A local crocodile farm manager has been named the Northern Territory winner of the 2005 Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation (RIRDC) Rural Women’s Awards.

Primary Industry and Fisheries Minister, Kon Vatskalis, congratulated Ann Palmer at a special ceremony at Parliament House this afternoon.

“Now in its sixth year, the Northern Territory’s RIRDC Rural Women’s award recognises and rewards the ongoing commitment of women on the land, and in particular, those with innovative ideas and goals that have the potential to grow their industry into the future,” said Mr Vatskalis.

“Ann Palmer is involved in the day-to-day management and operations at Crocodile Farms NT, with tasks ranging from husbandry to marketing crocodile skins.

“Her vision is to investigate and develop marketing opportunities for product items currently classed as by-products, and to enhance on-farm techniques for increased productivity.

“Ann hopes this will ultimately enhance the overall productivity and sustainability of the Territory’s crocodile industry.

“This Government has long-term plans, that put the Territory first, and it’s people like Ann Palmer who help keep the Territory moving ahead.”

As the Territory winner of the 2005 RIRDC Rural Women’s Award, Ann is provided with a $15,000 bursary to assist her achieve her goal. She will also attend the national awards in Canberra in March.

Mr Vatskalis also extended his congratulations and thanks to this year’s runner-up, Sarah Fe, an agricultural extension officer based in Katherine. Sarah receives $5,000.

Last year’s winner, Ms Lee Berryman, was provided with the opportunity to identify best practices in post-production and marketing of bamboo – including growing edible shoots for our gourmet food industry.

Mr Vatskalis congratulated all involved in the 2005 RIRDC Rural Women’s Award.

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