



Frome Electorate Office

Geoff Brock MP, Member for Frome



MEDIA RELEASE

12th November 2013

WATER - WINE GRAPE GROWERS ASSOCIATION - CLARE VALLEY

Geoff met, together with members of the Clare Region Grape Growers Association where the Association presented their case for some assistance with costs of water for those who cannot purchase water via a commercial basis through SA Water as some producers are able to do.

Geoff is very disappointed that Minister Hunter has not responded to the request by the Association. This request was for the Minister through SA Water to produce a suitable price that could be available to the Association Members involved.

Minister Hunter advised that the current 2013 "off peak" price is not the true commercial cost for SA Water to transport water to customers from April 2013 to November 2013.

Geoff is well aware that under the current legislation SA Water is a separate utility and must be commercially viable, however the request from the Association is for some assistance to ensure that the Clare Valley Grape Growers are able to compete with other Grape Grower Regions in South Australia, some have access to recycled water.

The State Strategic vision of the Clean Green Food promotes sustainable use of our State's natural resources. Safe and secure and affordable water supplies are critical for the future growth of South Australia's food and wine sectors. Clare Valley Grapegrowers are known for their clean green environment and are an important part of South Australia's economy.

It is very disappointing that the Minister has not attempted to answer the Associations plead for assistance. This is a time of desperate need to ensure the productivity of the grape growing industry in the Clare Valley region, competing against the commercial market place and the viability to ensure their business continues.

The continuance of the (CRWGA), in the valley is an integral part of the area, for employment, tourism and also the growth of the manufacturing sector of the region.

Geoff again considers the lack of understanding by the Minister very disturbing, and will keep pressure on the Government to provide water for

(CRWGA) on an agreed commercial basis, which would allow them to competitively compete in the wine industry market.

Geoff encourages the Government to re-assess the (CRWGA) request for fairer water charges, support South Australia's primary growers and producers to continue their commercial business of wine grape growing viably. The Clare Region Wine grape Growers Association need the government to listen to their cries for help and relief to the exceptional water cost they incur to continue in the commercial business.

Geoff will continue to work closely with Clare Region Wine grape Growers Association and be putting pressure on both sides of politics to ensure the continued viability of this industry.

Geoff Brock MP
Member for Frome