




Speech By
Hon. Mark Furner

MEMBER FOR FERNY GROVE

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Agriculture Industry

 **Hon. ML FURNER** (Ferny Grove—ALP) (Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries) (10.00 am): The beef industry is of prime importance to Queensland in general and North Queensland in particular. When those overseas think of quality beef, they think of Queensland. In 2017-18, the farm gate value of Queensland's cattle industry was worth \$5.47 billion to our state. Recently, times have been difficult for the sector. No-one can forget the devastating impact of the monsoonal event on those producers in the north-west. As everyone is aware, the industry continues to be impacted by drought as producers sell down cattle and pastures decline. Currently, 65 per cent of Queensland is drought declared.

Mr Lister interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Minister, I am sorry to interrupt you. Member for Southern Downs, you are warned under the standing orders. Member for Mermaid Beach, you are warned under the standing orders. I heard your interjection earlier. I have been very clear about the level of interjections, particularly when it is a non-combative ministerial statement being made.

Mr FURNER: My department continues to monitor the drought situation and will act as required to assist. There are many producers who have suffered badly from long-term drought, enduring eight consecutive failed or below-average wet seasons.

Throughout the drought, the Queensland government has been there. This government makes a significant investment of over \$17 million per year in beef cattle RD&E to improve the productivity, competitiveness, profitability and environmental sustainability of our state's beef industry. Frontline agricultural staff are well placed to help create jobs in regional economies through supporting the beef industry and, as a government, we support our hardworking public servants to support our primary producers.

Part of the research and development is conducted at Spyglass station, which is just west of here. Spyglass is a peak location for projects to advance beef breeding and will be a key driver of profitability in the beef industry. I will be heading out to Spyglass this Friday as the work that is being undertaken there will set up the industry for the long term. Spyglass is needed for the future of the sector to advance tropical and subtropical beef production and ecosystem management, as well as hosting development, extension, education and training programs. The Palaszczuk government will always promote the good work being done in the sector, work with the broader industry and highlight the quality of Queensland's produce to the world.