

CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGY — FUNDING

1101. Hon Lynn MacLaren to the Minister for Agriculture and Food:

- (1) With reference to question on notice No. 964 answered on 9 April 2014, has any funding been allocated by the State Government for research to deliver new crop varieties suited to hotter, drier climates?
- (2) If yes to (1), please provide details?
- (3) If no to (1), why not?

Hon Ken Baston replied:

- (1) Yes
- (2) The Western Australian (WA) State Government, through the Department of Agriculture and Food (DAFWA), has a diverse portfolio of project investment that contributes to developing new crop varieties suited to hotter and drier climates. Much of this is conducted in partnership with industry and co-funded by the Grains Research and Development Corporation (GRDC).

There are a range of research activities conducted at a purpose designed Managed Environment Facility (MEF) based at Merredin which screens a diverse range of wheat and barley genetic lines to identify lines more tolerant to drought and heat stress. The results of this research are provided to commercial breeding companies that develop new varieties for WA growers.

The WA State Government is a major shareholder in one of these commercial breeding companies - InterGrain Pty Ltd.

The WA State Government invests in both the facilities that enable the research and the scientific investigation undertaken, often involving in partnership, scientists from universities and CSIRO, as well as DAFWA. This represents an investment by the WA State Government of \$4.7 million over the period 2009 to 2015.

In addition, the WA State Government, through DAFWA, invests in a lupin breeding program that delivers new varieties for WA growers. Part of this program is focussed on producing more drought tolerant varieties for lower rainfall environments.

- (4) Not applicable.