



4 April 2016

Committee Secretary
Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport References Committee
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Mr Watling

Inquiry into the Primary Industries Levies and Charges Collection Amendment Bill 2016

Sugar Research Australia Limited (SRA) thanks the Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport References Committee for their invitation to provide a submission to their inquiry into the Primary Industries Levies and Charges Collection Amendment Bill 2016.

SRA fully supports the legislative changes proposed in the Bill and is keen to work with the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources to establish a Sugar Levy Payer Register.

As previously stated in our submission (dated October 2014) to the Committee's inquiry into 'Industry structures and systems governing the imposition and disbursement of marketing and research and development (R&D) levies in the agricultural sector', SRA is committed to broad-based, open and transparent communication and consultation with our levy payers. Such consultation is essential in ensuring our planning and investment in Research, Development and Extension (RD&E) appropriately meets the industry's priorities and expectations, particularly with respect to productivity and profitability outcomes. Whilst we currently have contact details for all of SRA's members (currently 2,384 grower members and 8 milling members), we do not know or have access to all levy payers (approximately 4,000 according to CANEGROWERS Australia or 3,500 according to ABARES). Without direct access to our levy payer details, communication and consultation to-date has had to be undertaken through multiple channels and relying on the assistance of industry representative bodies.

The enactment of the Bill would provide SRA with the long sought-after opportunities to not only identify all of our levy payers but also the ability to seek greater levy payer input and collaboration in setting the strategic direction for RD&E in Australia's sugar industry, as well as enabling improved mechanisms for accessing levy payer feedback on SRA's performance and return on investment.

SRA has recently consulted with the sugar industry representative bodies on the proposed legislative amendments and, subject to the Bill being passed, will continue to engage with them regarding SRA's application for access to sugar levy payer details and the development of a Sugar Levy Payer Register.

SRA looks forward to the Committee's Report and if you have any questions regarding this submission, please contact Ms Leigh Clement, Executive Manager Investor Relations on 07 3331 3329 or by email to lclement@sugarresearch.com.au.

Yours sincerely

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