National Farmers Federation

# Funding and Resourcing for the CSIRO

February 2026

# The National Farmers' Federation (NFF) is the voice of Australian farmers.

The NFF was established in 1979 as the national peak body representing farmers and more broadly, agriculture across Australia. The NFF's membership comprises all of Australia's major agricultural commodities across the breadth and the length of the supply chain.

Operating under a federated structure, individual farmers join their respective state farm organisation and/or national commodity council. These organisations form the NFF.

The NFF represents Australian agriculture on national and foreign policy issues including workplace relations, trade, and natural resource management. Our members complement this work through the delivery of direct 'grass roots' member services as well as state-based policy and commodity-specific interests.

## NFF Member Organisations

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# Executive Summary

The National Farmers' Federation (NFF) welcomes the opportunity to make a submission to the Senate Economics References Committee's (the Committee's) Funding and Resourcing for the CSIRO Inquiry (the Inquiry).

The NFF is deeply concerned about the impact of funding and resourcing pressures on the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation's (CSIRO's) capacity to deliver research and development outcomes for the benefit of Australian agriculture, the environment, and the community at large. According to the Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences (ABARES), CSIRO funding for agricultural R&D has declined by more than half in the decade from 2014-15 to 2024-25. CSIRO's capacity and output are deeply threatened by insufficient and insecure funding, which must be addressed immediately to protect and strengthen Australian agriculture, food security, and the community.

Research and development (R&D) is a crucial aspect of Australia's agriculture industry, underpinning innovation, driving productivity gains, and boosting industry competitiveness. The Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences (ABARES) in 2023 found that for every $1 invested in agricultural R&D, there is an almost $8 return for farmers over 10 years.

CSIRO has played a crucial role in the ongoing success of Australian agriculture, as a foundational member of Australia's thriving research and development system. The contributions made by CSIRO to Australian agriculture are many and varied and can hardly be overstated – just as the organisation has delivered profound contributions spanning industries, communities, and facets of daily life. CSIRO is the cornerstone of Australia's public investment in agricultural R&D, delivering public good science, foundational and blue-sky research that no other actor in the Australian agricultural R&D ecosystem can provide – nor replace, should CSIRO's role and capabilities be diminished.

CSIRO is a constant and valued collaborator with the agriculture industry in research and development through a wide range of partnerships and mechanisms, engaging with stakeholders such as Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR), state and territory governments, universities and other education providers, farming system groups, participants in the agricultural value chain, startups and entrepreneurs, agribusinesses and other private sector organisations. CSIRO is also a key contributor towards agriculture-related Cooperative Research Centres (CRCs), including three at present: CRC for Zero Net Emissions from Agriculture, Food Agility CRC, and Future Food Systems CRC.

Most importantly, perhaps, is CSIRO's long-running collaboration with Australia's world-leading Rural Research and Development Corporations (RDCs), which deliver agricultural R&D through a robust and tested shared funding model of agricultural industry levies and government contributions. The RDCs play an integral role in supporting improved productivity, profitability, biosecurity, animal welfare, farm business management, input efficiency, trade and market access, value-add pathways, sustainability, social licence, capacity, technology adoption, and data integration. In many cases, CSIRO is a valued partner in this research.

The NFF would also like to acknowledge the groundbreaking impact on Australian agriculture of the flagship site for Australian biosecurity, the Australian Centre for Disease Preparedness (ACDP, formerly known as the Australian Animal Health Laboratory or AAHL). The invaluable role of the ACDP in protecting Australian agriculture, community, and environment will be further detailed below.

CSIRO has supported the development of generations of scientists, researchers, and other agricultural R&D professionals. The organisation provides vital career pathways, particularly for early- to mid-career researchers, building Australia's human capital and driving innovation outcomes for the country.

Reversing CSIRO funding cuts to agriculture-related research units (agriculture and food, health and biosecurity, and environment) should be an immediate priority for government. Ensuring CSIRO, especially these units, are suitably and sustainably funded would help arrest long-term funding pressures on the entire agricultural R&D system and bolster the ability of CSIRO to continue to deliver significant public good outcomes. Protecting CSIRO staff from job losses should also be a top concern for the Inquiry. The NFF is deeply troubled by the prospect that specialist staff may be lost from critical areas, and that there may be no other research institution in Australia with the capacity to replace them or mitigate their loss.

CSIRO's immediate and long-term funding and resourcing pressures severely risk its capacity to continue to play a meaningful, nigh-irreplaceable function in Australian R&D. CSIRO has played a remarkable role in the success of Australian agriculture through its R&D contributions, and is well-poised to continue to do so through its partnerships with other key actors in the agriculture R&D system.

The NFF believes that CSIRO must be upheld and supported in its role as the primary deliverer of public research and development into agriculture and the environment.

## Recommendations

The NFF recommends:

1. CSIRO funding be urgently increased to ensure no staffing cuts occur in the agriculture and food, health and biosecurity, and environment research units.
2. CSIRO funding be sustainably set at a level reflecting its significant public good outcomes and role in sovereign scientific capability, and that funding enables the CSIRO to continue to deliver R&D in the agricultural and environmental fields.
3. That the Australian Centre for Disease Preparedness (ACDP) Part Life Refit (APLR) be funded and implemented in full.

# CSIRO's contribution to Australian agriculture

It would be extremely difficult to fully detail the beneficial impacts of CSIRO R&D on Australian agriculture. CSIRO has had an immense contribution across a range of fields, including genetics, data science and digital agriculture, animal welfare, biosecurity, pest and weed management, soil health, the environment and climate adaptability, and diseases and healthcare.

Below is a mere selection of CSIRO projects which exemplify the breadth and depth of CSIRO's contribution to Australian agriculture.

**Biocontrol of rabbits**

One of CSIRO's most well-known contributions to agriculture and environmental wellbeing, the biological control of rabbits has been a nearly nine-decade programme of work – and remains relevant and crucial moving forward. CSIRO (then CSIR) released myxomatosis in 1950, the world's first successful biocontrol of a mammalian pest animal, followed by Rabbit Haemorrhagic Disease Virus (RHDV) in 1996, and RHDV-K5 strain in 2017. A 2013 study by Cooke et al. conservatively estimated that rabbit biocontrol in Australia between 1950-2011 delivered A$70 billion (in 2011 A$ – approximately $101bn in 2026 A$) for Australian agriculture alone – notwithstanding the benefits for Australian ecosystems and the environment. A 2023 ABARES report estimated rabbits cost Australian agriculture around $197m per year in management expenditure and residual agricultural losses (2020–21 A$), with CSIRO collaborating with bodies such as the Centre for Invasive Species Solutions (CISS) on the development of future biocontrol options for rabbits.

CSIRO is equally a major player in the biocontrol of weeds, an area of research focus for the organisation since 1920. A remarkable piece of CSIRO research reviewing all weed biocontrol in Australia between 1903 and 2016 found an average annual investment of $4.3m delivered annual benefits of $95.3m – with benefits therefore outweighing costs by over 23:1. Weeds continue to cost Australia nearly $5bn per year, with CSIRO continuing to play a key role in delivering biocontrol solutions. This includes the National Weed Biocontrol Pipeline Strategy led by CISS in partnership with CSIRO and governments. CSIRO operates two key facilities for importing and testing new biological agents: one in Brisbane and the other in Canberra.

**Development of cotton varieties**

CSIRO has played a foundational role in the success of Australia's cotton industry, with 100% of Australian cotton now grown from CSIRO-bred varieties. CSIRO began developing cotton varieties in the 1960s, with a first commercial release in 1983. CSIRO's development of transgenic varieties with herbicide and insect resistance subsequently transformed the industry to one whereby Australia has elite yields, fibre quality, and reduced reliance on pesticides and water. Over 100 varieties of CSIRO-developed cotton have now been commercially released, with the industry now valued at $3.1 billion (GVP in 2023-24).

Research from Cotton Australia and the Cotton Research and Development Corporation (CRDC) shows that from 1997 to 2023, the volume of water used to grow a bale of cotton reduced by up to 50 per cent, while insecticide use per hectare (five-year average insecticide volume) reduced 96 per cent from 1998 to 2024. Land use per bale of cotton also dropped substantially.

CSIRO has had a similarly close relationship with Australian grain industries, particularly through its long-term strategic collaboration with Grain Research and Development Corporation (GRDC).

**Importation of dung beetles**

One of the lesser-known examples of CSIRO research on Australian agriculture and the environment, the importation and widespread release of dung beetles into Australia was a staggering success. Between 1967 and 1982, CSIRO imported 55 species of dung beetles for release in Australia. Native dung beetles, while effective at disposing of the dung of native marsupials, were incapable of effectively disposing the dung of imported cattle. Australia's large cattle herd therefore risked spoiling valuable pasture, with the dung also a top breeding ground for disease-bearing flies. CSIRO's importation of 55 species, and eventual successful establishment of at least 23 of these species, helps to fertilise pasture, assist with water penetration into the soil, and reduces flies.

The project was revived with the additional release of two dung beetle species by CSIRO in 2014 to further control buffalo and bush flies, and is still active to this day through the CSU-led Dung Beetle Ecosystem Engineers project.

**Virtual fencing and digital agriculture**

CSIRO played a key role in the development and testing of virtual fencing technologies, which in recent months has been made legal across all jurisdictions in Australia. Virtual fencing can deliver a range of improvements across pasture management and productivity, labour savings, worker safety, animal welfare, and environmental protection. CSIRO began researching virtual fencing in 2005 and eventually commercialised its research through a partnership with Gallagher.

This is just one area of CSIRO's contribution to digital agriculture, which also includes work on sensors, data analytics and software for forecasting and farm management, advanced livestock ear tags, and precision agriculture. Work on phenomics and genetics is not only limited to cotton and grains as mentioned above but also includes significant advancements in livestock. For example, CSIRO strongly engaged in the Beef CRC (over three seven-year CRC terms) which delivered significant genomics research and led to commercial outputs. This includes FeederCheck, developed with the Australian Wagyu Association, which is a commercial DNA genomic test for Wagyu beef cattle that tests for low genetic merit animals.

**Rodent pest management and the National Mouse Group**

This work has been a multi-year investment funded by GRDC in partnership with CSIRO and has substantial national engagement. Mouse plagues have sweeping impacts with economic, social, physical, and mental health dimensions. Direct economic impacts of mouse plagues vary but have been estimated at between A$64.5 million and A$1bn due to damage to agricultural crops including consumption of newly planted seed and maturing crops, consumption and fouling of stored grain and stockfeed, and damage to farm equipment, buildings, and farmsteads.

Through the program mouse numbers are monitored nationally, with seasonal updates published to monitor mouse numbers and the potential for plague conditions to develop. CSIRO engages with farmers from across Australia through the National Mouse Group to discuss monitoring, modelling/forecasting, developing advice for management, and

identifying research priorities. The program has provided practical advice to farmers on the control of mice through a better understanding of their ecology, along with research on new control measures.

**Systems agriculture**

CSIRO has demonstrated a strong aptitude for systems thinking in relation to agriculture, particularly through its Systems Program within the Agriculture and Food Research Unit as well as the Ag2050 project and the Food System Horizons collaboration with the University of Queensland. This work involves addressing complex agricultural systems that include multi-commodity complementarity, as well as life-cycle analysis at both the commodity and whole-of-farm levels. These outcomes ensure rigorous, forward-looking research about the structure of future agricultural systems – particularly considering pressures including a changing climate. The NFF understands that, despite the importance of such programs to the future of Australian agriculture and production systems, these programs may be at risk due to funding pressures.

**Australian Agricultural Sustainability Framework**

The NFF continues to lead the development of the Australian Agricultural Sustainability Framework (AASF). A critical component of the AASF has been the Data Ecosystem project in collaboration with CSIRO. CSIRO scientists identified Australia's agricultural data environment is fragmented and anarchic, with no uniform data sharing arrangements, poor data interoperability, and varying levels of governance capability maturity among data providers and users. Future work must be undertaken to develop a trusted, efficient and robust system of data exchange in documenting and reporting sustainability outcomes. CSIRO's skill base and foundational work in the Data Ecosystem project means it is well-placed to play a critical contribution to this ongoing work.

**Phytosanitary risk science**

CSIRO has played a key role in the assessment and management of plant biosecurity risks related to trade. CSIRO's work, in partnership with industry (particularly Hort Innovation), and with federal and state and territory governments, has delivered improved scientific methods for reducing plant pest risks relating to trade. This helps to protect Australia's biosecurity and agriculture industry, while strengthening market opportunities for trade. Key outputs range from new pest detection technologies to practical advice on inspection processes for crops or consignments, as well as the phytosanitary risk framework, first published in 2020, which provides a more rigorous biosecurity risk framework to assess how effectively phytosanitary measures (individually or in combination) can reduce biosecurity risks.

Across these important areas – and many others – CSIRO has institutional knowledge, expert personnel, as well as facilities and equipment that would be incredibly difficult to replace. The NFF is deeply concerned that insufficient resourcing of CSIRO can and will result in the organisation not being sufficiently capable of delivering at the same high standard it has consistently met across its storied history.

## Australian Centre for Disease Preparedness

While CSIRO has an array of facilities involved in agricultural R&D around the country (not to mention Montpellier, France), one must be singled out for special attention: the Australian Centre for Disease Preparedness (ACDP). Formerly known as the Australian Animal Health Laboratory or AAHL, the ACDP in Geelong exemplifies critical sovereign

research infrastructure vital to Australia's biosecurity, trade, and animal and human health. The high biocontainment facility – the first of its kind in the southern hemisphere – has Australia's largest Physical Containment 3 and 4 facilities, including a unique Large Animal Facility, insectary, and facilities for aquatic animals.

The ACDP is a crucial component of Australia's biosecurity system, protecting against animal and zoonotic diseases (which spread from animals to humans) through research, diagnoses, and surveillance of deadly diseases including foot and mouth disease. It is especially important in protecting Australia's $40bn livestock and $4bn aquaculture industries. The ACDP is Australia's National Reference Laboratory for emergency animal diseases, and a World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) Reference Laboratory for multiple diseases. The NFF itself has a representative on the ACDP's Security Assessment Group, which assesses the capabilities of the ACDP to avoid biosecurity breaches at the facility.

The ACDP has played a key role in numerous disease outbreaks in Australia, including the discovery of the Hendra virus in 1994 and the subsequent development of the Equivac® HeV vaccine, vaccine efficacy trials for Covid-19, recent outbreaks of avian influenza and Japanese encephalitis virus, and assisting with global outbreaks of Ebola, SARS, and Nipah virus among others. The ACDP also provides diagnostic animal export testing to confirm freedom from disease, which is crucial to trade and market access for Australian agriculture.

Now 40 years old – out of an anticipated functional lifespan of 100 years – the ACDP requires significant refurbishment under the two-stage ACDP Part Life Refit (APLR) project. Stage 1, fully funded by the CSIRO (through its consolidated assets) at an estimated cost of $372 million, involves the building of a new 1,400m$^2$ high-containment laboratory wing and urgent end-of-life infrastructure replacement. In planning for more than ten years, it is now due to be delivered by late 2028.

Relating to the terms of reference for this inquiry, the NFF strongly believes that the ACDP is a prime example of sovereign scientific capability that must be maintained as a matter of utmost importance.

The NFF notes CSIRO's own submissions to this inquiry state a complete rebuild of the ACDP would likely take up to 20 years from decision to commissioning, at a cost of at least $2.5 billion Australian dollars.

The NFF strongly supports the full funding and implementation of APLR, especially the two-stage 'clearly preferred option' as assessed by the CSIRO.  The NFF believes this is crucial to ensuring the continuation of Australia's sovereign capabilities in protecting from emerging infectious disease threats.

Besides the ACDP, the NFF would also like to highlight the value of CSIRO's regional-based researchers and infrastructure. Regional research engages with local communities and industry – including agriculture – across all stages of research from project design to adoption and can help ensure research is both relevant and beneficial to regional communities. Any consideration of consolidation of CSIRO facilities, or closure of regional facilities, should assess the risks of losing this valuable interconnection.

## Environment Research Unit

The CSIRO Environment Research Unit plays an important driving role in providing water, climate, natural resource, and other related environmental (i.e. hydrological and ecological) data underpinning research across a broad set of national programs. Of particular note is the National Soil Monitoring Program and National Adaptation Plan. CSIRO is responsible for the development of a range of vital future-focussed research outputs including climate-risk analyses and vulnerability assessments, natural capital accounting, environmental impacts, as well as water and land management tools and datasets. Much of this research has applicability to agriculture, including datasets around farm dams and water accounting, or climate adaptation. Funding cuts will diminish CSIRO's capability to undertake the complex science needed to inform and refine climate datasets and modelling services for decision-makers across a range of climate-sensitive sectors, including agriculture. Land and water management, climate adaptation and mitigation, drought and natural disasters, ecosystems and biosecurity are all key areas which intersect with agricultural production.

The NFF understands the Environment Research Unit is facing exceptional resourcing and funding pressures. As with all areas of CSIRO that support Australia's agriculture industry and deliver public good, the NFF believes the Environment Research Unit should be suitably and sustainably funded.

## Public investment in R&D and CSIRO

The NFF is deeply concerned at a long-term trend of declining public expenditure in agricultural R&D. Since 2005-06, private agricultural R&D funding has increased at 4.23% per year (in real terms), compared to 1.45% per year for public funding, per ABARES. However, that increase in public funding has been driven in large part by the R&D tax incentive (RDTI), whereby it is the private sector *doing* research. Since 2005-06, public expenditure on agricultural R&D has dropped by an average of 2.97% per year for the Australian Government and 1.94% for state governments. This undermines the delivery of public good science, and places additional pressures on other actors in the agricultural research and development system, notably including RDCs.

Australia's broader gross expenditure on R&D (GERD) in 2023-24 was estimated at $45.082 billion by the ABS, representing 1.69% of Australia's GDP. This is significantly below the average of Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) nations, which was 2.70% in 2023. Crucially, the 2025–26 Science, Research and Innovation (SRI) Budget Tables show that while the Australian Government will invest $15.1 billion in research and development (R&D) in 2025-26, this represents just 0.53% of GDP, well below the OECD average of 0.75% of GDP (in 2022, the most recent available figure).

These figures demonstrate that Australian government expenditure on R&D is insufficient, particularly in agricultural R&D. This has been especially notable in terms of core CSIRO funding for agricultural R&D, which has more than halved in the decade from 2014-15 to 2024-25 (per ABARES). We note that, over the last 18 months, the Agriculture and Food Research Unit has lost 30 staff, while Health and Biosecurity has lost 43. This is part of the CSIRO's sweeping job cuts, which included 400 general science support roles.

Without increased and consistent public funding, much important research risks being ignored due to a lack of commercial outcomes for profit-based private companies – even if they are benefitting from public funding through the RDTI. And with other actors in the Australian agricultural R&D system already under strain, it appears unlikely they can replace any capacity lost due to CSIRO cuts. The strain on other actors includes mounting resourcing pressures, particularly facing RDCs. Firstly, RDCs report that growth in their resources (i.e. increased levy revenue to reflect increased commodity growth) has generally failed to keep pace with the rising costs of executing R&D. Escalating input costs, including rising labour costs and capital expenditure on infrastructure and specialised equipment, place a substantial burden on RDCs' capability to procure or complete research.

Secondly, decreased expenditure from states and territories has forced RDCs to refocus their resources and investment priorities to address essential R&D gaps and fund increased extension activities. States and territories previously played a central role in both funding and undertaking extension and adoption activities, but this has slowly constricted in line with the overall decrease in state R&D expenditure. ABARES found that expenditure on agricultural extension and advisory services decreased by an average of 5.75% per annum from 2005-06 to 2024-25 (in real 2024-25 prices). Decreasing state and territory R&D output has led to weakened extension and adoption outcomes, as well as a downsizing of many state and territory R&D workforces, resulting in significant expertise leaving the system. In response to state and territory governments conducting fewer extension activities, the focus of the RDCs has necessarily expanded from investing in traditional R&D to investing across almost the entire Research, Development, Extension, Adoption and Commercialisation (RDEAC) continuum. Considering this increased remit, it appears unlikely that the RDCs can further stretch their output to replace any lessening in CSIRO involvement in agricultural R&D.

Furthermore, rising research costs, decreasing public investment and decreasing co-investment from external parties (such as universities) shrinks the purchasing power of RDCs in research, and risks increasingly fragmenting research capacity and capability. This could lead to a decreased focus on discovery, fundamental, or 'blue-sky' research, as RDCs may prioritise lower-risk research with more direct and timely outcomes for their levy-paying commodities. That is, because of the RDCs' structures and statutory funding and reporting obligations, they tend towards a lower risk profile based on return on investment to levy payers – and often prioritising incremental gains over transformational outcomes. This risk-averse profile is only exacerbated as RDCs' relative purchasing power decreases due to the above factors. For smaller RDCs with comparatively constrained budgets, the need for R&D to prioritise immediate industry needs has, in some cases, led to RDCs almost exclusively undertaking projects that help industry members meet compliance obligations.

As such, CSIRO should be upheld as an actor in agricultural R&D that has a unique place in the system, where blue-sky research and public good science should be protected and cherished – even apart from any potential commercialisation that may occur. CSIRO and public research drives innovation that is unbound from producing immediate financial dividends, but that can deliver sizeable benefits for industry and the community at large. This is, and must remain, a core function of CSIRO. No other actor can replace CSIRO's unique remit and output, which is being threatened by decreasing public investment – just as the entire system is placed under increasing strain from resourcing pressures.

Reversing CSIRO funding cuts to agriculture-related research units (agriculture and food, health and biosecurity, and environment) should be an immediate priority for government. Ensuring CSIRO, especially these units, are suitably and sustainably funded would help arrest long-term funding pressures on the entire agricultural R&D system and bolster the ability of CSIRO to continue to deliver significant public good outcomes. Further, increased funding would reduce the requirement on CSIRO to bolster its bottom line through inflated or exorbitant fees charged to other institutions such as RDCs to undertake research. These mark-ups can make CSIRO uncompetitive in the provision of research or block CSIRO partnership-making with other organisations both public and private. A well-funded CSIRO should be able to provide research at reasonable rates to improve Australia's R&D output, and should be a willing and able partner for other bodies.

Protecting CSIRO staff from job losses should also be a top concern for the Inquiry. The NFF is deeply troubled by the prospect that specialist staff may be lost from critical areas, and that there may be no other research institution in Australia with the capacity to replace them or mitigate their loss. In line with the terms of reference, the NFF would also like to particularly note the concerning risk of losing early- and mid-career researchers to the agricultural R&D ecosystem. CSIRO specifically targeted a cohort of early- to mid-career researchers aged 18 to 34 years old in a recruitment campaign known as 'Impossible Without You', which began in mid-2022. This campaign resulted in over 200 researchers being hired, with many on contracts under three years. The NFF understands many of these researchers did not have their contracts extended.

The NFF believes additional job cuts risk further reducing opportunities for early to mid-career researchers in Australia. Some will seek other opportunities overseas, while others will leave the agricultural R&D ecosystem entirely. This is a seriously concerning prospect and must be avoided if possible.

Just as CSIRO should be supported to deliver on its public good functions, protect sovereign research capabilities, and fill a unique gap in Australia's R&D ecosystem, CSIRO must also be upheld as a crucial provider of career opportunities and development pathways for researchers, to ensure Australia's research capacity is safeguarded for the future.

## Strategic Examination of Research and Development

The NFF acknowledges that this Inquiry takes place amid a broader reconsideration of Australia's R&D system, including the Strategic Examination of Research and Development. The NFF has strongly engaged in the Strategic Examination through multiple submissions, which are available to the Committee upon request.

The NFF notes the Strategic Examination has delivered its recommendations to government, and recommends the Committee consider the funding and resourcing needs of the CSIRO in light of these recommendations. Of note, the Strategic Examination considered methods of improving national coordination of research priorities, particularly through a proposal to: "Orient and align Australia's RD&I system to 5 or fewer focus areas over a 10+ year horizon". The NFF believes that agriculture, given its fundamental importance to food and fibre security, land and environmental management, and the consistently high rate of return of agricultural R&D, must be enshrined as one of Australia's national research focus areas. The Strategic Examination's initial proposal was that government should strongly invest in these focus areas. The NFF supports publicly

funded research agencies, such as CSIRO, having clearer mandates to address national priorities, and believes they should be sufficiently funded to deliver outcomes in these key areas. We note that there is currently no national strategy regarding public investment in agricultural R&D, which should be considered. Greater coordination and collaboration between CSIRO and RDCs and industry on matters of national research importance, such as agriculture, could help to avoid duplication and ensure research and development delivers cost-effective, meaningful outcomes for Australia.

## Conclusion

The NFF thanks the Senate Economics References Committee for the opportunity to provide input into the Funding and Resourcing for the CSIRO Inquiry.

The NFF is deeply concerned at decreasing funding for CSIRO research into agriculture and related fields such as biosecurity and environment, which reflects a broader decrease in public expenditure in agricultural R&D.

CSIRO has delivered a wide range of benefits to Australian agriculture through its existence, with substantial flow-on benefits for the wider community. After all, it was Doug Waterhouse's agricultural research into sheep blowfly control that went on to become the iconic *Aerogard*.

CSIRO must be sustainably and adequately funded to deliver its public good mission, and to remain a core provider of sovereign scientific capability into the future.

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