We’re immensely proud to sponsor this award, and while it was a tough choice to pick from such a strong group of finalists, we believe Troy is a worthy winner.”

Photos and interview opportunities can be arranged by contacting Deborah Boxall on 0419 944 286 or email deborah.boxall@kondinin.com.au