




Speech By
Hon. Mark Furner

MEMBER FOR FERNY GROVE

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Agriculture Ministers' Forum, Biosecurity

 **Hon. ML FURNER** (Ferny Grove—ALP) (Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries) (10.07 am): Last Friday, I represented Queensland for my first Agriculture Ministers' Forum, or AGMIN as it is better known, and Queensland was the setting for this forum. I took the opportunity to raise serious concerns with my colleagues. From Far North Queensland bananas to Central Queensland beef and from Kalei apples to Bundaberg macadamias, we are truly blessed here in the Sunshine State to have world-class food and fibre producers—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Members to my left, I am having difficulty hearing the minister.

Mr FURNER:—and we know that they have great potential to grow. This potential is very clearly outlined in the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries 2018 snapshot that I released during the Commonwealth Games. I also made it clear in our discussions that some things need to change. Biosecurity issues, along with drought, are the main constrictors for the growth of Queensland's agriculture and have massive flow-on effects to the retail and service industries. The Palaszczuk government takes our biosecurity obligations very seriously. That is why we invested more than \$120 million into enhancing our biosecurity capabilities in the last budget. That is also why I launched Queensland's Biosecurity Strategy for the next five years at a flower farm in Gatton earlier this month.

The strategy provides a six-point plan to ensure that any incursion is responded to in a quick yet organised fashion. We are the front-line state as you would know, Mr Speaker, when it comes to incursions of pests and diseases into Australia. I must commend the Biosecurity Queensland staff for the commendable work they do in this area.

We want the federal government to get serious about biosecurity and ensure that Queensland is not left to pick up the bill for yet another federal biosecurity failure at the borders. This approach will continue to inform our discussions with the Commonwealth on biosecurity whether the issue is red imported fire ants, carp or, especially, white spot disease. The fact of the matter is that biosecurity is everyone's business. Another key area of discussion was access to markets and drought policy reform.

My fellow agriculture ministers held some fruitful discussions on effective fruit fly management and related barriers to premium markets. We also received updates on the Trans Pacific Partnership and also other free trade agreements. Like the Premier, I will also fight to ensure that our producers are getting a chance to get into new and emerging markets. Let us hope that this year's Commonwealth budget can support this aim. There is clearly more work to be done to support our food and fibre producers, but under a Palaszczuk government we know this is getting done.