

**Submission
No 12**

INQUIRY INTO COAL SEAM GAS

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According to Assoc. Professor Peter Dart, Agriculture and Food Sciences, University of Queensland, “Coal seam gas has been touted by some as the answer to our addiction to dirty coal. It’s marketed as a “transition fuel” that will ween us off fossil fuels as we move to renewable energy.” But this transition could also see Australia become a net-importer of food instead of a net-exporter because we are the driest continent in the world. That’s why we must do everything within our power to ensure this water intensive and destructive industry does not destroy our precious underground water sources that feed our rivers, streams and prime agricultural land.

Prof. Dart went on to say, “The Darling Downs and Liverpool plains with their heavy clay soils, reliable rainfall and extensive underground water resources are among the most productive agricultural lands in the world. These soils store enough water to tide crops over in times of low rainfall. They have inherent soil fertility and soil organic matter that underpins their exceptional and reliable productivity. But the process of drilling for coal seam gas poses a significant threat to another environmental challenge of the 21st century – food security.”

While supposed CSG industry experts are hitting the airways and spending big on advertisements to try to tell us their mining practices are perfectly safe, Scientists like Professor Dart and others from countries around the world including the USA, South Africa, the UK, France, et al are sounding the alarm bells. We need to pay heed to their warnings and demand our State government place a moratorium on all CSG mining activity in NSW until all the environmental impacts are understood and our precious underground water is safe AND secure not only for us but also future generations.

We still have a small window of opportunity to protect and preserve our prime agricultural land and protect our water by having a moratorium on CSG mining in all of NSW. Water is life and our children and grandchildren are depending on us to do something about this critical issue.