

QUESTION ON NOTICE

No. 596

Asked on 10 May 2011

MR RYAN asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and Regional Economies (MR MULHERIN)–

QUESTION:

Will the Minister advise the House of the work being done by DEEDI scientists with Watercress to fully exploit this plant's nutritional and cancer combating qualities?

ANSWER:

The Queensland Government is committed to developing and applying science and technology to increase the competitiveness and value of Queensland harvested and processed foods through its investment in Research, Development and Extension.

Science-based information on the health and quality attributes of selected Queensland's tropical and sub-tropical horticultural produce will support consumer and market recognition of the value of premium Queensland produce and promote purchase.

The investigation of the potential health properties of Watercress is a specific example of research carried out by Queensland scientists in uncovering the potential health benefits in fruit and vegetables.

Research by Department of Employment and Economic Development and Innovation (DEEDI) and University of Queensland scientists indicate that watercress could be beneficial in combating certain types of cancer. Formulating guidelines on consumption that enhances these anti-cancer properties are an important outcome of this research.

These findings have far reaching benefits beyond the science and at a number of levels including:

- improving the overall well-being of Queenslanders through advocating the simple lifestyle change of eating more vegetables. An important step being the inclusion of this highly nutritious crop to the Queensland daily diet;
- developing new products and supply chains that encourage consumption of health-giving leafy green salad mixes; and
- assisting in building stronger and sustainable agri-food industries across Queensland.