



Media Release

Thursday December 9, 2010

The inadequacies of research and development (R&D) in the Queensland grains industry have been highlighted by a raft of disease and variety issues currently plaguing Queensland grain growers.

That's the view of Grains Research Foundation Limited (GRFL) chairman Damien Scanlan who believes growers should be setting grains research priorities in Queensland.

"Increasingly, research priorities are being set by the Minister when, in fact, they should be identified by growers on the ground," he said.

"In years like this, when we are seeing a host of diseases in chickpea, wheat and barley crops, it becomes very clear that grower's research requirements are not being met."

"The capacity of our research facilities has been so diminished by the Queensland Government that the few researchers we have left clearly struggle when we get into situations like this."

"At the very least we would like to see the Queensland Government publically rule out any sale of the Leslie Research Centre in Toowoomba which was bought and paid for by growers but has been the subject of a planned sell off."

Mr Scanlan has also slammed the Queensland Government's Grains 2020 Report arguing the report fails to outline a modernised research and development (R&D) plan and won't deliver maximum long term benefits to the Queensland grains industry.

Mr Scanlan said the Grains 2020 Report, approved by the Bligh Government last month, fails to recognise grower investors who contribute well over half the Fields Crops Budget.

The GRFL is instead calling for the Government to establish a Fields Crops Institute with a grower and skills based board to manage R&D in Queensland.

"This type of approach would allow us to recapture the researcher drive and enthusiasm that was once synonymous with the Queensland Wheat Research Institute (QWRI)," Mr Scanlan said.

"The bones of the QWRI are still there through the Leslie Research Centre (LRC) and grower equity in the LRC can be embedded into the proposed Field Crops Institute."

Mr Scanlan said it was time the Queensland Government got real about modernising grains research capacity.

“The Queensland grains industry is vital to the State’s economy and underpins many businesses focused on putting food on the table,” he said.

“We need world best research capacity and management for us to be successful in doing our job. A Field Crop Institute will do this. Grains 2020 will not.”

GRFL Chairman and GRFL’s spokesman Damien Scanlan.



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