




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR DALRYMPLE

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ADJOURNMENT

Agricultural Science

 **Mr KNUTH** (Dalrymple—KAP) (10.04 pm): I would like to speak about the concerns for investment in rural and regional communities. Our small towns are supported by the agricultural sector and the small businesses in these towns support the community. Rural and regional towns will cease to exist if we continue to ignore the importance that small businesses have to rural towns. We must also continue to support the development of our agriculture industry.

In the last few weeks there have been concerns brought to my attention about the removal of agricultural science from the Education Queensland curriculum. Removing agricultural science from schools would be devastating for Queensland students as this practical subject prepares students for further agricultural studies, life on the land and a basic understanding of where food comes from. Agricultural science is successful from Ferny Grove here in South-East Queensland to Charters Towers, Atherton and Malanda high schools in my electorate.

Having the opportunity to learn where our food comes from and alternative career paths is extremely valuable for our young students. Agriculture is a \$15 billion industry that sustained us through the global financial crisis. Our children, the leaders of tomorrow, deserve to be able to learn about it.

One of the newly appointed councillors of the Tablelands Regional Council is a prime example of how diverse a career in agriculture can be. Councillor Ball was a dairy farmer, an auctioneer, a recipient of the Agricultural Ambassador Award and studied agricultural science at Malanda State High School.

I have contacted the Minister for Education directly. She has advised me that agricultural science is not being removed from the Education Queensland curriculum. We would like to see the government promote agricultural science and agriculture as an industry with real career paths.

Small business is the lifeblood of farming communities. In a place where the corner store is an hour drive away it is shocking to hear reports that small good suppliers are now no longer supplying our local stores with small quantity orders. Suppliers selling out to large corporations will be the death of small business and, in turn, small communities as they will only supply multinationals. This is yet another blow to small Queensland towns that are the employers of local people. We need to stop talking about jobs and start backing our farmers, our local businesses and our small communities.