

Scholarship to remember leading researcher

THE Australian animal health industry has rallied behind the call to establish a scholarship celebrating the memory of one of the country's most accomplished livestock scientists, Dr Kristina Hacket. Dr Hacket, who passed away last November aged 50 after a year-long battle with brain cancer, was principal researcher at Elanco Animal Health for the past 21 years. Her endeavours resulted in the commercial release of several innovative technologies that improve the health, productivity and welfare of animals in Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and South America. To honour Kristina's dedication to research in the animal health sector, her many friends and colleagues are raising \$140,000 to establish a merit-based scholarship for women studying agriculture, veterinary or animal sciences at the University of Sydney. Elanco Animal Health and Virbac Animal Health have each donated \$30,000 and are joined by not only individual contributors from Kristina's wide circle of family and friends, but also member companies of the Veterinary Manufacturers & Distributors Association. This broad industry support is testimony to the foresight, leadership and commitment to diversity in animal health of the contributing organisations. Elanco ANZ Director, Bruce Bell, says his organisation is pleased to support the initiative. "Kristina drew enormous respect for her intellect, thoroughness and integrity, both inside and outside the company, and made a significant contribution to this business through her commitment to excellence," Bruce says. "Personally, she was a caring, thoughtful and loyal colleague and friend to so many of us – a pleasure to work with and alongside". Virbac Director of Commercial Excellence for the SANZA Region, Sarah Hunter, a classmate at The University of Sydney, says Kristina was a lifelong friend and treasured colleague throughout the animal health sector. "Kristina inspired many of us working in agriculture, veterinary science and the animal health industry," Sarah says. "A quiet achiever, her impact on many reached beyond the professional". After completing a Bachelor of Science in Agriculture (Animal Husbandry) at the University of Sydney in 1988, Kristina forged a life-long career within the animal health industry. After four years as a Development Virologist and Quality Manager with Cyanamid Websters (later Fort Dodge Animal Health), Kristina joined Elanco Animal Health in 1996 and spent the next 21 years in various research and development roles. Commencing as a Clinical Research Associate, she steadily rose through the ranks to become Clinical Research Manager of the company's Australian research and regulatory team and then its ANZ Research Hub. She was responsible for the planning and implementation of pre-clinical and clinical studies to support the registration of numerous products used in sheep, cattle, pigs, poultry and companion animals. Together with fellow Elanco researchers, Drs Barry Lowe (deceased) and Jim Rothwell (now a program manager with Meat & Livestock Australia), Kristina played a key role in the development and registration of the well-known sheep lousicides, Extinosad Eliminator and Extinosad Pour-On. The trio co-authored several scientific articles and patents relating to the use of spinosad in livestock, formulation technology and delivery systems. Further support from members of the agricultural and animal health industries is required for the target to be achieved. To donate to the Kristina Hacket Memorial Scholarship, visit crowdfunding.sydney.edu.au/project/9117 - Ends – Media Enquiries: C7EVEN Communications Kate Munsie
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