

# 2019 FEDERAL ELECTION PRIORITIES

Representing 17,000 grain farmer members across Australia, GrainGrowers has identified seven key priorities for the next Federal Government to help advance the Australian grains industry. Based on member and industry input, including over 500 survey responses, and endorsement from the GrainGrowers National Policy Group, these election priorities will underpin sustainable growth of the grains industry, and benefit the national economy, consumers and the community.



## 2 Improved freight efficiency

Australian supply chain costs are comparably higher than our competitors. As a result, growers are penalized through lower grain prices and reduced profitability.

### GrainGrowers election ask:

1. Develop a targeted infrastructure investment program that removes bottlenecks along the supply chain. This program should utilize the CSIRO TraNSIT model to assess all agricultural infrastructure projects.
2. Support increased utilization of higher productivity vehicles through the reclassification of all suitable roads to allow road train and B-double truck access.
3. Ensure agricultural freight is a high priority in the National Freight Strategy.



## 1 Better telecommunications

Connectivity is essential for all farm businesses to operate efficiently and adopt new technology. Yet blackspots, slow speeds and poor service hamper regional Australia every day.

### GrainGrowers election ask:

1. Implementation of all recommendations from the Regional Telecommunications Review to ensure access to infrastructure, consumer protections and digital inclusion.

### Did you know

- 71% of grain growers are not satisfied with their mobile phone service.
- Nearly 10% of grain growers have no mobile phone or data coverage on their properties, and around a third of growers have less than a quarter of their farms covered.
- 80% of growers experienced ongoing issues with landline, mobile or internet in the last 12 months.



## 3 Improved research, innovation and access to technology

Adoption of research and new technologies are essential to ensure the sustainable growth of grains, to meet the needs of customers and the community and to remain globally competitive.

### GrainGrowers election ask:

1. Ongoing matched funding contribution from Government to agricultural R&D based on matching the R&D levies paid by growers.
2. Maintain support and confidence in Australia's regulatory system to ensure ongoing access to current and emerging technologies, and improve Australia's ability to attract new technologies and products.



## 4 Improved access for agricultural machinery on roads

While farmers generally only need to move ag equipment short distances, at specific times of the year, there's a lot of unnecessary red tape. Simple, practical rules are needed to keep Australia moving and safe.

### GrainGrowers election ask:

1. Adopt National Class 1 Agricultural Vehicle and Combination Mass and Dimension notice, which covers at least 80% of current agricultural fleet.

### Did you know

- The grains industry employs over 100,00 people, looks after 23 million hectares of land and constitutes 22% of agriculture's gross value of production.



## 5 Improved trade and market access

70% of Australian grains, oilseeds and pulses exported each year, and access to open and fair markets is crucial to the success of Australian grains sector.

### GrainGrowers election ask:

1. Ratify IA-CEPA and commit funding to Indonesia-Australia Grains Partnership.
2. Pursue ambitious and high-quality free trade agreements with key trading partners, focused on EU, RCEP and India.
3. Prioritise initiatives that eliminate the non-tariff barriers which penalise Australian farmers.
4. Commit to addressing trade distorting domestic agricultural policies in overseas countries via the Cairns Group, WTO and direct representation.



## 6 Enhanced climate resilience and risk management

Many farmers are impacted by the current drought, it's not over yet with a low winter crop again forecast. Farmers use various tools to prepare and manage climate risk but these tools lack flexibility. A market failure has also meant a strong insurance market (such as multi-peril and weather derivatives) is yet to establish.

### GrainGrowers election ask:

1. Introduce a temporary 150% tax incentive on MPCl and weather insurance premiums for five years to support the development of a sustainable insurance market in Australia.
2. Improve the effectiveness of Farm Management Deposits (FMDs) by allowing intergenerational transfer of FMDs and the use of FMDs by companies and trusts.



## 7 Improved information transparency and competition

There's no level playing field in the grains supply chain with a small number of regional monopolies compared to over 20,000 individual grain farming businesses. This creates distortionary information asymmetry, placing Australian farmers at a disadvantage when making marketing decisions.

### GrainGrowers election ask:

1. The introduction of a mandatory Grains Stocks Reporting scheme in Australia and free and public access to ABS monthly grain export data.
2. ACCC market study into the grains supply chain.
3. Extend the Wheat Ports Code to all grains and to improve reporting requirements in accordance to the recommendations of Wheat Port Code Review.