

MEDIA RELEASE

Adrian Pederick MP JP

Member for Hammond

Opposition Whip

Shadow Minister for

Agriculture, Food & Fisheries and Forests

Wednesday June 23, 2010

Hollow ring to Ag Minister's bold statement

There is a hollow ring to the state Agriculture, Food & Fisheries minister's bold statement about food sector growth potential, says Opposition spokesman Adrian Pederick.

Mr Pederick was responding to a statement from Minister Michael O'Brien that he saw great export potential for the food sector that could equal that of mining and defence.

'The minister calls on the industry sector to be innovative in its marketing and to take advantage of SA's reputation for quality food and wine,' he said.

'Given his government's focus on slashing funding to the primary industry sector with major cuts to staff, facilities and programs, his brave statement sounds hollow.

'The minister should understand that a large part of that reputation was hard-earned over many years by the innovative and persistent efforts of producers around the state, and it was critically supported by properly funded research and development programs and rural services.

'It would seem this new minister wants to skate in on the back of the achievements of those years of commitment, input and effort and expect the producers to stay ahead of the game without continued support.

'Defence and mining cannot progress without essential research and development and exploration. These things cannot happen without adequate levels of support from a government that understands that staying ahead of the game depends heavily on their investment in pursuing them.

'The same is true for the agriculture and food industry. Producers need proper support to maintain quality and quantity in the face of falling water availability, cheap imports, threats to the environment and unreasonable tax burdens.'