

AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION FARMS PROVISION TRUST —  
PLANT AND MACHINERY REPLACEMENT

**45. Hon JIM CHOWN to the Minister for Education and Training:**

As the minister has been made aware by the Combined Agricultural Advisory Committee, all agricultural colleges maintain a full list of plant and machinery within which they have a planned replacement program. This detailed program has set out that they require \$946 992 annually over the next three years to fulfil this essential service. The government's removal of 20 per cent from the agricultural education farms provision trust will equate to approximately \$320 000 per annum. That is one-third of the colleges' budget towards their planned replacement program.

- (1) Will the government provide additional funding to make up the shortfall in the planned replacement program for plant and machinery?
- (2) If the answer to (1) is yes, will all plant and machinery on the college's replacement program be covered?
- (3) If the answer to (1) is no, how will the colleges remain functional if students do not have access to safe, modern equipment in what is a rapidly advancing technological environment?

**Hon SUE ELLERY replied:**

I sincerely thank the honourable member for some notice of his question.

- (1) No. However, should any school find itself in financial difficulty, the Department of Education will provide additional support to the school to balance its budget and, if required, schools can be referred to the department's budget review committee.
- (2) Not applicable.
- (3) Safety of the machinery is the primary concern, so the maintenance budget will remain a priority. The plant and machinery replacement schedule has always been subject to the availability of funding. The funding for the maintenance and replacement of plant and machinery comes from two sources. Individual colleges set aside funds and the trust supplements the college budgets. The income to the trust has always been variable, as it is dependent on the farm-generated revenue of the colleges. All other expenditure line items within the trust budget will be considered before affecting the plant and machinery replacement budget.