

produce ready to grow

URBAN sprawl and the right-to-farm are two issues that rarely go hand in hand, but balance can be achieved, say two South Australian Legislative Council members.

Family First's Robert Brokenshire introduced the Right to Farm Bill into Parliament in 2009 and it passed through the Legislative Council in November that year. It was designed to help farmers continue their agricultural practices, despite urban encroachment.

"Urban sprawl is stopping farmers from operating machinery," Mr Brokenshire said.

"They receive complaints about harvest spray equipment working at night, noise issues, dust, potential for spraydrift and so on. We've got to protect our agriculture. SA's future is around value-added agriculture and this legislation aims to protect the right-to-farm.

"The Riverland has seen retirees moving into the middle of intensive viticulture areas.

"On Yorke Peninsula, we've got the sea change and retirees moving up there. That's all fantastic but if that encroaches on and prevents food and agricultural production, then we're in big trouble."

Mr Brokenshire said small area farmers played an important role in South Australian agriculture, contributing a significant amount in food and produce to the State and its economy.

"Small area farmers not only add

to our food production, they also have the money and time that larger scale farmers sometimes lack, to significantly work on improvements for environmental benefits, such as extensive tree planting," he said.

"I don't think, however, that there will be too many more small area farms created under the current planning legislation put in place by former Planning Minister Paul Holloway.

"It has become increasingly difficult, to the point of impossible, to subdivide larger farms and create allotments for hobby or small area farmers, particularly compared with 20 to 30 years ago when a farmer could apply to create a new title."

Mr Brokenshire said small area farms were able to stimulate local economies and communities.

"These farmers buy fencing equipment, sprays and feed and keep the local livestock agents and rural supplies merchants viable," he said.

"They also contribute socially within their local communities, which is of huge benefit to local community groups, schools and commerce."

Mr Brokenshire believes that "if planning is done properly", smaller farms can become the interface – or a buffer zone – between urban environments and largescale agriculture.

"We also need to develop plans to protect our food bowls from further subdivision," he said.

Greens MLC Mark Parnell is also keen to see the preservation of the

State's food bowls.

"A debate often raised by the government in advocating for urban sprawl is that we are not currently using the land occupied traditionally by hobby farmers as productively as possible, so we may as well put houses there," he said.

"My argument is when that land is paved over, it is lost to any food production completely. There's no going back. In 20, 30 years, we will be asking ourselves, where are we going to grow our food?"

Mr Parnell said the right-to-farm meant different things to different people: on one level, it was a no brainer because all people should have it.

"But on another level, that right does not mean a right to pollute, as has often been a euphemism used in the parliament," he said.

Mr Parnell said the standards set under Mr Brokenshire's *Right to Farm Bill* needed to be closely examined to ensure the best possible outcome for all parties.

"I have every sympathy for farmers who are trying to conduct their business, but as an environmental lawyer, I once represented a client who had a gas gun firing at 45 second intervals 20 metres away from their window by a neighbouring vineyard," he said.

"It's certainly a mixed issue and we don't want standards set at levels where farmers are forced out because of urban sprawl."



Stand against 'control'

STRATHALBYN farmer and Food Producers and Landowners Action Group SA spokesperson Peter Manuel (pictured) believes farmers should be able to farm their land without excessive government or bureaucratic interference.

The beef producer has made public his views about government departments "increasingly controlling and interfering" with farmers across the State and, particularly, measures to charge farmers for water from their own dams.

"We are competing in a global marketplace where farmers in other countries get helped out and subsidised, but here in Australia we are being sent to the wall," Mr Manuel said.

"We need to find a balance and remember that farmers are food producers for the State and country. If they are forced from their land, who will produce the food? Good farming land needs to be kept for farming." Late last year, Mr Manuel, along

with members of FLAG SA and other like-minded individuals, staged a rally at Victor Harbor to protest against Natural Resource Management Board water allocation plans "that severely diminish farmers' rights".

"We're also appealing to our city friends because this is going to affect all of us," he said.

"This is much more than just a tax on our dam water, it's about asking for some transparency, on the one hand we see \$30 billion of our water rights being sold overseas for a quick buck and yet here in Australia, where we are world leaders in water recycling and conservation, the governments are seeking to put controls on farmers everywhere for a green agenda ahead of a sustainable food production agenda."

In September last year, the government announced plans to metre dams in the Adelaide Hills where water water was being used for commercial purposes.



Jacksons Motor Inn

**overlooks the city.
Just 10 minutes from the CBD.**

When travelling to **Adelaide**, do what hundreds of others do and stay at **Jacksons Motor Inn**.

- Just 10 minutes from CBD and less than 10 minutes from Adelaide Showground
- Easy access to public transport
- Extensive grounds to relax in & enjoy
- Great range of rooms from \$65 for a budget double to \$180 for a family room with ensuite spa
- Rooms recently upgraded HD LCD TV & quiet inverter air conditioning system
- Off street parking
- Outside swimming pool - Not heated



373 Glen Osmond Road
Adelaide, SA 5064
phone (08) 8379 1601
email: bookings@jacksonsmotorinn.com.au
web: www.jacksonsmotorinn.com.au

Wide Span Sheds

No Compromise Steel Building Solutions.

SHEDS • BARNs • STABLES • FARM BUILDINGS • ARENAS • RESIDENTIAL • INDUSTRIAL

Need a shed?

There's no better time to buy than now with Wide Span Sheds Sizzling Summer Sale!

Value Barn

\$6,910

Call for our best price!



Sizzling SUMMER Sale

Follow us on:



Call **1300 WIDE SPAN (1300 94 33 77)**

Check out our full range online at www.sheds.com.au