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Edible oils researcher recipient of 2009 Farrer Memorial Medal

Farrer Memorial Trust Chairman, Dr Richard Sheldrake, today announced well known oils researcher Dr Rodney Mailer as the winner of the 2009 Farrer Memorial Medal.

A Principal Research Scientist with the NSW Department of Primary Industries and the EH Graham Centre at the Wagga Wagga Agricultural Institute, Dr Mailer's award recognises his outstanding contribution to edible oils research in Australia, in particular his work on canola and olive oil.

Dr Sheldrake said Dr Mailer was internationally recognised for his work on variety breeding and quality testing.

"Dr Mailer has been involved with the release of 22 canola cultivars, which have at times made up 50% of Australia's \$600 million canola crop," Dr Sheldrake said.

"He has been instrumental in the development of the Australian canola industry through his research work, which included screening breeding lines, identifying quality traits and investigating environmental impacts on quality.

"Dr Mailer's research has also involved the development of laboratory methodology and selection from 30,000 canola lines annually.

"His studies on olive oil quality, harvest timing, irrigation and storage have earned Dr Mailer international recognition for his major contribution to the development of the Australian olive industry.

"The value of his research is reflected in the high level of funding support from industry for studies on oil and meal quality from oil crops, including five current fully funded projects."

Dr Mailer joined the NSW Department of Agriculture in 1979. In 1982 he graduated in Applied Science for Charles Sturt University (CSU) and was appointed as an oilseeds chemist. He completed a PhD at University of Manitoba, Canada, in 1993.

"Dr Mailer has published 45 scientific papers and made more than 140 conference or workshop presentations, many of which were presented overseas," Dr Sheldrake said.

"He is closely aligned with several universities, being an Adjunct Associate Professor with CSU and previously Senior Academic Associate at the University of Western Sydney and Sydney University."

Dr Mailer will receive the Farrer Memorial Medal in Sydney on 28 September 2009 during the World Congress on Oils and Fats and the 28th International Society for Fat Research Congress, when he will also be invited to give the 2009 Farrer Memorial Oration.

The Farrer Memorial Medal was established in 1911 to perpetuate the memory of William Farrer and to encourage and inspire agricultural scientists. William Farrer was a former employee of the NSW Department of Agriculture.

The Medal is awarded annually to a person who has provided distinguished service in agricultural science in the areas of research, education, extension or administration.

MEDIA CONTACT: Sarah Chester 0417 207 669