

## **Carbon tax repeal welcomed; farmers already leading the way**

In its first item of business for the 44<sup>th</sup> Parliament, the Federal Government is today introducing legislation to repeal the carbon tax – a move welcomed by the National Farmers' Federation (NFF).

NFF President Duncan Fraser said that the NFF does not support the carbon tax as a means of reducing greenhouse emissions as it adds unnecessary costs into Australian farm businesses.

“Australia’s farmers have led the way in emissions reductions without the carbon tax. We have been very vocal opponents of the carbon tax, and remain so – due to the cost burden borne by our sector,” Mr Fraser said.

“Agriculture may be excluded from directly paying the tax, but that doesn’t mean that its impact isn’t felt by our farmers – in fact, agriculture remains a heavily affected sector due to the flow on costs allocated to electricity and transport, and by the pass through costs from agricultural processors.

“Farmers operate in an extremely competitive marketplace already, and they do so off their own bat, with Australian farmers receiving one of the lowest amounts of Government subsidies of any OECD country.

“Add in the impact of this tax, and our farmers are not only competing against heavily subsidised farmers from around the world, but also farmers in overseas countries without a carbon tax.

“Critically, agriculture recognises the need for action on the reduction of carbon emissions, and our sector has been leading the way. We have already adopted many practices to help improve our carbon footprint: soil sequestration through minimum till farming; revegetation of land and waterways; the return of land to the environment for conservation; and methane management of livestock and effluent ponds, among others.

“In fact, the former federal Department of Climate Change has said that Australian primary industries have led the nation in reducing greenhouse gas emissions - a massive 40 percent reduction between 1990 and 2006.

“We know that farmers and agriculture can play an important role in reducing emissions, but we firmly believe that in order for our sector to reach its potential, greater investment in research and development is needed to develop and convert carbon science and methodologies into on-farm action.

“That’s why we support programs like the Carbon Farming Initiative, and were disappointed when the former Government cut funding from the Biodiversity Fund and Carbon Farming Futures: both important programs that help farmers store carbon and continue their work as frontline environmentalists.

“Today, we support the Government’s move to repeal the carbon tax legislation, and call on the Government to strategically invest in the agricultural sector to help it reduce its carbon emissions,” Mr Fraser said.

**Ends.**

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