

Five minutes with Adrian Pederick - Stock Journal, February 12, 2009

Emma Partridge, Journalist with the Stock Journal, asked Adrian for his response to six questions. Adrian's answers appear below.

1. What makes regional SA a good place to do business?

Regional SA is a fabulous place to do business due to the sense of community in our rural industries – people support each other through seasonal and economic challenges and celebrate the good times together. Our rural industries are supported greatly by affiliated businesses (ie. rural supply/general stores) and also our educational facilities through agricultural programs and school-based apprenticeships. Our rural industries contribute substantially to our State's economy and should be recognised for this contribution and supported accordingly – unfortunately, I do not believe this is happening at present.

2. What excites you about the future of SA's primary sector?

Our agricultural industries have seen massive technological changes over the past 100 years. Agribusinesses, right through from aquaculture to viticulture and everything in-between, have also had to manage greater demands associated with industry standards and business management practices. Success in primary production still comes down to sustainably managing our natural resources – ensuring that what we have in the way of soil, water and vegetation remains viable for future seasons and future generations. New technologies take into account this latter point, ensuring that producers have the opportunity to diversify, to maximise rainfall, grow frost/drought resistant crop varieties and produce stock for world markets. Greater marketing of produce both nationally and internationally is also ensuring our rural industry opportunities are maximised. Furthermore, regional development organisations are well placed to assist with the success of emerging industries in our rural areas.

3. What changes do you anticipate for your business/industry in the next decade?

My background is in dryland farming having grown-up and worked the family farm at Coomandook until entering politics in 2006. I believe there will be significant restructuring throughout the dryland farming sector. Farmers will own more land and there will be more corporate farming undertaken due to economies of scale. I also believe there will be an increase in the use of contractors and consultants due to the scale of future farm businesses and the need for specialised industry advice. Farming businesses will also need to manage greater responsibilities associated with industry standards.

4. What challenges do we face and how well placed are we to survive and thrive?

The biggest challenge for agriculture in the future is whether or not it will be a sector included in the Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme. Carbon off-sets on-farm should be recognised if agriculture is to be part of an emissions trading scheme. Agricultural industries are under pressure already with high input costs and dry seasons and should not have these extra cost pressures. Primary production, like other industries, should have access to free permits so that our rural industries not only remain viable but become vibrant and prosperous. Rural industries are well placed to thrive in the future primarily due to the resilience of industry people in the past, present and, I expect, the future.

5. If you could invest in any rural industry, which one would it be and why?

I would invest in a mixed farming property so as to spread the operating risk between cropping and grazing. I believe this would ensure a more stable income working with climate variability and greater overall returns (as research results indicate). I would invest in producing quality export beef and invest also in the associated market drivers to ensure this industry continues to be as successful as it has been in the past couple of years. Export beef is one of our State's success stories.

6. What is the most important business advice you have received?

Run your farm as a business and the lifestyle will follow. Work hard, work smart and the fruits of your labour will help you achieve your lifestyle outcomes. Advice from my Father, Bob, who farmed until he was 80 years old, was always well received.