



MEDIA RELEASE

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For immediate release

LNP TO REBUILD AGRICULTURE BIOSECURITY

LNP Shadow Minister for Agriculture, Food and Regional Queensland, Andrew Cripps, says the LNP will deliver on the commitment in its 30 strategic plan for agriculture, to rebuild Queensland's biosecurity capacity after years of neglect and decline under Labor.

Mr Cripps said the LNP had nominated agriculture as one of the four pillars of Queensland's economy and was determined to strive towards its goal to double food production by 2040, through the leadership and support of a new stand alone agriculture department.

"In striving to achieve this ambitious goal, we simply could not afford the potential for our production to decline as a result of a disease outbreak or a pest incursion, so biosecurity is a fundamental cornerstone of our plan to grow agriculture in Queensland" said Mr Cripps.

"Surveillance, detection and response capability are frontline service for agriculture. Agriculture underpins the employment of many rural and regional communities, so a strong biosecurity framework is essential to make the livelihoods of those families secure" he said.

"An LNP Government will ensure Queensland's biosecurity is protected by employing an additional 15 biosecurity officers, investing \$6 million over the next four years. These biosecurity officers will help protect us from both animal and plant threats" said Mr Cripps.

"The Bligh Labor Government has no vision for Queensland agriculture and has a record of empty promises that have weakened primary industry and let farmers down. In particular, biosecurity capability under Labor has been decimated, as if they just don't care" he said.

"Labor's ineffective response to citrus canker, fire ants, Hendra virus, cane smut and equine influenza has only been matched by its indifference towards Asian bees, maintaining the integrity of the tick line and the loss of professionals from the department" said Mr Cripps.

"The Queensland Ombudsman found major failures in Labor's handling of our biosecurity system and recently followed up with another report condemning the Bligh Labor Government for taking no action on the recommendations to address these failures" he said.

Mr Cripps said the engagement of 15 additional Biosecurity Officers over 4 years would commence the rebuilding process of a vital frontline service to agriculture, with the new officers to be recruited and trained across a range of both animal and plant disciplines.

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