

**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES STANDING COMMITTEE  
ON PRIMARY INDUSTRIES AND RESOURCES**

Inquiry into Australian farmers and climate change

*Chair: The Hon Dick Adams MP  
Deputy Chair: Mr Alby Schultz MP*

# More research required into climate adaptation

The **Australian Institute of Agricultural Science and Technology (AIAST)** will share its concerns about research funding with the House Primary Industries and Resources Committee at a public hearing to be held on **18 November 2009**, in Committee Room **1R3**, Parliament House, Canberra, at **5pm**.

AIAST notes in its submission to the inquiry into Australian farmers and climate change (Submission no. 63) that: "Australia has for many years boxed well above its weight in the area of research and extension. Until a few years ago our agricultural productivity was growing at more than 2 per cent per annum, despite difficult seasons. That has now changed and our performance has plateaued. One of the main reasons for that has been the large reduction in research and extension which has meant that we have been living off of our intellectual feedstock... This situation needs to be reversed immediately if we are to provide the technologies and extension services to farmers as an essential part of them adjusting to climate change."

AIAST is also concerned about the potential impacts of policy responses to climate change, stating in its submission that "What we do need to ensure is that government policy responses to climate change do not exacerbate the impact of the change itself on agriculture!" AIAST notes that: "Given that the impacts of climate change will be gradual, we are confident that farmers will adapt to the on-farm issues into the future. Just how readily they will be able to do that depends not just on their own capacity but on off-farm influences including the impacts of government policies."

The Committee is looking forward to discussing these matters. The Chair of the Committee, Dick Adams, noted that: "There is great concern within the farming community about the shift away from agricultural research and extension by governments, a concern the Committee shares. If Australia is to respond effectively to climate change, then research into climate change adaptation and mitigation in the farm sector is vital. Just as important is the provision of extension services which will allow the rapid take-up of new thinking and new practices. We need to invest in these things now."

**PUBLIC HEARING—Canberra, Wednesday 18 November 2009**

**WHERE:** Committee Room 1R3, Parliament House, Canberra  
**WHEN:** Wednesday 18 November 2009, 5pm  
**WEBCAST:** <http://webcast.aph.gov.au/livebroadcasting/>

**For media comment:** please contact the Committee Chair, the Hon Dick Adams MP, on (02) 6277 4293 or email [D.Adams.MP@aph.gov.au](mailto:D.Adams.MP@aph.gov.au)

**Further information:** contact the Inquiry Secretary (02) 6277 4500, email [pir.reps@aph.gov.au](mailto:pir.reps@aph.gov.au) or visit the Committee's webpage at <http://www.aph.gov.au/pir>