

# Ag Scientists support halving of emissions by 2050

The Australian Institute of Agriculture has added its voice to those calling for the Federal Government to adopt a target of 50% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2050

All major political parties in Australia have wrestled with this issue but debate recently hotted up when the Prime Minister posed an in-principle move toward the 50% by 2050 target.

Institute Chair, Dr Turlough Guerin, warned that “agricultural exporters from Australia could be penalised through increased trade restrictions imposed by other countries if they saw our efforts to reduce emissions as inadequate”.

The arguments made by the Institute were similar to those recently promoted by the National Farmers Federation.

“We simply can’t afford not to do our bit to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases as they cause decline in rainfall in the world’s major food bowls, including Australia’s”, Dr Guerin said.

Dr Guerin added that the recent suggestion that agriculture be exempted from efforts to reduce emissions was hard to justify.

“As soon as one group is given an exemption, other stakeholders want one too”, he said, “leading to little action by any one”.

“The best way to encourage action is to set a good example oneself”, the AIA Chair said.

Australian agricultural scientists have recently developed a cheap, effective feed additive for reducing emissions of methane from cattle and sheep.

“All we have to do now is work out how to get a feed additive into animals that graze extensively on large areas”, Dr Guerin concluded.

Ag Institute Australia is the peak industry body for agricultural and natural resource management professionals. Ag Institute Australia is committed to advancing the profession, and the application of science and technology, for the sustainable development of agriculture and natural resource management in Australia. Ag Institute Australia members are engaged in a wide range of activities including research, education, government, agribusiness and private consulting.

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