

## Call to protect SA's prime agricultural land

**Grain Producers SA has called on Minister for Agriculture Barnaby Joyce to protect grain production in South Australia by supporting a moratorium on mining on prime agricultural land.**

During his appearance on ABC Q&A last month, Minister Joyce said that mining should not occur on prime agricultural land. The comment was in the context of prime farming land on the Liverpool Plains of New South Wales but GPSA has analysed land values between NSW and SA.

**"I'VE SAID QUITE CLEARLY – AND I'VE SAID THE SAME SINCE 2009 – THAT YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE MINING ON PRIME AGRICULTURAL LAND."**

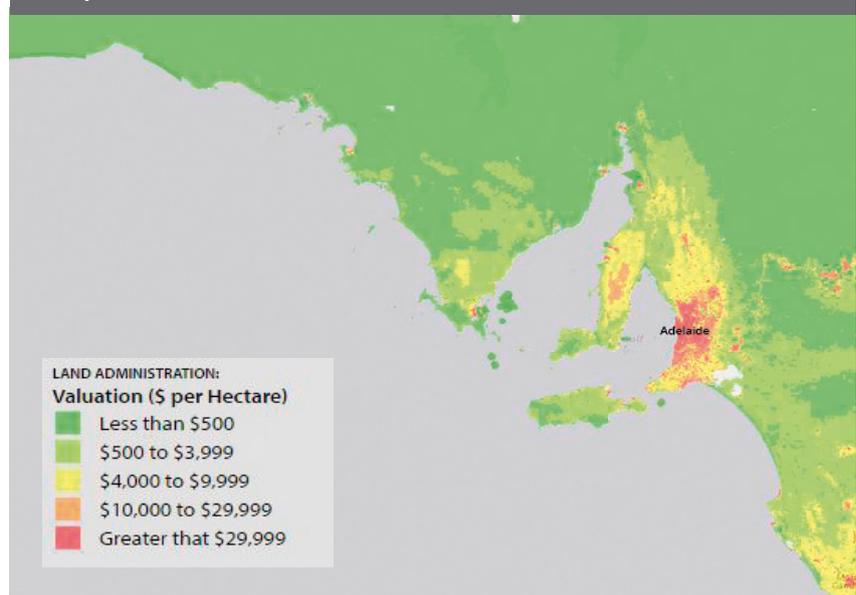
**BARNABY JOYCE, ABC Q&A, MONDAY 6 JUNE 2016**

The NSW Valuer General's 2015 report on land values for the Liverpool Plains stated rural mixed farming and grazing land was valued at \$2900 per hectare while rural grazing land was valued at \$1750/ha. Rural Bank's Australian Farmland Values 2015 report found the average value of the region's farmland was \$3752/ha.

GPSA chairman Garry Hansen said if the Liverpool Plains farmland was considered prime agricultural land and a benchmark against which other regions and agricultural land can be judged, then there were many regions in SA that would be of equal, or greater, value.

According to the SA Valuer General, many parts of the state's farmland is valued between \$4000/ha and \$10,000/ha, well above the value of the prime agricultural land of the Liverpool Plains.

Graph 1: South Australian land values 2012-13 (\$/ha)\*



"The average values of land on the Yorke Peninsula have increased from \$2000/ha in 2001 to \$8000/ha in 2013. This is the very same land that is under threat from the proposed Hillside Mine at Ardrossan," Mr Hansen said.

"In fact, a significant area of agricultural land in South Australia is valued at similar or in excess of the value of the land on the Liverpool Plains.

This is why GPSA is seeking support for a moratorium to protect SA's prime agricultural land from invasive mining and is asking Minister Joyce, his colleagues and State Government counterparts to ensure action on this front.

"With less than five percent of South Australia's land available for agricultural production, it is imperative that we protect what is left."

### Reminder – director nominations due in July

**Producers considering nominating for board membership of GPSA must submit their nominations between July 13 and 20.**

There are five positions in total up for election – four director positions and the chairman's position, each for a period of two years. To nominate, candidates must complete the nomination form, which requires the support of five GPSA members.

The position of board member requires the commitment of attending up to eight meetings annually in Adelaide and regional SA and being available for telephone conferences as needed. There is also the opportunity to represent GPSA nationally on other commodity or issue groups.

**Details: [www.grainproducerssa.com.au](http://www.grainproducerssa.com.au) or 1800 734 884**

# RWA highlights need for continued research investment

## From the CEO

With **DARREN ARNEY**



**The detection of Russian Wheat Aphid in South Australia last month has highlighted the importance of timely action in response to exotic pest and disease incursions.**

The industry, particularly GRDC and the scientific community, had contingency plans developed 10 years ago around the potential for the pest to come in and the protocols and response has been very good.

As spring approaches, it is important that growers monitor their crops and talk to their advisers around economic thresholds and timing and application of insecticides to ensure we are targeting the RWA and protecting crops but ensuring beneficial insects are maintained to also help control them.

Some crop varieties have a certain level of tolerance to RWA and this genetic material needs to be fast-tracked through to growers. The RWA issue highlights the need for continued funding for the Australian Centre for Plant Functional Genomics.

Grain Producers SA was disappointed to learn that the SA Government has withdrawn \$1m/year in funding for ACPFG. The government's contribution to R&D has declined significantly over the past 50 years. GPSA believes there is a role for government in the space because of the significant public good research brings to the economy since wheat is SA's number one export.

One percent of gross farm income goes to the Grains Research and Development Corporation and in turn, the GRDC allocates funds and to government organisations like CSIRO and SARDI. The grower-funded SA Grain Industry Trust also funds significant research through SARDI. In February, at the GRDC Updates, there was an announcement of a co-funding arrangement between GRDC and PIRSA/SARDI of \$5m per year of growers' funds with matching in-kind support from SARDI.

These examples demonstrate the already significant volume of money growers are putting to research – and given the significant benefit to the economy, it is not unreasonable to expect the State Government to be contributing its fair share too.

## FEEDBACK CALL

**The annual Grain Producers SA Grower Priorities Survey is open for your feedback!**

GPSA conducts an annual survey of South Australian growers to determine issues they are experiencing in the industry and how they rate as a priority for their business. It is anonymous and only take five minutes to complete however it will help GPSA to better advocate for growers and develop policy and submissions on your behalf.

**YOU COULD ALSO BE IN THE RUNNING TO WIN A KESTREL 3500DT METER!**



Complete the survey at [www.grainproducerssa.com.au](http://www.grainproducerssa.com.au) or call the office to be posted a copy.

## Young SA growers to attend national conference

**YOUNG South Australian grain producers Chad Nickolls, 33, Pinnaroo, and Ben Francis, 34, Maitland, will attend the Australian Grains Industry Conference later this month after winning Grain Producers SA's two sponsorship positions.**

The conference, in Melbourne from July 25 to July 27, is hosted by Grain Trade Australia and brings together the Australian and international grain industries to network while providing the latest information on international grain markets.

GPSA chief executive officer Darren Arney says the organisation offers the sponsorship positions annually, valued at \$2500 each, to encourage participation of young producers in the grain industry and help build their skills by giving them exposure to end-users.

"We are passionate about upskilling young producers and will be encouraging Chad and Ben to share their experiences with the wider industry through GPSA once they return," he said. "AGIC represents a great opportunity for young producers to gain a broader perspective of the industry's key players. After all, they are the future of our industry and we need to start now in helping them learn more about the whole supply chain."

Chad works on the family farm at Pinnaroo and appreciates the challenges of farming in the Mallee region on the SA/Victorian border including exporting through the Port Adelaide terminal and supplying the local feed grains industries.

"By attending the conference I would hope to improve my understanding of the grains industry post farm-gate, both the domestic feed industry and particularly, the export supply chain," Chad said.



Chad Nickolls (pictured left with his family) and Ben Francis have won the two GPSA-sponsored position to the Australian Grains Industry Conference.

Ben is involved with family farming operation Loudounbrae Farming on the central Yorke Peninsula. Changes to their farming system in the past five years including a controlled traffic cropping system and a chaff deck system have already brought benefits.

"I am looking forward to the opportunities attending the conference will have for broadening my understanding of the grains industry as a whole which I will be able to share in the district and implement within our own business."