




Speech By
Hon. Mark Furner

MEMBER FOR FERNY GROVE

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PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT

Agriculture Industry

 **Hon. ML FURNER** (Ferny Grove—ALP) (Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries and Minister for Rural Communities) (2.46 pm): Queensland's agricultural industries are ploughing along at an increased rate. Last week I had the privilege to attend AgForce's commodity boards function in Toowoomba. AgForce brought together their four commodity boards: cattle, sheep and wool, grains, and cane. As a result of ongoing investments the Palaszczuk government has made in agriculture, Queensland truly is the place to be for agricultural innovation, productivity and leadership. I note AgForce recognised this government's leadership and that we are listening to regional voices. Because we are a government that listens, we have invested in Rural Economic Development grants across agricultural industries in Queensland.

Along with AgForce I was hosted at the Victoria Hill Lamb Feedlot by Stephen and Claire Schmidt. I want to give a shout-out to Claire, who until recently was in the RFDS but is now a GP in Allora. She is a great addition to that town. A few years ago Stephen Schmidt and neighbours in Charleville constructed a wild dog fence and started to control the wild dogs. As part of the Schmidts return to running sheep at Charleville, they saw the need to finish off their own sheep and lambs regardless of the dry season. As cluster fences are built more producers are returning to the sheep industry, and as a result the Schmidts saw an opportunity to build a feedlot. The Palaszczuk government supported the Schmidt family with a RED grant. That will see the sheep and goat industry prosper and support 106 jobs in Allora.

The next day in Dalby I visited another RED grant success, MidWest Fabrications. It was good to see them again after first meeting them at the Dalby show a couple of years ago with the Governor. Father Martin and daughter Amy Schutt showed me how this government's RED grant assisted their business. The RED grant allowed them to extend the existing manufacturing factory and implement the necessary equipment to safely and effectively manufacture larger numbers of the 60-foot harvest platforms. They told me that, with the huge shift towards larger capacity machinery to increase productivity, the wider draper platforms allow producers to get their crops off more quickly and harvest more crop for less time and money while boosting productivity and lowering overheads. It will come as no surprise that this will create regional jobs. In fact, there are eight apprentices on the floor already and more to come.

These are just a few examples of our commitment to supporting industry, helping business, growing regional jobs and economies and ensuring that Queensland is the place to be when it comes to agricultural investment and jobs.