

News Release **Minister Geoff Brock**

Minister for Regional Development
Minister for Local Government

Wednesday, 18 June 2014

\$200,000 grant for Keith-based seed company

Regional Development Minister, Geoff Brock today announced a \$200,000 grant to Keith-based seed company – Seed Genetic International – towards the development of a packing and logistics export facility.

“The grant has been made possible through the Regional Development Fund which has been significantly increased from \$1.6 million annually up to \$15 million a year as part of my agreement with the Premier,” Mr Brock said.

“The main purpose of the fund is to boost economic activity and generate jobs growth in the regions, and this facility will provide a significant boost to the Limestone Coast.

“This grant will allow SGI to develop its ‘Glasshouse to Warehouse’ facilities to create efficiencies throughout the packaging process,” Mr Brock said.

“The small seeds industry is already an integral part of the local economy and this upgrade will enhance product value and will also provide value-adding opportunities.

“SGI – which focuses on plant research, breeding, production and marketing of its own proprietary seed products – will now be able to efficiently process this valuable product using the latest technology, boosting grower returns and more closely meeting their customers’ needs.

“The reach of this project will go beyond SGI, using local resources, tradespeople and materials where possible during the development.

The new SGI facility – which will create 2.5 FTE jobs over two years – will have the capability to store, blend, coat and package seed (lucerne, clover, cereals, canola) for export and Australian sales.

“It facility consist of a large storage shed and silos, a modern automated packing, coating and bagging plant, office complex and laboratory,” Mr Brock said.

Russell Davis from SGI said the new facility would give the company capacity to efficiently process clean, green produce from the local area using the latest technology and equipment to boost grower returns, while meeting the requirements of customers.

“Keith is considered the ‘Lucerne Capital of Australia’, and having a modern packing and logistics facility in the heart of the production area makes economic sense,” Mr Davis said.

“This will centralise our breeding, research and development, storage and production administration sectors of the business and allow us to value add for specific customers while maintaining control of our intellectual property,” Mr Davis said.

“It will also lead to significant employment opportunities going forward as we expand and diversify our products, and will allow seed to be exported in a timelier manner.”

Mr Brock said that the SGI project was a great example of the State Government supporting local companies, generating employment opportunities and boosting regional economic growth.

“The grant is one of six projects across the State to receive grants totalling more than \$1.1 million through the latest round of the State Government’s Regional Development Fund Stream 2 allocation,” Mr Brock said.