
Thursday, 16 February 2012

VITICULTURIST NAMED RURAL WOMAN OF THE YEAR

Mary Retallack, a third generation viticulturist from Crafers West in the Adelaide Hills, has been named winner of the 2012 RIRDC Rural Women's Award for South Australia.

Ms Retallack aims to develop a "Women in Wine" website to act as a common meeting place and information sharing hub, showcasing a range of new opportunities tailored for women in the wine industry.

Ms Retallack, who runs her own viticultural consulting business, was presented with the award in Adelaide by Minister for Agriculture, Regional Development and the Status of Women, Gail Gago.

"Mary is highly deserving of this important award, having dedicated her professional life to the wine industry, and for her passion in encouraging other women to reach their full potential," Ms Gago said.

"The website will offer networking and mentoring opportunities, identify long-term career paths, and ensure that talented women are not lost from the wine industry.

"I am particularly pleased to present this award during 2012, the Australian Year of the Farmer, to celebrate the vital contribution women make to our farming and regional landscape."

Ms Retallack receives a \$10,000 bursary from the Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation (RIRDC) to enhance her skills and share the reward by "putting back" into her local community.

Ms Gago also congratulated runner-up Krysteen McElroy, a mixed farm enterprise owner from Padthaway, for her dedication in encouraging young people to return to farming.

The award, now in its 13th year, provides rural women with the opportunity to realise their visions for primary industries and to meet a network of equally passionate and innovative peers.

Both the winner and runner-up will attend a one-week residential Australian Institute of Company Directors' course and dinner at Parliament House in Canberra during September, where the Australian RIRDC Rural Women's Award 2012 winner will be announced.

The award is jointly sponsored by PIRSA, Westpac, ABC Radio and Rural Press.