

QFF MEMBERS

Australian Prawn
Farmers Association

CANEGROWERS

Cotton Australia

Growcom

Nursery & Garden
Industry Queensland

Qld Chicken Growers
Association

Qld Dairyfarmers'
Organisation

Qld Irrigators Council
Association Inc

Associates:

- Flower Association
of Queensland Inc
- Queensland
Chicken Meat
Council
- Queensland
Aquaculture
Industries
Federation
- Biological Farmers
of Australia

MEDIA RELEASE

July 17, 2008

GREEN PAPER CAUTIOUS ABOUT INCLUDING AGRICULTURE

The launch of the Australian Government's preferred Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme (CPRS) Green Paper has acknowledged that agriculture faces huge costs and challenges from an Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS), according to the Queensland Farmers' Federation (QFF).

QFF President Gary Sansom said he was pleased the Government has not moved to impose an arbitrary date for covering agriculture, but instead identified a target of 2015 – pending the need to first overcome practical impediments of measuring, monitoring and verification of carbon emissions – with a decision on inclusion or exclusion to be considered in 2013.

"While Treasury is yet to do the detailed modelling for industry impacts, modelling done by the New Zealand Government shows many farms ceasing to be profitable under an ETS at fairly foreseeable carbon prices.

"If the only way to reduce emissions is reducing production, then the CPRS fails as a as a tool for encouraging better ways of producing less emissions intensive food.

"Farmers are also concerned that even though agriculture is initially excluded from the ETS, we will still face a large increase in costs because around 40 per cent of farm inputs are emissions-intensive and will be going up in price although there will be some relief, at least in the short term, from the proposed reduction in fuel excise

"These cost increases will dramatically impact on the competitiveness of Australian agriculture and will need to be compensated from day one or see Australia lose agricultural markets to countries without an ETS. That would be a negative outcome for the global mitigation effort and for the Australian economy.

"Nor would it do much to help Australia play its part in addressing the current global food crisis, which can only get worse as demand continues to exceed supply for food.

"The more we look at it, the more we think that there are better policy instruments for agriculture to contribute to reducing emissions than being included in the CPRS which needs to be explored fully," he said.

"Notably, the Government has recognised and emphasise the essential need to work in close consultation with agriculture to overcome these problems and in developing appropriate responses.

"Queensland farmers are committed to finding workable new ways to reduce the sector's carbon footprint and ways farmers can adopt solutions to build on our leading contribution to reducing emissions on an equitable basis.

Farmers have maintained that they are willing to play their part in meeting Australia's, and the world's climate change challenge. Today's Green Paper provides the opportunity for Government and farmers to work together to ensure this can be achieved in an equitable, measured and sustainable basis.

"What we need are policies that combine the mitigation and adaptation challenge in the rollout of improved farming practices, backed by a massively expanded research and development effort on improving practices even more," he said.

For more information:

Jamie O'Brien

Media & Policy Officer

07 3837 4747

041 762 6420