

Riverland and Mallee - Primary Producers' Business Centre

A discussion with Minister Simon Crean

Thursday 2nd February 2012

Loxton – 91 Alamein Avenue

Welcome

Minister Simon Crean

Minister for Regional Australia, Regional Development and Local Government; Minister for the Arts

Nicole Seils

Adviser to the Minister

Glen Atwell

Minister's Media Adviser

Megan Lees

Head of the Murray-Darling Basin Taskforce in the Department of Regional Australia, Local Government, Arts and Sport

Leon Mills

SA State Director, Department of Regional Australia, Local Government, Arts and Sport

Dr Mark Seibentritt

Consultant

Brenton Lewis

RDA CEO

Nicolle Jachmann

RDA Economic Development Manager

Brett Proud

Large scale wine grower
Deputy Chair of Riverland Winegrape Growers Association
Member of Riverland Wine Industry Development Council
Pioneer “Collaborative Farmer – Grape grower”
Strong advocate for the Business Centre

Kevin Pfeiffer AOM

Long term Chair of the Riverland Horticulture Reference Forum
Senior Winemaker and business man with a lifelong passion for the region’s Primary Producers
Strong advocate for the Business Centre

Tony Loffler

Dried Fruit Grower
Member of the Horticulture Reference Forum
Regional Representative on the Agricultural Bureau - Advisory Board of SA

Peter Hill

Large scale wine and citrus grower
Deputy Chair - Consolidated Cooperative Wholesalers (CCW) (650 grape grower members)
Member of Riverland Winegrape Growers’ Association - Management Committee
Board member of Citrus Growers’ SA
Member of Riverland Horticulture Reference Forum

Michael Vowles

Mallee Broadacre Farmer (Grain and Livestock)
Elected member of Loxton Waikerie District Council
Vocal advocate for the Business Centre

Lance Degenhardt

Convenor of the Riverland Business Cluster
Lifelong member of the ALP
Vice President SA Country Labour and State President of the Australian Workers Union

Chris Bennett

Horticultural consultant and scientist
Irrigation specialist and recent CEO Irrigation Australia Ltd
Project manager CT Farms Almond Industry irrigation trials (Improved yields, improved quality with less water)

Chris Byrne

Winegrower
Executive Officer: Riverland Winegrape Growers’ Association & Riverland Wine Industry Development Council
Long term member of the Riverland Horticulture Reference Forum
Author of the original proposal for the Riverland and Mallee Primary Producers Business Centre

What we have in the Riverland and Mallee of SA:

- Ideal climate
- Reliable water supply and *some* rain
- Great soils (add water will grow)
- First class infrastructure
 - Irrigation
 - Transport
 - Processing facilities
- First class towns and communities - Five major centres - all robust
- Large scale production capabilities
- Enviable Bio-security standards and infrastructure
- An abundance of leading edge farming and irrigation technology
- Good access to market entry points
- **The Primary Industry Funding Schemes Act**

We are poised to move to the next level of excellence

(We should not be held at a competitive disadvantage while others catch up)

➤ We are about

- **GROWTH... not further decline**
- **Increasing levels of achievement (building much with little)**
- **Working more collaboratively with one another (Horticulture and Agriculture)**
- **Working with all tiers of Government to build Industry... NOT about relief programmes and handouts (except in the case of Exceptional Circumstances)**
- **Increasing our competitiveness through:**
 - **Improving the scale of our operations**
 - **Applying our R&D funds locally**
 - **Increasing our workforce skills through appropriate (local) competency based training**
 - **EXTENSION programmes to achieve consistent standards of excellence and quality outputs**
- **Continuous improvement and closer engagement with our processor partners**
- **Value adding to build local employment opportunities and employment security**
- **Thought leadership**

What the Riverland and Mallee Primary Producers Business Centre will add:

The capability for the Region's Primary Producers to collaborate effectively, engage with all stakeholders and reach consensus on matters of common interest such as:

- **The Murray Darling Basin Plan and its implementation**
- **Climate change policy and how our farmers and growers will be affected**
- **The roll out of the NBN and the opportunities it presents for rural Australia**
- **Carryover policy and water trading**
- **Collective bargaining to reduce input costs**
- **Food security**
- **Water security**
- **Salinity zoning**
- **Spray drift**
- **Taxation policy (Volumetric tax on alcohol)**
- **Bio-security policy, standards and implementation**
- **Farming diversification opportunities**
- **Collaborative farming business models**
- **Training, development and Extension**
- **Transitioning to new enterprise business models & incorporating Value Chain principles**
- **Raising awareness of our position as producers, relative to Global Markets**

Dramatic improvements in productivity, efficiency and professionalism at the industry organisation level will emerge through sharing:

- **Administration and financial services**
 - **Membership management services including integrated data bases**
 - **Communication services and capabilities (NBN)**
 - **Collectively bargaining to reduce input costs including machinery, vehicles, fuel and telecoms**
 - **Web site services**
 - **Meeting facilities**
 - **Training development and extension facilities**
 - **Laboratory facilities and analytical services**
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