



# **FARMING AND LAND MANAGEMENT FEDERAL POLICY**



## WHAT WE BELIEVE

Farming and agriculture have been at the forefront of Australia's development. For over 200 years, farmers have fed our growing population and provided an underlying economic cornerstone that has been vital to our social, economic and environmental development. Australian farmers are environmental stewards, who collectively manage over 60% of Australia's land mass. Our farmers deserve better recognition, support and security from Government.

Australians are rightfully concerned when large tracts of prime agricultural land and water rights are sold to foreign interests. Historically, our economy has been developed using large amounts of foreign private capital, whereas now we are experiencing an influx of foreign Government capital and loss of ownership.

With an ever-expanding population food and water security is a key strategic issue for the nation. Long-term planning can successfully avert any gaps between demand and supply.

Market power in the food system has created a challenging environment for many Australian farmers and suppliers, with flow on costs to ordinary consumers. Government policies must be put in place to protect and provide incentives for local farmers and suppliers within a competitive food system.

We reject any Government who cave in to inner city and green lobby groups over land clearing laws, while true facts and science are neglected. Farmers should have the freedom to clear vegetation on their land where appropriate.



## OUR ACTION PLAN

1. Support the establishment of a register of foreign owned lands in sufficient detail to show foreign government interest in particular, that is accessible for public scrutiny.
2. Drastically reduce the level of foreign investment that triggers review by the Foreign Investment Review Board to a review threshold of \$0.
3. Increase transparency and integrity in foreign investment of agricultural land.
4. Ensure the security of land ownership, water, and the protection of domestic and foreign markets for Australia's food producers.
5. Introduce right-to-farm legislation giving farmers absolute private property rights, including the right to refuse mining operations.
6. Vehemently oppose any moves by the Commonwealth to overturn State and Territory based land clearing laws.
7. Support the expansion of a sustainable live export trade.
8. Oppose cheap imports of foods undercutting Australian farmed foods and risking the biodiversity of Australian farmed produce.
9. Significantly increase water conservation networks with a view to making water availability for agriculture a first priority.
10. Support Federal grants for on-farm infrastructure for water conservation.
11. Significant increase in investment in water storage and distribution infrastructure, including the establishment of a northern water diversion scheme to dry land areas.



## OUR ACTION PLAN - con.

12. Significantly increase Federal funding into drought mitigation research and development.
13. Support measures to reduce market domination and increase competition in the retail and agricultural sector.
14. Immediately review and amend the Murray Darling Basin Plan through active consultation and recognition of farming enterprises and rights, including social, economic and environmental considerations. Placing water for agriculture as the first priority over all others.
15. Support the establishment of a rural development bank to provide farming enterprises with an alternate source of financial support.
16. Reduce government interference into farming and small business enterprises by removing unnecessary duplication of State/Territory and Commonwealth law, red tape, and regulation. Emphasise the role of the states in part.
17. Amend the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act to remove the right for Third Parties to take Court action. Further, the Act is to be amended to exclude the Commonwealth veto on State infrastructure projects such as water or power utilities projects.
18. Establish and expand appropriate fuel load reduction on public lands through grazing, firewood harvesting, controlled clearing and prescribed burning.
19. Prevent the Federal Government interference with State and Territory based wildfire management projects.
20. Prevent Commonwealth interference over farmers protecting their land through burning of adjacent public land areas.