



MEDIA RELEASE

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QUARANTINE DELAYS HURT TASMANIAN DAIRY FARMERS

Tasmanian Dairy farmers are being hit hard by quarantine procedures with little sympathy from the State Government, according to Murchison MLC Ruth Forrest. "I am aware of Tasmanian Dairy Farmers waiting for a container of grain for their dairy cows for nearly a week whilst it sits at the Burnie wharf waiting for quarantine officers to do their job" said Ms Forrest.

Rocky Cape Dairy Farmer Andrew Roberts is completely out of grain thanks to Quarantine's inability to undertake sampling of containers due to the rain. Tasmanian Dairy Farmers import approximately 80% of their required grain needs with Tasmanian only producing about 20%. Importing of grain is therefore a necessity for dairy farmers and delays to the delivery of grain are totally avoidable in the view of many farmers.

"Farmers, along with many other professions don't stop their work because of rain and I cannot understand why quarantine officers cannot perform their functions with the aid of a rain coat and non-slip boots" said Ms Forrest, who herself grew up on a farm.

"It is totally unacceptable that at present containers of grain into Tasmania could be held up for weeks due to inclement weather"

"The Tasmanian Government is riding on the back of the booming dairy industry, I suggest they actually do something to assist farmers and not continually hinder them with their work which is hard enough without bureaucracy gone mad" said Ms Forrest.

"The bureaucrats need to understand that to abruptly stop feeding grain to cows in full production will have the affect of dramatically decreasing cows production and not only this but Tasmania is now drought declared and surely the State Government should see it as a priority to move the shipments of gra+in into this state as a matter of urgency" Ms Forrest stated.

Grain Importer, Hugo McMullen who imports much of Tasmanian's grain has informed Ms Forrest that Tasmania's inflexible quarantine procedures are responsible for delays to grain being released to farmers and for no other reason that quarantine officers don't like to work in the rain.

Ms Forrest has made significant attempts to rectify with quarantine this situation to facilitate timely delivery of much needed grain all to no avail. Ms Forrest calls on the Minister to actively and immediately intervene to resolve this issue for the benefit of all farmers.

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For further information phone Ruth Forrest MLC on 0419 879 524

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