

# **Agricultural Competitiveness Green Paper Submission**

## **Date submitted**

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## **Name of Organisation/Individual**

Jeff

## **What are the top policies from the Green Paper that the Government should focus on in the White Paper and why?**

Increasing funding for RD&E activities especially through the likes of CSIRO. Innovation is the only way we can keep ahead of some of these other countries. They've all got cheaper labour and are closer to their markets.

Infrastructure investment is key. But there seems too much focus on roads. More roads equals more vehicles. We have to make better use of the ocean, air and rail to move commodities and machinery around the country.

Communication improvements via NBN are good but need to focus on wireless technology in rural areas. Satellite is fine for schools and the kids at home but I don't farm in my home!! I need the internet and phone reception working everywhere. More and bigger mobile towers. Phone reception is better in Namibia than it is in rural WA.

The Entrepreneurs' Infrastructure Programme and Collaboration initiative sounds like a good fit for businesses wanting to grow and diversify.

Obtaining and retaining labour will be a big challenge in our area so some of the initiatives in that space seem helpful. Especially making it easier for overseas workers to come out and stay out without having to jump through so many hoops and paper trails of nonsense.

## **What policies from the Green Paper don't you support and why?**

I'm not convinced \$525mil spent on a 'green army' is creating any value in the long term. That needs to be better justified or scrapped and use the money properly.

## **General Comment**

I didn't read much about initiatives to improve domestic value adding. Particularly before produce leaves the farm gate. The graph showing the value of food post farm gate is horrible to look at. So many middle men!

I also think there should be incentives for taking unproductive land out of rotation and returning it to nature. Increases productivity and reduces cost.

In the taxation space I think medium to long term soil improvement techniques such as liming should be considered as a capital expenditure.

With regards to the drought assistance I can only stress that you must only focus on businesses that are viable but have suffered a one off catastrophic event (and this shouldn't just be restricted to drought). Some businesses just aren't viable and shouldn't continue doing what they're doing. Provide assistance for them to change to more appropriate land use. If we're talking about competitiveness then propping up uncompetitive producers won't help.