

QUESTION ON NOTICE
No. 1644
Asked on 29 October 2009

MR HOPPER asked the Minister for Primary Industries, Fisheries and Rural and Regional Queensland (MR MULHERIN)–

QUESTION:

Is 'no change' one of the options for the modernisation of the research and development network in Queensland?

ANSWER:

At a recent Cropping Industries forum comprised of funding bodies and industry leaders the 'no change' option was discussed. However all parties agreed that Queensland needed renewal of infrastructure.

Without renewal it would mean denying Queensland growers the latest Research and Development (R&D), which is essential to them remaining internationally competitive.

It would mean denying our scientists, up-graded and new laboratories, new research field sites and would erode long-term retention of core scientific expertise.

It would mean ignoring the views of industry, our scientists and our stakeholders.

I realise that the reforms currently being negotiated with industry do challenge the status quo.

However, without renewal we cannot grow the productivity and profitability of the Queensland Primary Industry sector. A future that includes new and exciting opportunities, as well as external challenges to be overcome.

But this future is not going to be created by itself without changes to R&D infrastructure.

Any grower will attest to the critical importance of R&D in their business. Over the last 100 years technology advances have been the backbone of industry prosperity. Queensland scientists have a well earned international reputation, and Queensland's cropping industries have been at the fore-front of the benefits derived from this R&D.

But world-class science needs world-class infrastructure.

Why are we reforming our R&D?

- To build new linkages with Queensland universities that will not only provide better research outcomes but also enhance Queensland's training capacity in agriculture.
- To ensure our R&D locations reflect current industry demographics

- To improve our ability to attract and retain scientists to rural and regional locations
- To provide our scientists with the scientific tools so they can get on with their job of supporting future economic growth of the sector.

We are renewing because we believe there are better, smarter and more innovative ways to ensure future industry growth.

“No change” as an option was discussed. And it was not supported.