



Speech By  
**Julianne Gilbert**


**MEMBER FOR MACKAY**

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Record of Proceedings, 2 December 2020

**MOTION**

**Agriculture Industry**

 **Mrs GILBERT** (Mackay—ALP) (5.44 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the motion and to support the amendments made by the minister. Queensland is the agricultural powerhouse of this nation. We know that, from the Tablelands right down to the Border Rivers, our farmers produce the best meat. Because of the Palaszczuk government's dog fence program, we know that sheep are also on the rise. We have the best grains, the finest cotton, the best fruit and vegetables, the best sugar industry, and we cannot forget our fishers. Queensland feeds and clothes Australians as well as the world.

The Palaszczuk government has backed our farmers to the hilt to do what they do best. We back farmers through our regional economic development grants. Over three rounds we have provided businesses with grants of up to \$250,000, which have been matched by co-contributions from applicants for economic development projects that create employment and generate projects in rural and remote areas. I speak of businesses like Kialla Pure Foods near Toowoomba on the Darling Downs. One of Australia's leading organic grains processors, Kialla was given a RED grant to install a new mixer and mixing system.

During the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, Kialla experienced over a 300 per cent increase in demand for their products as more people took to baking while working from home. Not only were they able to meet this demand because of the new equipment they installed with the RED grant; they were able to hire an additional six people, many of whom had recently been laid off because of the pandemic. The Palaszczuk government's RED Grants program has seen the creation of over 1,890 direct and indirect jobs right across regional Queensland. This government is backing our farmers, giving them the confidence to expand and grow.

The Palaszczuk government is also backing our farmers to export their clean, green food and fibre all around the world. Our Growing Queensland's Food Exports Program has opened doors for Queenslanders to export. This \$1.3 million program supports 15 agribusinesses seeking to enter new markets. Qualipac near the Lockyer Valley has literally broken new ground by competing in the first shipment of commercial kabocha squash to Japan. It is a variety that is extremely popular and highly prized in Japan. With the help of the Palaszczuk government, this product has now made more inroads into the \$108 million export market. The first shipment of Queensland grown kabocha was snapped up within days and retailers in Japan are demanding more.

While COVID-19 has been a great disrupter to 2020, the Palaszczuk government has worked hard to ensure that the agricultural sector can continue to meet the needs of consumers here and overseas. As part of our \$12.5 million unite and recover economic plan for Queensland agriculture, we have invested \$5 million to reinvigorate trade relationships. This is quite different to what the federal government is doing. The Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries led the charge, in September hosting Queensland's first-ever virtual trade mission with Japan. In 2019-20 Japan

imported 19.7 per cent of Queensland's total agriculture exports valued at an estimated \$9.55 billion. From Brisbane the minister hosted the Japanese Consul-General and Queensland agribusinesses. Through the wonders of technology, the minister also met with importers, retailers and other enterprises in Japan. This mission has been an unmitigated success and has helped open new markets for Queensland.

What have we heard from those opposite? The motion moved by the LNP shows they have not learnt anything in opposition. They cannot read budget papers and they cannot—

*(Time expired)*