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Rural Industries Research and
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Sugar Research and
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Grape and Wine Research and
Development Corporation

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Media Release

RURAL RDCs WELCOME NEW RESEARCH DIRECTION

The Council of Rural Research & Development Corporations' Chairs has welcomed the revised Rural Research and Development Priorities released by the Federal Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry as reflecting the current challenges being faced by Australian rural industries.

The revised priorities have been released by the Federal Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry the Hon. Peter McGauran as part of the Federal Government's Agriculture Statement, Future Harvest.

There is an increased emphasis on improving productivity, better understanding the supply chain and the challenges of climate variability and climate change.

Natural Resource Management and Biosecurity remain priorities, with skill development and the promotion of technology seen as being important in supporting the five main research priorities.

The five new priorities are:

1. Productivity and adding value – Improve the productivity and profitability of existing industries and support the development of viable new industries
2. Supply chain and markets – better understand and respond to domestic and international market and consumer requirements and improve the flow of such information through the supply chain, including to consumers.
3. Natural Resource Management – support effective management of Australia's natural resources to ensure primary industries and both economically and environmentally sustainable
4. Climate Variability and Climate Change- build resilience to climate variability and adapt to and mitigate the effects of climate change.
5. Biosecurity – Protect Australia's community, primary industries and environment from biosecurity threats.

Supporting the priorities.

1. Innovation skills – Improve the skills to undertake research and apply its findings
2. Technology – Promote the development of new and existing technologies.



Chair of the Council, Terry Enright, believes the RDCs are already well advanced in investment in programs that reflect the 2007 research priorities.

“Natural Resource Management already attracts approximately 20% of the total RDC research investment. All of the RDCs have recently or are currently involved in NRM projects or programs with Land and Water Australia”, Mr Enright said.

“As well, the success of the jointly-funded \$6million Managing Climate Variability Program has brought a national focus to climate risk management over its five year life, and greatly improved seasonal forecasts, giving confidence to many decision makers in rural industries. The explicit direction to fund further research in this area will no doubt produce further world-first innovation, and create lasting change for levy payers and the wider Australian community, “he said.

The RDCs are committed to continuing this analysis and regular reporting back to our stakeholders.

The new Rural Research & Development Priorities herald an exciting new era in rural research and innovation. Information, reports and case studies illustrating the progress of Rural RDC projects under the new priorities will be posted regularly on the Rural RDC website www.ruralrdc.com.au

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