

PIEFA welcomes Ag degree decision

Primary Industries Education Foundation Australia welcomes the decision by the Hon Dan Tehan, Minister for Education to lower the amount which students must contribute to their fees for an undergraduate degree in Agriculture.

Research by the Australian Council of Deans of Agriculture indicates that there are four jobs for every single Australian agricultural graduate.

There has been a continual skills shortage in the agriculture and related sectors for many years, and any initiative to support students studying agriculture is an important contribution to building the industries into the future. Primary industries including agriculture, horticulture, fisheries and forestry make up a significant part of the fabric and economy of regional and rural Australia. Despite droughts and natural disasters, these industries continuously bounce back, giving real meaning to the word resilient.

Their resilience was fully demonstrated through the global financial crisis of 2008 when there was very little change in their contribution to the Australian economy. In fact, there was a comparative increase because of the decline in other sectors.

The Australian economy faces many headwinds into the future, but it is underpinned by a strong, export oriented primary industries sector. Having greater numbers of graduates entering the sector's workforce will ensure it remains strong and a significant contributor to the Australian economy.

The Primary Industries Education Foundation Australia (PIEFA) is a national, not for profit company, limited by guarantee and governed by a skills-based board of directors. It has a tripartite membership base drawn from the industry, education and, until recently, the government sectors.

Its mission is to engage and inspire students and the broader community about the importance of the Australian food and fibre sector.

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