

# **MEDIA RELEASE**

**NEWS FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA**

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ATTENTION: Chiefs of Staff, News Directors

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## Major scholarship to mark 50 years of Agricultural Science at UTAS

The launch of a major new scholarship has marked the first day of celebrations of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of agricultural science at the University of Tasmania.

The Professor George Wade Scholarship in Agricultural Science – named after the Foundation Professor of Agricultural Science at UTAS – was launched today at the same time that a lecture theatre in the Life Sciences building on the Sandy Bay campus was renamed in his honour.

The perpetual scholarship aims to be available each year to the most worthy student entering the Tasmanian Institute of Agriculture/School of Agricultural Science.

The UTAS Foundation, which is administering the scholarship, has initiated an appeal to raise \$150,000 by the end of June next year. Already \$50,000 has been raised, including a donation of \$10,000 by George Wade's three sons, announced at today's launch by Ian Wade.

The remarkable impact and legacy of Professor Wade, who was appointed in 1962, was essayed by the UTAS Vice-Chancellor, Professor Peter Rathjen, in his address this morning which kicked off the two-day anniversary program.

"The first Degree of Agricultural Science was offered in 1963," Prof Rathjen said. "Lecturers were appointed progressively over the next four years and we are particularly delighted that four of those original staff members are here today: Doctors Jim Yates, Alan Bray and John Madden, and Prof Bob Menary.

"Prof Wade led Agricultural Science here for 20 years, during which he oversaw a steady growth, appointed staff, developed infrastructure, and from the start, fostered an enviable research reputation which stays with us – we are still very highly regarded for our agricultural research across Australia.

"Many of the people who have studied and worked here attributed that success to the inspiration and initiative of Prof Wade."

Prof Rathjen also acknowledged the achievements of Prof Wade's successors, notably the UTAS PhD graduate Dr Robert Clark, who was appointed Head of School in 1992.

“Dr Clark built and strengthened links with industry and government, and within the university, something which this school leads the way in Australia. “He developed the concept of an agricultural research institute which pooled the resources of UTAS, the State Government and industry, and integrated research, teaching and development in a USA-style land grant university model, and so was born the Tasmanian Institute of Agricultural Research in 1996.

“It is still going strong 15 years on, as the Tasmanian Institute of Agriculture (TIA).”

Prof Rathjen said the two-day anniversary program was a celebration of “history, collegiality, teaching and research over 50 years”.

“The Tasmanian Institute of Agriculture/School of Agricultural Science has a deep culture, a deep tradition, but it is a school that has been able to resist being static, that has been to adapt itself to the needs of Tasmania and of agricultural science.”

The current Director, Professor Holger Meinke pointed to a substantial increase in student intake in recent years and some “fabulous evaluations”, including an Excellence in Research in Australia (ERA) rating of five, the highest possible.

“Going forward we will focus solidly on innovations required to remain at the leading edge of science - locally, nationally and internationally,” Prof Meinke said.

The full anniversary program can be found at:

[www.tia.tas.edu.au/news/50th-anniversary-of-ag-science-at-utas](http://www.tia.tas.edu.au/news/50th-anniversary-of-ag-science-at-utas)

For further information on the appeal:

<http://www.utas.edu.au/foundation/donations-and-support/current-appeals>

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