UNIVERSITY of Western Australia graduate Kimberley Adams has received top honours in this year’s Young Professionals in Agriculture Awards.

An agronomist with Landmark in Northam, Ms Adams received the award this week for her research focused on stubble retention and the impact of soil water repellence in sandy soils.

Two other graduates from the university, Nikki Dumbrell, of WANTFA, and Georgia Pugh were also recognised for their work, placing second and third respectively.

Ms Dumbrell’s work focused on carbon farming and Ms Pugh’s on beef carcase quality.

Department of Agriculture and Food Grains Industry executive director Mark Sweetingham said the judges were impressed by the high standard of presentations made by the finalists.

“The future of the agriculture and food sector is with our young people and it is pleasing to see the passion these six here displayed for the industry and research they are undertaking,” Dr Sweetingham said.

“The success of the WA agricultural sector is dependent on attracting people such as these, who are innovative and progressive, and possess impressive communication skills.

“The Young Professionals in Agriculture Awards recognise talented individuals who have the potential to lead and underpin the future success of our industry.”

Sandy soils are at risk of erosion, and consequently the adoption of no-tillage cropping methods with full or partial stubble retention has become the industry standard. Ms Adams research explored the potential of stubble retention in exacerbating soil water repellence, by increasing soil organic matter and waxes.

She will represent WA in the national forum later in the year. Other finalists included Liam Ryan, development officer with the Department of Agriculture and Food, who was awarded best presentation, Thinza Vindevoghel and Hannipoula Olsen.

Young Professionals in Agriculture forum was a wonderful event organised by the WA division of the Ag Institute Australia aimed at attracting promising young professionals to the sector.