

Mr Errol Steinhardt



11 January 2017

Research Director  
Agriculture and Environment Committee  
Parliament House  
BRISBANE QLD 4000  
aec@parliament.qld.gov.au

Dear Committee Members,

**Inquiry into the impacts of invasive plants (weeds) and their control in Queensland**

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission on this issue which has been affecting the productivity of Queensland farms for decades.

The two main weed species impacting my property in the Scenic Rim Regional Council area are Giant Rat's Tail grass and Fireweed. In the past year alone I have spent over \$25,000 on aerial and ground spraying in an attempt to control these weed species. Despite the time and money I have committed to chemical controls I appear to be fighting a losing battle against these invasive species. Chemical control is a constant expense as reinfestation is almost inevitable with weeds being continually spread onto the property through water, native animals, and wind. I also harbour concerns over the long term health implications of the chemicals used to control these weeds – for example my son is frequently administering chemical sprays to control weeds on our property and I worry about what the consequences might be for his health in 20 or 30 years time.

It is my belief that chemical controls are not, alone at least, the solution to combatting these invasive species. I would encourage the State Government to focus on the research and development of biological controls to combat Giant Rat's Tail grass and Fireweed. It is unfair to have farmers investing time, money and regularly exposing themselves to harmful chemicals in a never ending cycle of spraying. It would be of incredible benefit to our State's agricultural sector if a biological control such as the moth *Cactoblastis cactorum* which brought Prickly Pear under control could be used against Giant Rat's Tail grass and Fireweed.

Please feel free to contact me for any further clarifications or to take me up on my offer.

Regards

Errol Steinhardt

