

MEDIA RELEASE

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Minister's food industry figures misleading

Minister Caica's announcement of a Food Strategy for 2010-2015 glossed over several years of underperformance says Opposition Agriculture, Food and Fisheries spokesman Adrian Pederick.

Mr Pederick said Mr Caica's announcement referred to food industry Gross Food Revenue being nine percent higher than the previous year.

'But he omitted to mention that in the very same SA Food Scorecard, that figure is qualified by the statement, "real Gross Food Revenue growth over the year is estimated at 3.4 percent," Mr Pederick said.

'The report explains the variation is due to the effect of "domestic food price inflation". Taking this into account Minister Caica's statement sounds hollow.

'That report also details significant falls in farm gate revenue compared with the previous year; field crops down 24 percent, wheat 23 percent, barley 17 percent, dairy eight percent, vegetables 11 percent, citrus eight percent. Falls were also recorded in potatoes, capsicums, cucumbers, and blue fin tuna.

'The figures on food exports from SA since 2001-02 are equally disturbing. In the last year of the previous Liberal government, 01-02, exports totalled \$2.98 billion. Under Labor it fell by almost half by 04-05 and in 08-09 was \$2.3 billion, still well short of the Liberals' 01-02 figure.

'Given those past performance figures, SA food producers and other food industry sectors can be assured that a Liberal government has the track record to assist them to maximise the opportunities for the best result.'