



MEDIA RELEASE

Date: Tuesday 12 April 2011

For immediate release

CRIPPS VOWS TO TAKE FARMERS FORWARD

Hinchinbrook MP, Andrew Cripps, says he is determined to take Queensland's agricultural sector forward and secure primary industries as part of the state's economic future, after being appointed the LNP's Shadow Minister for Agriculture, Food and Regional Economies.

Mr Cripps said it was a great honour to be asked by LNP Leader Campbell Newman to serve in his new Shadow Cabinet, especially in an important role responsible for Queensland's primary industries and its regions, both of which he was passionate about.

"My electorate is a regional electorate in North Queensland. Primary industries underpin the economy. About 15 per cent of my constituents are employed in primary industries and the annual value of local primary production is more than \$500 million" said Mr Cripps.

"Since I was elected in September 2006, I have fought many battles on behalf of farmers, primary industries and people employed in rural industries against the more outrageous, destructive and punitive policies of the Beattie and Bligh Labor Governments" he said.

Mr Cripps said despite two decades of neglect and disadvantage under Labor, he believed there was a profitable and sustainable future for primary industries and the next generation of farmers in Queensland and the regional and rural communities they lived in.

"I believe it's sad the Bligh Labor Government discarded the Department of Primary Industries as a stand alone department. There are still many dedicated and talented people in what was the DPI, but the truth is it is now a shadow of its former self" said Mr Cripps.

"Frankly, it will take some time for farmers to put their trust back in the department. I have a vision of a department pursuing research and extension focused on productivity, service delivery and driving its own agenda, not being subservient to other departments" he said.

Mr Cripps said the issue of food security was a serious matter that included the protection of agricultural land, the profitability of farm enterprises and training of rural industry employees.

"I am well aware that the major issues in Queensland's regional communities relate to the lack of infrastructure and services, a symptom of Labor's indifference" said Mr Cripps.

Contact:	Andrew Cripps MP Member for Hinchinbrook	Address:	PO Box 1515 Ingham Qld 4850	Ph:	07 4776 1428
		E-mail:	Hinchinbrook@parliament.qld.gov.au	Fax:	07 4776 3503
