



**National Greenhouse and Energy Reporting System – Regulations Policy
Paper**

SUBMISSION

To

Department of Climate Change

Prepared by:-

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February 2008



Background

The Western Australian Farmers Federation (Inc) (WAFarmers) is WA's largest and most influential rural lobby and service organisation.

WAFarmers represents approximately 4,000 Western Australian farmers from a range of primary industries including grain growers, meat and wool producers, horticulturalists, dairy farmers and beekeepers.

It is estimated that collectively our members are major contributors to the \$5.9 billion gross value of production (2005/06 – ABS, WA Agri-Food Industry Outlook – December 2006) that agriculture in its various forms contributes to Western Australia's economy.

Additionally, through differing forms of land tenure, our members own, control and capably manage many millions of hectares of the State's land mass and as such are responsible for maintaining the productive capacity and environmental well being of that land.

Comment

WAFarmers welcomes the opportunity to provide comment on the Department of Climate Change's *National Greenhouse and Energy Reporting System Regulations Policy Paper*.

WAFarmers notes the minimal reference to agriculture throughout the paper and notes that (Page 35) "Reporting methodologies are not yet sufficiently developed for wide-scale measurement of agriculture and land use.....at the facility and corporate levels." And that "Following the development of improved methodologies for estimating emissions in these areas, further consideration will be given to reporting and threshold issues."

Nevertheless, it is WAFarmers position that agriculture is a greater part of the solutions to mitigating the impacts of climate change than it is a contributor to the problem.

To this end, the report of the Prime Ministerial Task Group on Emissions Trading states that "the agricultural sector should be engaged to develop realistic options and that the main focus for the agricultural sector at this stage in emissions trading is to increase its capacity to achieve low-cost abatement, initially via the provision of offsets".

WAFarmers believes that in setting the course for addressing climate change at the national level, it's only fair that the process from here on is all inclusive. Farmers have long carried the burden of public good expectations in relation to environmental management with no recognition and see a lot of potential for diversification as climate change adaptation and mitigation strategies are formulated.



Since 2004, WAFarmers has actively lobbied both state and federal government's, consistently reinforcing our view that agriculture has a major role to play in the climate change debate expects that agriculture should play a leading role in the development of state and federal government initiatives.

WAFarmers recognises that both Federal and State Governments are clearly focussed on the stationary energy sector, which is understandable but agriculture can't stay in the shadows any longer. WAFarmers knows that the agricultural sector is unique in the challenges that it presents but that is no reason not to address them.

Farmers, as managers of a large part of Australia's land mass have a massive role to play in carbon trading, offsets and sequestration and need to be at the table now to ensure that these opportunities are realised, not brought in at the last minute to find that the opportunities have turned in to expectations.

No Government or industry sector has a mortgage on the answers to the questions posed by climate change. Solutions need to be formulated across all sectors.

WAFarmers looks forward to working with the Department of Climate Change in this regard.

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