

# Media Release

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## State Government must consider all aspects of Toorale sale

The NSW Farmers' Association is calling on the State Government to address the social and industry concerns associated with the sale of Toorale Station in Western NSW.

NSW Farmers' Association President Jock Laurie says while farmers understand the environmental issues surrounding the sale, the loss of agricultural production, local jobs and the ongoing management must be considered.

"At a time when world food supply is so critical and drought is still having a major impact on NSW farms, the State Government must find the balance between addressing environmental concerns and ensuring sustainable food production into the future," Mr Laurie said.

"It is good to see the Government going into the market to purchase water instead of acquiring it through compulsory acquisition, however we do question why they need to tie up all the dryland agricultural production on this property," Mr Laurie said.

Today's announcement will see the 91,000ha property turned into a national park as part of the NSW and Federal Government's plan to save the Murray – Darling Basin.

"The ongoing management of noxious weeds and pests on the property must be secured, and the Government will need to provide neighbouring landholders with a detailed plan on how they intend to manage this huge parcel of land once it is turned into a national park," Mr Laurie said.

"Farmers across NSW spend millions of dollars each and every year on control programs for weeds and pests and we need to ensure the same is done within all national parks," Mr Laurie said.

"If weeds and pests are left unattended, the impacts on surrounding properties are quickly felt by local landholders," Mr Laurie said.

Mr Laurie says the landmark agreement will also have a major impact on the local community, with reports more than 100 jobs will be lost.

"This will not only have a major impact on the agricultural industry in western NSW, but the loss of jobs will have a flow on affect in the surrounding towns," Mr Laurie said.

"Rural areas are already struggling with the affects of drought and I would urge the Government to put in place measures to support the surrounding communities affected by this sale," Mr Laurie said.

"The sale of Toorale Station sets a precedent for all stakeholders and we must ensure the environment, local communities and ongoing agricultural productions does not suffer in the future," Mr Laurie concluded.

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