

Media Release

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NSW Farmers support Windsor's Wheat survey

The NSW Farmers' Association has indicated the release of a National survey conducted by Independent Member for New England Tony Windsor, shows that only 14% of wheat growers support the Federal Government plan for wheat.

The Association says this Poll, which 3000 wheat growers participated in, will contribute greatly to the current discussion on the Single Desk Wheat Export Marketing Scheme.

NSW Farmers' Association Grains Committee Chairman, John Ridley, says the recent results of the poll are in line with last year's survey indicating 82% of growers support a single seller Single Desk Wheat Export Marketing System and urges the Federal Government to consider both survey results.

"I would urge the Federal Government to listen to the needs of growers across the country, as they know the risk to their farm business best," Mr Ridley said.

"If the Federal Government doesn't take heed of this survey, it should consider conducting its own so as to understand the needs of growers, just as the Prime Minister had called on his predecessor to do," Mr Ridley said.

"Clearly, there is not enough time to make the changes needed to move away from the Single Desk structure before this year's harvest is carried out.

"Growers across NSW are currently sowing this year's winter crop, without the risk protection of a National Pool and the certainty of marketing arrangements at the end of the season," Mr Ridley said.

Mr Ridley said the industry needs more time to gain certainty about how a new structure could possibly work and to ensure that growers will be able to benefit from conditions currently enjoyed under the Single Desk marketing system.

The NSW Farmers' Association provided a comprehensive submission to the Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Standing Committee last week regarding the two new Wheat Export Marketing Bills.

"At the hearing, which is part of the Parliamentary Inquiry into the Bills, we outlined the concerns growers had with a move away from Single Desk," Mr Ridley said.

"Our Members are concerned about the potential loss of benefits provided through a national pool. They are also concerned that the cost of establishing and maintaining a new system will be passed back to growers, and that the Federal Government must consider the prospect of providing financial assistance to growers," Mr Ridley said.

"Any change away from the Single Desk system must deliver quality assurance, payment security and also provide fair and open access to port and country facilities

to accommodate all involved in the industry,” Mr Ridley said.

Mr Ridley says the Government should also release the results of the Ralph Report which was completed last year. The Ralph Report was commissioned by the Wheat Export Marketing Consultation Committee. The Report details the outcomes of consultation with growers across Australia.

“It is in the best interest of growers for the Federal Government to release the findings,” Mr Ridley concluded.

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