

Submission  
No 616

## INQUIRY INTO COAL SEAM GAS

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The urbanisation of the Australian population over the past 6 or 7 decades has led to the majority of the people becoming disconnected from the way food is created , processed and distributed . This disconnection fosters a general malaise that food will always be cheap, abundant and with great variety , nothing could be further from reality.

It is a fact that every populous country in the world is taking food security and food sustainability very seriously indeed , except Australia. Europe, China the Arab Nations and India most notably are keen to have a secure food supply for their people and are buying farm land in Australia and other countries for that very purpose.

The politicians and bureaucrats in Australia have been blissfully ignoring the fact that this country is already importing food and that the years of natural largess of excess production have drawn to a close . We must bear in mind that only 6% of the Australian land mass is arable and of that 6% the area of very fertile high production land that has reliable rainfall and underlying irrigation supply is very limited indeed. To even contemplate putting future food production in these areas under threat of real disruption and destruction beggars belief. I support an indefinite moratorium on further exploitation of coal reserves and coal seam gas in these areas and in particular the Liverpool Plains region, I urge the standing committee to support this view. Our arable food producing areas must have ultimate priority over all other forms of exploitation and must be preserved at all cost for the future of NSW and Australia . It is only a matter of time before Australia suffers shortages of food , the country is already under duress from water shortages and with no limits being considered to cap the total population to sustainable levels , the problems of water and food will only gradually become worse until we have a calamity. Our children and grand children will suffer if we allow agriculture to be pushed aside for a quick cash grab. Remember there can be no economic activity without food.