

MEDIA RELEASE

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New Ag minister must prove his worth on locusts

Widespread rain and warm weather can bring both feast and famine for SA farmers says Opposition Agriculture spokesman Adrian Pederick.

The conditions that promise so much for long-suffering farmers are also perfect for the farmers' arch-enemy - plague locusts.

As huge swarms move inexorably south, reports are coming in of extensive damage to early emerging crops.

Mr Pederick urged farmers to not only be vigilant in monitoring their advance but also be well prepared to fight back.

'While farmers are effectively the front line of defence, it is also vital that PIRSA are at the ready to provide the necessary advice and assistance at the critical time.

'I urge new Agriculture Minister Michael O'Brien to ensure the government does everything it can to minimise this locust plague, which has the potential to undo much of the gain offered by recent substantial and widespread rainfalls.

'This will include careful surveying and accurate mapping of the plague's advance to identify areas where spring hatchings will occur and ensuring the department has adequate personnel and supplies to treat hatchings and hoppers at the critical time.'