




Speech By
Hon. Mark Furner

MEMBER FOR FERNY GROVE

Record of Proceedings, 25 May 2022

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Sheep and Goat Industry

 **Hon. ML FURNER** (Ferny Grove—ALP) (Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries and Minister for Rural Communities) (10.07 am): As every member of this place knows, there has never been a greater friend of Queensland agriculture than the Palaszczuk Labor government.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr FURNER: Let me repeat that: there has never been a greater friend of the agriculture sector than the Palaszczuk Labor government. We have stood by them in the depths of the COVID-19 pandemic, we have stood by them through flood and fire—we have stood by them every single day.

Today the Premier has announced more strong support, with \$4 million in Rural Agricultural Development grants over two years to support the sheep and goat industries. It is critically important for this state that we have a Premier who understands the importance of agriculture. That is exactly what we have here in this government. Even in opposition, the Premier saw the opportunity that cluster fencing could bring to our state's sheep and goat industries. From 2015 she led the introduction of funding programs for cluster fencing and the result has been transformational. We are bringing the sheep industry back to Queensland and we are seeing significant growth in the goat industry as well.

The \$4 million in grants announced by the Premier this morning will go a long way to making sure the production chains of these industries can grow as well. The Rural Agricultural Development grants of up to \$200,000 per business will see the value of the industry double. This supports our sheep and goat meat strategy that I launched last year in Ilfracombe at Beaconsfield Station. Eligible activities under the grant program include developing a new market for sheep or goat products; developing a niche product or brand for the sheep and goat product markets; and expanding the capabilities of businesses in the supply chain, for example, by providing specialised training or equipment.

Applicants for the grant program will need to submit an expression of interest and match any funding with a minimum co-contribution of 50 per cent. If deemed suitable they will then be requested to proceed to a full application. The Palaszczuk government will always back Queensland farmers to succeed and to take advantage of the opportunities we have helped to create.