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## OCT 2011 COLUMN - INNISFAIL ADVOCATE

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Date: Monday 10th October 2011

For immediate release

### LNP AGRICULTURE STRATEGY

On Friday 16 September 2011, the Leader of the LNP, Campbell Newman and I, launched the LNP's new strategy for agriculture in Queensland. The strategy sets an ambitious target to double our agricultural production by 2040. As I said at the launch of the strategy the LNP's plan is focused on increasing agricultural production. Not regulation, not compliance – production.

The LNP has identified six priority areas to support efforts to achieve this goal. The LNP will firstly re-establish a stand-alone Department of Agriculture, to drive this strategy. This stand alone Agriculture Department will be directed to engage and work co-operatively with farmers to achieve outcomes, rather than focus on bureaucracy and red-tape. The LNP's six priority areas in our strategic plan are:

1. **Facilitating new infrastructure** – The LNP will support new water infrastructure to enhance existing and encourage new agricultural production, including the Connors River Dam, Nathan Dam and Water for Bowen projects. The LNP will also support improved transport infrastructure, including roads, rail and ports, to facilitate moving agricultural products for value adding and to domestic and export markets.
2. **Improve skills and career pathways** – The LNP will promote agricultural science, agricultural economics and biosciences, as pathways for young people to pursue careers in agriculture. The LNP wants to improve the profile of graduate careers, school based apprenticeships and traineeships in agriculture. This will involve close partnerships with universities, agricultural colleges, private training providers and schools.
3. **Research, Development and Extension** – The LNP will work with industry, existing institutions and universities to identify R, D & E priorities to improve productivity, support the sector's ability to address emerging challenges and capitalise on new market and export opportunities. The LNP will develop long term funding sources for agricultural R, D and E, as part of our commitment to science and innovation focused on productivity.

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4. **Protecting Strategic Cropping Land (SCL)** – The LNP will identify and protect SCL under an improved system of Statutory Regional Plans, which will involve extensive community and industry input. The LNP will not allow new open cut mines on SCL, or new underground mining, coal seam gas, or other resource projects on SCL, if it is likely to have a significant, adverse impact on the productive capacity of that land.
5. **Bio-security** – The LNP will ensure Biosecurity Queensland is adequately resourced to undertake its prevention, emergency response and detection responsibilities.
6. **Fight Labor’s Carbon Tax** - The LNP will oppose Labor’s Carbon Tax. It will drive up the cost of farm inputs and erode our competitive advantage against imported products.

Agriculture is a key economic driver in the Hinchinbrook electorate. I am proud, both as the Shadow Minister for Agriculture and the Member for Hinchinbrook, that the LNP is promoting and supporting agriculture. You can view the LNP’s Agriculture Strategy by contacting my office or accessing the document on the LNP’s website at the following address: [www.lnp.org.au/policies/the-cando-lnp-agriculture-strategy](http://www.lnp.org.au/policies/the-cando-lnp-agriculture-strategy).

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