

MEDIA RELEASE

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Rural SA feels budget heat AGAIN

Once again, rural South Australia and agriculture have been given the cold shoulder by the State Labor Government.

Shadow Agriculture Minister Adrian Pederick said the pain of last year's budget has been rekindled by more cuts and lack of investment in rural SA.

'In 2010-11, 179 jobs were sacrificed and \$80 million over four years was slashed from Primary Industries and Resources SA,' Mr Pederick said.

'In yesterday's budget, capital expenditure in Agriculture Food and Fisheries has been dealt another \$34 million blow. Given the contribution to state coffers of this year's bumper \$3.4 billion harvest, it is cruel that country producers are expected to further carry Labor's finances with more cuts.

'At this critical time for food production, Labor has seen fit to pull another \$2.7 million out of research and development and \$4.1 million out of services.

'The \$12 million decrease in biosecurity spending ignores the clear and present danger of a massive plague of mice across much of the state's prime cropland.

'Following the trumpeted success of a modest outlay to fight the recent locust plague, it is deplorable that there is no allowance in the budget to support farmers in fighting the mouse plague.

'This is not about giving handouts to farmers; it's about protecting the income potential of one of the state's biggest export earning industries.

'Labor seems intent on killing the goose that lays the golden eggs.

'Mr Snelling has the hide to tell South Australians he's a family guy who's looking out for SA families, but his Budget certainly doesn't suggest that.

'Labor is attacking the real South Australian families who put food on his table and oil on the wheels of the state's economy.

'He and his Labor colleagues should remember that without the income from rural production, they won't have any money to spend buying Labor votes in the city.'