



SAM BIRRELL MP

Federal Member for Nicholls

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Media Release

NFF takes desperate measures to save farming

The National Farmers' Federation (NFF) has been forced to take the extraordinary step of launching its largest advocacy campaign in almost 40 years, as Labor continues to decimate the industry and the regions.

Member for Nicholls, Sam Birrell MP, said the Federal Labor Government had stripped farmers of confidence and the NFF was desperately trying to save the sector from the impacts of a litany of poor policy.

"We have seen time and time again - policy from the Albanese Government that has perverse impacts on regional communities.

They are ignorant of regional Australia, what makes the economy tick, and the unique challenges it faces," Mr Birrell said.

New NFF president David Jochinke delivered a dire warning at the NFF Conference that it was in the fight of its life.

"Labor's plans to rip water out of our regions using destructive buybacks, its refusal to reinstate a dedicated Agricultural Visa, and the decision to make Australian farmers pay for the biosecurity risks associated with overseas products shipped here to compete with home grown ones are just a few examples of why the 'Keep Farmers Farming' campaign has had to launch," Mr Birrell said.

"In a country where farmers feed the nation and contribute billions to our economy, it's disappointing a campaign like this is necessary.

"It should serve as a wakeup call to the Labor Government and its punishing policies.

"These costs don't just affect farmers, they flow on to industry, local jobs and prices at the checkout," Mr Birrell said.

Farmers are being punished by Labor in almost every possible area. Just some examples include;



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Water buybacks – Labor is forging ahead with plans for water buybacks, ignoring the economic and social safeguards for an additional 450 gigalitres.

“Water buybacks rip the economic lifeblood out of regions, when water goes from the consumptive pool economic activity, jobs and people are lost to regional communities,” Mr Birrell said.

“Reverting to buybacks for the additional 450 gigalitres will hurt regional communities and drive-up food prices, affecting all Australian families.”

“Everything we have worked so hard for in Nicholls – industry, jobs, businesses; will all be devastated if more water is taken,” he said.

Fresh food tax – Labor is taxing farmers more, by forcing them to pay for the biosecurity risks of international importers.

“It is unfathomable the Labor government would ask farmers pay for the biosecurity risks of international importers from other countries.

“All farmers will be impacted by Labor’s new tax, which will push up the price of fresh food.”

Scrapping the Ag visa – Australia’s top peak food industry bodies warned that agriculture required an additional 172,000 workers, yet only around 16,000 Pacific Australia Labour Mobility (PALM) workers have come in since Labor got into office.

“Labor is refusing to reinstate the Agriculture Visa, even though changes to the PALM Scheme are making it even more difficult and costly for farmers to get their product from paddock to plate.

“Farmers simply can’t get the workers they need and will be forced to offer a minimum of 30 hours per week, despite agriculture work being seasonal and weather dependent.”

“It’s no wonder our farmers are on their knees and now begging Labor to stop destroying the industry,” Mr Birrell said.

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