

GrainGrowers' National Policy Group Meeting Update

26-27th February 2020

GrainGrowers' [National Policy Group](#) (NPG) held its first face-to-face meeting of the year in Perth on 26-27 February. The meeting focussed on the important opportunities and issues facing the Australian grains sector, including grains industry sustainability and climate policy, RD&E, biosecurity, drought policy and water management. Other key topics of discussion included agvet chemicals, transport, market access, grain quality management, workforce relations and regional health. The meeting was attended by guest speakers from the GRDC, WA Farmers, GIWA, Plant Health Australia, AEGIC and Intergrain.

Climate Resilience and the Grains Sustainability Framework

Drought policy, climate resilience and sustainability remain a core focus for GrainGrowers.

The NPG endorsed the Grains Sustainability Framework as a significant step forward in positioning the Australian grains sector for enduring profitability and sustainability. The Grains Sustainability Framework is underpinned by priorities and goals, grouped according to the three key pillars of responsible environmental stewardship; building capacity and wellbeing; and raising consumer confidence in the Australian grains industry.

The NPG also considered the development of a climate change policy and debated the key policy principles focusing on capturing potential opportunities, recognising the adaptation already achieved by farmers over many years, and ensuring the policy supports the economic sustainability of the industry. Further information regarding the development of a GrainGrowers' climate change policy will be provided to members shortly.

Biosecurity

The grains sector relies on Australia's biosecurity system to support economic prosperity and sustainability. The control of weeds, pests and diseases already established in Australia costs growers over \$5 billion each year. Australia's biosecurity risks are increasing, and the NPG has strengthened GrainGrowers' biosecurity policy position by endorsing the following policy principles:

- Biosecurity is a shared responsibility and requires coordination across all governments, industry, producers and the broader community

- Maintaining Australia’s resilient and world-leading approach to biosecurity requires continuous research and innovation, and ongoing commitment to prevention and response
- Governments at all levels should provide a robust, effective and adequately resourced biosecurity system
- New and existing quality assurance principles should support continual improvement in the management of grains biosecurity
- Management of grains biosecurity is enhanced by bilateral agreements, harmonised legislation and cooperation between industry and government jurisdictions, as well as the community

GrainGrowers’ new biosecurity policy will be released shortly, along with targeted advocacy to Government and industry stakeholders.

Wheat Quality

The NPG were joined by representatives from the AEGIC and Intergrain to discuss the findings and recommendations of [*Gains in Grains: Is Australia Producing the Most Profitable Quality of Wheat?*](#), a research report commissioned by GrainGrowers to investigate the performance of Australian wheat quality. The NPG focussed on opportunities to improve the efficacy of the End Point Royalty (EPR) system; better reporting of varietal quality performance or ‘strike-rate’; refining the wheat classification system to ensure growers and the supply chain is maximising the interaction of production and quality; and streamlining the promotion of Australian wheat to maximise value capture for Australian grain growers.

Next Meeting and Next Steps

GrainGrowers next face-to-face NPG meeting will be held in July in the Northern Region. If you would like any further information about any of the issues presented in this update, or would like to raise additional issues for GrainGrowers to focus on, please get in touch at enquiry@graingrowers.com.au or 02 9286 2000.

About the NPG

The NPG provides input into, reviews and approves GrainGrowers’ policy positions that are developed on behalf of all Australian grain farmers. NPG comprises 15 elected grower representatives, five from each of the Western, Southern and Northern regions. The group meets several times a year in person to debate the important issues effecting growers. Further information is available at: <https://www.graingrowers.com.au/policy/national-policy-group/>