



## GARRAWILLA PARTNERSHIP

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Committee Secretary  
Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport  
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24 March 2019

Dear Sir/Madam

We write to emphatically express our view that the *Export Control Amendment (Banning Cotton Exports to Ensure Water Security) Bill 2019* must not proceed. It would present an unprecedented threat to the future viability and profitability of Australia's agriculture.

We have operated our family-owned farming enterprise since 1980, with an irrigation cropping property in Mungindi Qld (Balonne Shire Council) and a rain-grown cropping property in Jondaryan Qld (Toowoomba Shire Council).

We cannot comprehend on what basis the Bill, which proposes the banning of all Australian cotton exports, would ensure water and food security in the Murray-Darling Basin? On this premise, it would result in the banning for export of every Australian-grown irrigated crop. It would establish the precedent for banning the export of every water-consuming product, from milk and dairy products, to citrus, grains and pulses etc, right through to education ... that is, overseas students who come to study in Australian institutions and consume our water while gaining knowledge, and then returning to their homeland, would now be banned. This example of extrapolation is used to highlight the ridiculousness on the proposed Bill. Having started this process, where is the stopping point of banning exports based on water use and food security?

Banning the export of a specific crop, ie. cotton, will not alter the water-use of irrigation licence holders, nor the export of water-consuming crops. Farmers will grow the next most profitable agricultural product, which given the limited size of the domestic market, will invariably be exported eg, chickpeas to India.

Finally, using this season as an example, we highlight the lack of fundamental common sense and logic in the proposed Bill. Owing to the drought and consequent zero water-licence allocation, we have grown zero hectares of irrigated cotton in Mungindi. We have, however, a rain-grown cotton crop on our Jondaryan property. Even though the varied production in both areas has had no impact on water-use in the Murray-Darling Basin, a blanket ban of exporting cotton produced would be imposed.

Yours faithfully

Ralph and Barbara Grey