Media release

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New paper explores opportunities for Australian farmers to unlock the digital agriculture revolution

nbn and the National Farmers' Federation have brought together industry experts in a new paper exploring the power of connectivity to enable a $15.6bn per year digital agriculture opportunity* for Australian farmers.

Launched by the Minister for Communications, Urban Infrastructure, Cities and the Arts. the Hon Paul Fletcher MP, at Charles Sturt University in Wagga Wagga today, the paper – Connecting Australian Agriculture – explores the opportunities for Australian farmers to unlock the digital agriculture revolution.

nbn and the National Farmers' Federation also announced a new three-year partnership, which will focus on lifting the adoption of digital agriculture through education and awareness and improving digital literacy. Australian farming businesses need the digital skills across a stack of technical capabilities to make the most of the digital revolution.

The Hon. Paul Fletcher, Minister for Communications, Urban Infrastructure, Cities and the Arts said:

"We know that digital technologies offer vast potential to support our agricultural producers to grow their businesses, create jobs and enhance the economy.

"Capabilities such as remote monitoring, automation and a wide range of others can drive efficiency and productivity for our agricultural sector – lifting its value from $60 billion to $100 billion by 2030. That is why the Australian Government is committed to supporting the sector, including by improving connectivity in regional Australia."

Gavin Williams, nbn Chief Development Officer, Regional and Remote said:

"Harnessing the digital agricultural revolution is the next big opportunity for Australian agriculture with a new generation of connected tools enabling things like remote sensing and automation, which will help farmers save time, grow productivity and make more informed decisions.

"The key to unlocking this digital agriculture revolution is on-farm connectivity, not just at the homestead but out in the paddock. Much of this connectivity is available today through the **nbn**™ network.

"We need more collaboration between farmers, technology vendors and network operators to educate farmers about what is available, the future possibilities and to lift their digital skills to make the most of the digital revolution. Our role at **nbn** is to help farmers, and industry, leave no paddock behind in this digital agricultural revolution.

"Combined with our new three-year partnership, this paper is the next step of the journey. Out ultimate aim is that together we can achieve full digital adoption across Australia's farming industry.

Fiona Simson, President of the National Farmers Federation said:

"The National Farmers Federation's target for Australian agriculture to tally $100 billion by 2030, relies on farmers' successfully capturing the transformative opportunities of digital agriculture.

"It's our goal that by 2030, every Australian farm has access to the infrastructure and skills needed to connect to the Internet of Things.

"The NFF's partnership with nbn **is** at the heart of ensuring this vision becomes a reality.

"With the **nbn**™ network having already connected so many rural Australians, it's now time to focus on increasing the digital literacy of our regional communities and to increase the awareness of the exciting future of digital agriculture".

Ahead of the launch, Gavin Williams and Fiona Simson toured the Charles Sturt University Global Digital Farm, a testing facility for connectivity, such as the **nbn™** Fixed Wireless and Satellite products and digital agricultural devices.

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Notes to editors

- *Figure from The Connecting Australia report on agriculture, which was commissioned by NBN Co. and undertaken by AlphaBeta. AlphaBeta Advisors undertook analysis of the benefits of internet-enabled technology by categorising agricultural technology into 3 types of technologies (automation and robotics, decision support technology and monitoring technologies), identifying the degree of internet connectivity required, and estimating the potential benefits of these technologies to different agricultural uses (e.g. dryland cropping) to 2030. The analysis is aligned to and builds on the Farm Institute of Australia, Accelerating precision agriculture to decision agriculture 2017 project. Can be accessed here: nbn-connecting-australia-agriculture-v2.pdf (nbnco.com.au)

For more information, visit www.nbn.com.au