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Wheat growers need adjustment help

Farmers from around NSW agree that the Federal Government must set up and fund a comprehensive re-adjustment package for the wheat industry.

NSW Farmers' Association President Jock Laurie says as the Government is imposing deregulation on the industry, growers need help.

"The Wheat Export Marketing Act has seen changes to the marketing arrangements for the export of wheat are likely to create significant financial and social disadvantages for wheat growers," Mr Laurie said.

"Wheat growers will lose the confidence, clarity and certainty that is necessary in order to enable them to operate their businesses in an efficient and effective manner," he said.

"We have seen adjustment packages in other agricultural industries such as dairy and sugar cane following the introduction of significant changes within these two industries.

"Why not wheat," Mr Laurie asked.

The NSW wheat industry is a major agricultural activity. For the year ending 30 June 2006, the gross value of wheat produced in NSW was \$1.432 billion which is equal to 28.1% of the national value (\$5.099 billion).

"Growers are concerned the Act has the potential to create an imbalance of power in favour of non grower sectors of the value chain," Mr Laurie said.

"There will be the possible loss of the benefits provided through a national pool as there is no provision under the Bill for the existence of a single national pool.

"The Federal Government should establish and fund a comprehensive re-adjustment package for the wheat industry and we will be lobbying to see this happen," Mr Laurie concluded.

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