



28 November 2007

**Legislative Council
Standing Committee on State Development**

**FINAL REPORT:
INQUIRY INTO ASPECTS OF
AGRICULTURE IN NEW SOUTH WALES**

The Chair of the New South Wales Parliament's Standing Committee on State Development, the Hon Tony Catanzariti MLC, today released a report on the Inquiry into aspects of agriculture in New South Wales.

"This report shows just how important agriculture is to all of New South Wales", Mr Catanzariti said. "Agriculture provides key economic, environmental and social benefits – not just to rural and regional areas but to the entire State."

"Right now, however, the industry and rural communities are suffering from the hardship of the drought, and they need our support."

Mr Catanzariti said that while there is a perception held by many people that agriculture is damaging the environment, this is far from the truth.

"We've seen – and we want other people to realise – that farmers are being increasingly innovative in their use of new farming practices and technologies, so that they can sustain the land and be more efficient with water."

"The NSW State Plan identifies 'Growing Prosperity Across NSW' and 'Environment for Living' as priority areas and the Committee was asked to identify initiatives to address impediments to sustaining appropriate levels of productive capacity and growth in the agricultural industry."

"Climate Change was identified by a number of people from rural and regional NSW as potentially having a major impact on the agricultural industry", Mr Catanzariti continued.

"The Committee has made a number of recommendations with regards to enhancing drought support measures with the focus on farmers and governments being proactive rather than reactive."

"Recommendations were also made with regard to streamlining legislation and regulations, or 'red tape', including a recommendation to create a 'one-stop shop' for advice and information."

"On behalf of the Committee I would like to thank everyone who participated in or attended the public forums, hearings and site visits, and everyone who made a submission. Their contribution to the aspects of agriculture Inquiry has been invaluable and we are grateful for their time and effort."

The report, which includes 38 recommendations, is available on the Committee's website at: www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/statedevelopment.

For further information please contact the Committee Secretariat on 9230 3311 or for comment, please contact Tony Catanzariti MLC, Chair of the Committee on (02) 9230 2837