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'Keep it clean' key message for harvest 2013-14

GRAIN Producers SA is encouraging growers to keep harvest clean this year by ensuring grain delivered to receival centres is contaminant-free and does not exceed maximum residue limits for late season chemical application.

All domestic and export markets for South Australian grain have a low or nil tolerance level for chemical residues and contaminants. But while harvest has only just started, there have been reports of some loads of grain with contaminants that are unacceptable.

Viterra has been reminding growers that it is essential all pickled grain, artificial colouring, fertiliser, bait, rodents and old grain is not present in newly harvested grain to avoid potential supply chain contamination.

Chief executive Darren Arney said delivering 'clean' grain would protect South Australia's reputation for a quality product in domestic and export markets and would ensure there was no reason for grain prices to be discounted.

Growers must clean all harvest and grain storage equipment thoroughly including:

- **Pressure-wash field bins** to remove any residual fertiliser, pickled grain and dye from the cone, walls and roof.
- **Clean-out headers with compressed air** to remove any contaminants and when unloading, let the first bit of grain run out on to the ground (including contents of the bubble auger).
- **Dry-run augers and use a soft mallet on the length of the barrel** to dislodge any fertiliser build-up, even those cleaned after seeding/spreading urea. Grain to be retained on-farm should be first run up the auger. Growers may be surprised at how much urea can become lodged in augers.
- **Trucks must be pressure-washed** to remove any traces of fertiliser or pickle, including tarp rails and the underside of tarps.

However, while GPSA believes growers have a responsibility to take care in delivering grain, it does not agree that growers are liable for cross-contamination in the bulk handling system.

"There have been reports that if contaminants are found in a load tipped off at a receival centre then the grower will be held personally responsible for any other grain that becomes contaminated at the site," he said.

"GPSA does not agree with this because bulk handlers charge a receival fee to cover the cost of checking a load of grain for contaminants and if anything is found, the handler has the right to reject a load.

"GPSA believes it is not possible for growers to manage a bulk handling company's internal processes. Accidents can happen and any contamination is not intentional."

Growers must only use registered chemicals and adhere to withholding periods, label instructions, application rates and safe operating procedures at all times.

Mr Arney said the industry and Federal Government have a pesticide residue monitoring program, the National Residue Survey, that tested chemical residues in grain every harvest and provided evidence of grain growers' 'good agricultural practice' to support ongoing market access.

“If the National Residue Survey detects a MRL breach, growers may be faced with increased sampling, testing and/or administration which could delay harvest deliveries or worse, result in losing market access,” he said.

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About Grain Producers SA:

Grain Producers SA is a not-for-profit organisation that intends to represent 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.

