



Adrian Pederick MP
Member for Hammond

House of Assembly
25th Sep 2014
Question Time

New Horizons

Mr PEDERICK (Hammond) (15:06 :50): My question is to the Minister for Agriculture. In regard to the New Horizons initiative that was announced in the lead-up to the election, is the minister aware of the work Mr Clem Obst of Mundulla, who has been advocating the claying of sandy soils for the past 45 years and who was awarded an Order of Australia 10 years ago for developing and promoting clay spreading techniques to increase water efficiency and retention in sandy soils?

The Hon. L.W.K. BIGNELL (Mawson—Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries, Minister for Forests, Minister for Tourism, Minister for Recreation and Sport, Minister for Racing) (15:07:19): I thank the member for Hammond for the question, and I am sure the people who are running the New Horizons project in Primary Industries and SARDI are well aware of all that has happened in the past.

Mr Pederick: They're 45 years behind.

The SPEAKER: The member for Hammond is warned.

The Hon. L.W.K. BIGNELL: The New Horizons project is very exciting for the future of agriculture in South Australia. There are three trials going on around this state: one over in Lower Eyre Peninsula, one in the Mallee and one down in the South-East, where they are looking at not just using the top five or 10 centimetres of soil, but going down 50 centimetres and using all the soil. The results that we are seeing in improvements in yields are producing increases in yields of between 70 and 200 per cent.

We know how important the agricultural industry is to the South Australian economy, and if we can increase those yields then it is good not just for farmers but for all South Australians. As a government, we are working with the agricultural community to make sure that we can help them in any way we can to improve their yields. As I said, the results that we have had so far have been terrific.

I was over at the Cleve Field Day, as I know a lot of members opposite were as well, and the people who were running the trials had some examples there. They had some core samples

that had been grown in traditional soil, then they had the ones that had been given some more organic matter, and then the New Horizons technique as well. I have to say that the roots below throughout the soil were very healthy, and when you looked at the crop they were much further advanced—they were around three or four weeks advanced to what some of the other examples were.

I think it is a terrific example, and I commend everyone who is working on the current project and those who have done work in the past in looking at putting more clay into soils and making our state more productive. We do have some parts of the state that are traditionally less productive than others because of the chance of where these places lie and the soils that are there, but I have to say, this government is working day in, day out, to try and—

The SPEAKER: I don't think the minister needs to say. The member for Little Para.