

Domain

FULL STEAM AHEAD FOR AGENTS

BY JESSIE DAVIES

RURAL property agents are gearing up for a busy few months as the market moves into full swing.

While some major deals for large scale or specialised properties have been sealed already, most rural agents have been preparing their marketing campaigns to shift the smaller, traditional agricultural properties on their books. "The market will build steam from here on in," said Webster and Nolan agent David Nolan, Sydney.

"I think everyone has been feeling their way into the new year but my take is that this year the property market will still be as strong as it was last year and may even strengthen in the second half of the year."

Replenishing rain across a number of Queensland cattle regions had boosted listings significantly.

Ray White Queensland's Bruce Douglas said had a number of properties going to auction next month around Charleville, Roma and Dalby.

"The producers that have had good breaks – in the west and the north of the state – have seen it as an opportunity to put their properties on market, especially in light of the condition the cattle market is in," Mr Douglas said.

Elders Glen Innes agent Geoff Hayes said the local market had made a very strong start to 2016 while Landmark Harcourts agent Sally Douglas, Wagga Wagga, said she'd been marketing a lot of lifestyle properties this year. Inquiry from corporate investors has continued to keep Peter Etheridge and his colleagues from CBRE busy.

"If the cattle market stays like it is for another two to three years I expect the family farm operators will be getting in, but they're still catching up right now and the corporates have the money to get in."

He had observed increasing interest in dryland farms in the north of the state.



"The price of chickpeas has given a lot of investors a spring in their step," he said.

"There's been a strong demand in the Riverina for irrigated properties and now, interestingly, it's turning back to the northern rivers like the Gwydir and the Macintyre."

This year's major sales in NSW have spanned cattle and thoroughbred properties.

David Nolan and Frank Spilsbury, Elders Real Estate, Armidale, sold cattle property "Ro-

mani", Kingstown, for \$4.5 million. Merriwa's G.M. Llewelyn privately marketed the local grazing property "Wanaka" for \$4.2 million.

MacCallum Inglis agent Michael Burke sold the Upper Hunter property "Glenburnie" for \$4 million. Meares and Associates recently announced outstanding Riverina properties "Stonehaven", Holbrook, and Berryjerry Station, Wagga Wagga, had been sold for undisclosed amounts.

ROMANI: While some prestigious NSW properties have sold this year, like "Romani", Kingstown, advertised for \$4.5 million through Webster Nolan Real Estate and Elders Armidale, agents expect the market will really rev up in the coming weeks.