

National Quarterly Grower Consultation Forum

Forum Two - Communiqué

On Monday 6 February, grain grower representatives met in Sydney to participate in the second National Quarterly Grower Consultation Forum hosted by GrainGrowers. The aim of the forum is to review emerging grains issues and ensure the most appropriate mechanisms for response and action are identified.

The meeting was attended by grower and executive representatives from Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia and Western Australia – including NSW Farmers' Association, South Australian Farmers' Federation, WAFarmers – and on a national level, the National Farmers' Federation (NFF) and GrainGrowers.

Participants agreed that this forum provided a vehicle for States to bring forward their key grain policy positions and work together to develop a national view. The forum enabled the identification of priority areas to feed into the NFF agenda and be utilised by participants in their dialogue with stakeholders and decision-makers.

Guest speakers at the forum included Professor John Lovett (Chairman, Cooperative Research Centre for National Plant Biosecurity) and John Harvey (Managing Director, Grains Research and Development Corporation).

Participants reviewed the action items from the first forum held in November. It was agreed that infrastructure and biosecurity were important issues that needed ongoing focus and outcomes. The following items and actions were identified as priority issues for grain:

- Infrastructure – (a) examine the NFF's infrastructure policy, (b) develop a set of broad policy principles on infrastructure for the grain industry, and (c) open a dialogue with bulk handling companies to develop a strong grain industry 'action agenda'.
- Biosecurity – (a) examine government progress on the recommendations from the Beale review, (b) discuss priority areas with the CRC for National Plant Biosecurity, and (c) identify grain biosecurity priorities.
- Agriculture chemicals – seek enhanced NFF activity in this area, utilising existing expertise.
- Labour and skilled workers – (a) examine codes for skilled immigration, and (b) review the Pacific Island Workers' Scheme and identify opportunities for grain.
- Drought – maintain a watching brief and ensure drought reform is not lost from government agendas.

For further information:

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