



MEDIA RELEASE

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SunRice recognises pioneer growers for over 70 years of continual delivery of rice

SunRice Chairman Laurie Arthur made a very special presentation to two rice growing families, both from near Griffith, at the Company's 2019 Annual General Meeting to recognise their extraordinary dedication to the Australian rice industry.

"While several growers have grown rice for many years, what sets these two families apart is that they have not missed a year for 72 and 68 years respectively, even when drought threatened to decimate the industry in C08 and just 19,000 tonnes of rice was produced. This is a feat that is unlikely to be repeated," said Mr Arthur.

Mr Arthur presented service awards to Ron and Judy Hemley for their 72 years of continual growing and delivery of rice and to Marj Evans, and in memory of her late husband Ivor, for their 68 years of continual growing and delivery of rice.

The Hemley's grew their first crop in 1947 and they have not missed a delivery since. They share-farm with Serg Panazzolo and their legacy is in good hands with their grandson Brett Turner recently winning the highest yield award at the Rice Industry Awards.

Thrilled to receive this recognition, Mrs Hemley said:



Left to right: Marj Evans, SunRice Chairman Laurie Arthur and Ron and Judy Hemley

"Farming has been our life and we have enjoyed every minute of it. The rice industry has always been good to us and we have tried to support the industry when times have been tough. Farming as with nature is cyclical. We have seen good and challenging times but sticking to what you know and a system that works has done well for us."

Marj and Ivor Evans made their first delivery in 1952 and have also not missed a year since. Mrs Evans, who sharefarms with Dick Thompson, was surprised and equally delighted her family's support of the industry has been acknowledged in this way, reminiscing about life in the early days of growing rice post World War II:

"I have wonderful memories of the close-knit community around the area. Many rice growers were returned soldiers and all had a pioneering spirit and just got on with what needed to be done. Rice has always been a wonderful industry to be involved in and those who established it should be proud of the legacy they have left."

"The value adding that the rice industry does and what that means to the community is marvellous – what other agricultural industry achieves that? Our research and development is second to none and the new varieties we have are great. I would love for the wider community to know just how good we are, particularly with water efficiency. We have such a great story to tell and we need to be louder in telling it."

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