

**Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee**

**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

Additional Estimates February 2017

**Agriculture and Water Resources**

**Question Number: 3**

**Division/Agency:** Agricultural Policy Division

**Topic:** Corporation Law and Dairy farmers

**Proof Hansard Page:** 22

**Senator LEYONHJELM asked:**

**Senator LEYONHJELM:** I am less interested in the history than I am in why there should be a difference between Corporations Law and that for dairy farmers. What would prevent dairy farmers from having the same rights as shareholders in a public company?

**Mr Quinlivan:** I think that would be a policy matter for the government, which it would consider if it received representations from the dairy industry. I am not aware of this proposition, which I understand in another context. I was not aware of it having been raised here, but, if it were, obviously the government would consider it.

**Senator LEYONHJELM:** Would it simply be a regulation, to change it from 15 to five?

**Mr Quinlivan:** It would be a legal instrument of some kind. I am not quite sure whether it is a determination, an order or a regulation, but we can give you some advice on that during the day.

**Senator LEYONHJELM:** That would be fine. I will take that on notice; thank you.

**Answer:**

The Dairy Produce (Dairy Service Levy Poll) Instrument 2016 was made under the *Dairy Produce Act 1986* by the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources, the Hon. Barnaby Joyce MP, on 15 December 2016. It is a disallowable instrument, noting that the period for disallowance has now expired.

**Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee**

**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

Additional Estimates February 2017

**Agriculture and Water Resources**

**Question Number: 4**

**Division/Agency:** Agricultural Policy Division

**Topic:** Advice to the Minister of Defence land grab issue

**Proof Hansard Page:** Written

**Senator STERLE asked:**

1. Did the Minister seek a briefing on the Defence land grabs in Shoalwater Bay Training Area and Townsville Field Training Area? Is so when?
2. Did the department consult with the Defence department with regards to compulsory Defence land grabs in Shoalwater Bay Training Area and Townsville Field Training Area?
3. With regards to the Minister's letter where he claims that "the Turnbull-Joyce Government made a commitment that no one will be forced to sell their land against their will" why would the Minister reassure landholders when prior to the visit on the same day the Minister was claiming that he was talking to the highest levels and no one had told the Minister that there would be compulsory land grabs?
4. Why is there a discrepancy in the Minister's information prior to and post his visit with landholders?
5. Minister Payne has admitted that she knew about compulsory land grabs prior to the 2016 election, did the Minister receive briefings from Defence about the Singapore deal prior to the 2016 election?

**Answer:**

1. The Department of Agriculture and Water Resources (the department) briefed the Deputy Prime Minister on 2 February 2017 for his visit to the Rockhampton region on 3 February 2017.
2. The department did not consult with the Department of Defence on development of the Australia Singapore Military Training Initiative.
3. The position in the letter is clear.
4. The department is not aware of any discrepancy.
5. This is a question for the Department of Defence.

**Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee**

**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

Additional Estimates February 2017

**Agriculture and Water Resources**

**Question Number: 5**

**Division/Agency:** Agricultural Policy Division

**Topic:** Farm Cooperatives and Collaboration Pilot Program

**Proof Hansard Page:** Written

**Senator STERLE asked:**

1. When did the pilot program officially open?
2. How many farmers have been provided expert advice and information so far? Provide detailed information on where are these farmers based across Australia and what types of businesses do they run?
3. How many farmer groups across the nation have been provided expert advice and information so far? Provide detailed information on which farmer groups have been provided expert advice?
4. How has this program been promoted? At what cost?
5. How will the program be evaluated?
6. How has the panel of industry experts been selected, who are the successful applicants?
7. How can farmers submit proposals for new collaborations to the panel of industry experts?
8. How will the \$3.8 million dollars earmarked for new farmer group projects be managed? Including details about the application process, selection process, delivery of funding and assessment of the programs?

**Answer:**

1. The Farm Co-operatives and Collaboration Pilot Program commenced with the execution of a funding deed between the Commonwealth and Southern Cross University (SCU) on 22 April 2016.
2. To date, 284 farmers and farmer groups have completed the program's initial self-assessment and progressed to the next phase of the program, including receiving expert advice on co-operatives and other collaborative business models. The industry and geographic reach of the pilot program, as provided by SCU, is at Table 1.

**Question Number: 5 (continued)**

**Table 1. Sectoral and geographic coverage in the Farm Co-operatives and Collaboration Pilot Program (as at 15 March 2017).**

INDUSTRY	QLD	NSW	ACT	VIC	TAS	SA	WA	NT	Total
Aquaculture	1	3	0	1	0	0	0	0	5
Beef	11	13	1	8	3	3	4	2	45
Chicken meat	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Dairy	1	8	0	5	2	0	0	0	16
Eggs	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Fishing	3	4	0	2	0	2	0	1	12
Forestry	2	2	0	0	0	0	2	0	6
Fruits	2	6	0	4	2	1	2	0	17
Grain	2	6	0	3	0	6	4	0	21
Mixed crops	5	4	0	3	0	1	3	0	16
Mixed meat	3	8	1	3	1	0	1	0	17
Mixed meat & crops	1	6	0	0	2	1	0	0	10
Mixed meat & grain	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Nuts	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Other crops	5	14	1	6	1	5	4	0	36
Other livestock	1	3	0	1	0	0	0	0	5
Other service	3	5	1	2	0	0	1	0	12
Pork	2	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	4
Rice	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Sheep meat	4	4	0	3	1	0	1	0	13
Sugar	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Turf / Other plants	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
Vegetables	6	9	0	2	0	0	2	0	19
Wine	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	3
Wool	5	8	1	0	0	0	0	0	14
<b>Total</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>284</b>

Source: Southern Cross University

3. Refer to previous answer.

4. SCU is responsible for all communication and promotional activities, achieved through: the Farming Together website; eBulletins on program activities; social media; industry meetings; print media and radio; and the hosting of a National Forum in August 2016.

Expenditure by SCU on Communications to date is \$439,408.

5. SCU is required to implement a project Monitoring, Evaluation, Review and Improvement (MERI) program to be contracted to an independent consultancy. SCU used an open tender process to select an external consultant.

6. The Expert Advisory Panel was established by SCU through a competitive tender process run through TenderLink, which ran from late August 2016.

A second tender process for the Expert Support Panel was conducted in January 2017, to fill gaps in expertise. A list of providers is at Attachment A. The second tender process will expand this list.

7. Farmers and farmer groups can access the pilot program via the Farming Together website (farmingtogether.com.au).

**Question Number: 5 (continued)**

8. Up to \$3.8 million (GST inclusive) will be made available to eligible farmer groups over the life of the pilot program, to submit proposals to get their collaborative pilot project off the ground. Farmer groups that have received Expert Support have been invited to submit an application that addresses the selection criteria in the Funding Guidelines.

A merit-based application process has been adopted with eligible applications assessed against the criteria, which include contribution to program objectives, likelihood of project success, benefit and impact of the project risk management and value for money.

The application period for the first round of project funding closed on 31 March 2017. A second round of funding is expected later in 2017.

**Attachments**

A: Farm Co-operatives and Collaboration Pilot Program - Expert Panel providers

**Farm Co-operatives and Collaboration Pilot Program - Expert Panel providers\***

Ethical Fields	Kingfisher Law
Revive Communications	RDA Mid North Coast
Inside Outside	RDA Northern Rivers
Hoffman Beef	RDA Central Coast
Livestock Logic	Burley Park Pty Ltd
ProAdvice	RM Consulting Group P/L (RMCG)
Heart of the Bush	Jenkins Legal Services
A.D. Boyle & Associates	Meridian Agriculture Pty Ltd
Rural Directions	Cooperative Federation of NSW Limited
Deloitte	Greener Pastures Consulting
Crowe Horwath	Rural Business Support Services Inc
Vanguard	Co-operatives WA
KA Rural Enterprises	GMG Financial Group
Mach 2 Consulting	Systems Agriculture Pty Ltd
Business Council of Co-operatives and Mutuals (BCCM)	Agknowledge - Connecting Agriculture
Ag Innovate	Holmes Sackett
Stellar Advisory Services	Pivotal Point

\* As at 15 March 2017. Additional providers are being processed following a second open tender process.

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**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

Additional Estimates February 2017

**Agriculture and Water Resources**

**Question Number: 6**

**Division/Agency:** Agricultural Policy Division

**Topic:** Kangaroo mass mortalities

**Proof Hansard Page:** Written

**Senator XENOPHON asked:**

The vet also stated that "*implications are concerning not just for kangaroo meat industry, but the [Australian] meat industry in general.*"

- a. Is there anything in the Action Plan to prevent the meat of any kangaroos shot in the regions affected by the 2016 December mortality epidemic entering the domestic or exported meat trade?
- b. Were commercially shot kangaroos from the affected regions prevented from entering the consumption supply chain? Please provide details of precautionary procedures enacted?

<sup>1</sup><http://www.abc.net.au/news/2016-12-01/rural-kangaroo-mystery-deaths/8079490>

**Answer:**

The Department of Agriculture and Water Resources is not able to comment on the response to the incident identified in the media article or on kangaroo meat produced for domestic consumption. State and territory governments are responsible for the management of these issues.

In relation to edible kangaroo meat certified by the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources for export, this meat must originate from export registered establishments which demonstrate compliance with the *Australian Standard for the Hygienic Production of Wild Game Meat for Human Consumption*. This standard requires that product is derived from animals which are healthy and do not show signs of abnormalities that may render the meat unwholesome.