



PRESS RELEASE – 27 November 2017

## **Primary Producers want Election to create positive Action**

Primary Producers SA (PPSA) want the March State Election to be a time when the huge contribution to the S.A. economy of food, wine and fibre is acknowledged with actions to help the competitiveness of the sector.

Food, wine and fibre exports have increased by more than 50% over the last decade, whilst non-agricultural merchandise exports have not increased. Agriculture has contributed more than the overall 20% increase.

This underlines the importance of the sector. We are 25% of the economy and 1 in 5 jobs in the State are associated to the food industry.

The costs of doing business are the biggest issue for primary producers. Competing not only interstate but internationally, any extra costs harm the industry and reduce exports and jobs.

Energy and water costs are hurting some industries badly, particularly irrigators and intensive industries, whether that be livestock or horticulture.

PPSA would like to see the large increases in NRM levies and Emergency Services Levy addressed. These have hit the bottom line directly hence reducing competitiveness.

Transport is a major cost on everything we grow. The current 90 day Transport Project is making major progress in reducing these costs, and we would like all parties to commit to supporting this unique partnership of industry and Government Departments. Much reform has been done cheaply, and very targeted capital spending is seeing major improvements.

The increase in high volume access, the identification of route weak spots, and reforms of regulations re machinery movements are vital to industry.

PPSA want reform of the NRM system. It has lost the confidence of many primary producers, who feel it is too bureaucratic and “top down”. We want NRM Boards to control their own budgets and staff.

There is a strong feeling that there are too many glossy documents and not enough “on ground action”.

PPSA also call for an Independent Review of water planning and management costs as SA signed up to with the National Water Initiative but has not done.

PPSA is not anti-development, but in the processes agricultural land needs to be valued, and a long term view taken when decisions are made. Planning changes and mining can alienate and devalue agricultural land. We must preserve the safe and clean image of our produce.

With exploration and mining, good process, consultation, compliance and compensation are vital. We also feel that local regions affected should receive part of the royalties collected.

PPSA want to see more emphasis on research, development and extension, and Bio-security. These done well underpin the competitiveness of primary production. We would like to see increased public education re risks and benefits of biosecurity.

We want to see an increase in Government funding of SARDI. Lack of extra funding will see a loss of capacity and capability, and risk the loss of industry funding which has been an increased to now be the dominant part of SARDI funding.

PPSA also want PIRSA maintained as a stand alone Department, with SARDI a unit of PIRSA. PIRSA and SARDI are vital to competitiveness and development of our industries.

We urge all parties and candidates to understand the importance of our sector to understand the difference they can make between a thriving sector and one held back by increasing costs and red tape.

In return we will be able to deliver more exports, more jobs and a better SA economy.

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Policy available at [www.ppsa.org.au](http://www.ppsa.org.au)