

## InShort

**Marine park fight:** Residents and fisherman of Port Wakefield have organised a protest against the South Australian government's no-take zones in marine parks. Liberal MPs Vickie Chapman and Adrian Pederick have shown support for the protest and are urging people driving past the town on their holidays to take note. "The Weatherill Government's plan to ban fishing and recreation in areas such as Port Wakefield will crush coastal communities," Ms Chapman said. "Many South Australians would not be aware of the impact the no-take zones will have on small coastal communities. However, the decision to delay the implementation of the zones means the fight against Labor's plan is far from over."

Agriculture, Food and Fisheries Shadow Minister Adrian Pederick said it was not just fishermen in towns such as Port Wakefield who would be affected but their families, small business owners and social services including schools.

**Farm practices survey:** A recent GRDC report provides new insight into on-farm practices across the nation. The *Farm Practices Survey Report 2012* outlines the adoption of key management practices used in Australian graingrowing regions. GRDC executive manager-research programs Steve Thomas said graingrowers continually demonstrate their resourcefulness and success in managing challenging seasonal, industry and market conditions to deliver profitable and sustainable farm businesses. "Farming practices are constantly changing to match these challenges," Dr Thomas said.

• Details: [www.grdc.com.au/farmpractices](http://www.grdc.com.au/farmpractices)

**DNA testing delivers:** Effective use of DNA technology can reduce the chance of breeding horned Merino rams by 80 per cent in just one year and completely remove the horn gene from the flock in just seven years, according to new data from the Cooperative Research Centre for Sheep Industry Innovation. Through the Information Nucleus Flock, the Sheep CRC has researched the impact of various DNA testing regimes for breeding-out the presence of the genes responsible for horns on Merinos. The modelling revealed that DNA-testing just the rams used in a breeding program will quickly reduce the number of horned sheep and eventually lead to the removal of the horn gene from a Poll flock in about 20 years. The gene can be removed even faster if producers choose the more expensive option of testing both rams and ewes.

• Details: [www.sheepcrc.org.au](http://www.sheepcrc.org.au)

**Farming app:** Australian CliMate is a new iTunes app to help farmers make better operational decisions based on recent weather and likely climate probabilities. The free app allows farmers to look-up the last 60 years of daily rainfall, temperature and radiation data for their location. Seasonal forecasts are based on current ENSO conditions. It also calculates heat sums and estimates soil water and soil nitrate accumulation. The app was developed by the Managing Climate Variability program to help farmers make sense of past climate statistics and forecasts for their own location. MCV project leader David Freebairn said the app was available for iPhone, iPad and iPod touch devices. A web version of the app will be available in March. CliMate can be downloaded by searching for 'Australian Climate' in the app store.