

Wednesday, August 11, 2016

GPSA holds AGM, welcomes new chairman and farewells inaugural board member Max Wilksch

Grain Producers SA has today welcomed its youngest chairman Wade Dabinett to the helm while farewelling inaugural board member Max Wilksch at the company's Annual General Meeting at the Eyre Peninsula Field Days in Cleve.

Mr Dabinett joined the GPSA board in May 2014 and has been vice-chairman since the 2015 AGM. He also chairs GPSA's Transport and Supply Chain Sub-Committee.

As a young grain producer, Mr Dabinett says he is hoping role as chairman will encourage other young producers to consider being part of the organisation and its sub-committees.

"I think there's a missing generation of farmers – those in their 30s and 40s – who aren't engaging in advocacy anymore," he said.

"Advocacy has been the poor cousin to research and development and I certainly think it warrants more time and investment. Hopefully I can encourage those guys who have been focused on production and farming systems groups in the past to become involved in advocacy and post-farm gate issues which impact all producers.

Mr Dabinett takes over the role from inaugural chair Garry Hansen, who has stepped back to be a director. He was re-elected in the recent nomination process, along with Stephen Ball, Riverton, and David Malpas at Lucindale.

Retiring director Max Wilksch paid tribute to the outgoing chairman and says he hopes Mr Dabinett's appointment will motivate a younger generation of growers to join the advocacy organisation.

"I think we have funded research and development for ever and a day, and it certainly has its place, but now we need to focus on the advocacy to see where agriculture fits into the government system," he says.

Mr Wilksch said he was most proud of establishing and chairing the agriculture security and priority sub-committee, which investigated invasive mining in agricultural land.

"We have developed a policy and it will be up to the new team to progress it now, but it's something I can go away feeling really content with," he says.

“I think the organisation has employed some great staff and I admire the people I have worked with. We have all worked to a common aim but it was the leadership who drove it. GPSA can go wherever it wants to go now.”

ENDS

For interviews:

Wade Dabinett, Incoming Chairman, 0408 686 092

Darren Arney, Chief Executive Officer, 0448 186 707

For more information on Grain Producers SA and its policies, visit www.grainproducerssa.com.au or get in touch on 08 8391 6621 or email info@grainproducerssa.com.au

About Grain Producers SA:

Grain Producers SA is a not-for-profit organisation that represents all levy-paying grain producers in South Australia. GPSA's objective is to foster the development and implementation of policies that promote the economic and environmental sustainability of the South Australian grains industry for the benefit of its producers and the wider community. Growers are encouraged to have their say on policy and have input on the people who represent them.
