



Where are the grain trains?

Queensland's grain industry is playing 'second fiddle' to coal on freight trains in Central Queensland.

AgForce Grains president Wayne Newton said a recent spate of train cancellations is causing major headaches for exporting company Graincorp and costing farmers valuable income through additional costs.

"With central Queensland Graincorp depots rapidly filling with this year's sorghum crop, transport delays could slow harvest and delivery of the crop off-farm," Mr Newton said.

"The State Government promised that agricultural freight would not be forgotten in the privatisation of the Queensland Rail network in regional Queensland, yet in central Queensland, coal is yet again receiving preferential treatment to grain on rail.

"We have a situation where a ship has been waiting days to be loaded at Mackay port, but grain is being trucked because trains are unavailable. This is more expensive, puts more pressure on roads, and at the end of the day, growers will pay through higher freight costs or lower commodity prices."

Grain exporting company Graincorp has a 'take and pay' arrangement with QR National which should mean tracks are made available in a timely fashion to allow grain to get to port.

"The hot spot at the moment is the Mount McLaren district north of Clermont, where Graincorp is going to great lengths and expense employing night staff to load, only to be told at the last moment the trains are cancelled," Mr Newton said.

AgForce urges the State Minister for Transport Anastacia Palaszczuk to intervene in this matter, to ensure the smooth carriage of grain to port and onto export customers.

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***Who is AgForce?** AgForce represents thousands of Queensland broadacre producers who recognise the value in having a strong voice. AgForce leads the way to ensure agriculture's social, economic and environmental contribution is recognised by all levels of government. AgForce works alongside landholders, encourages and supports the next generation, builds industry partnerships and skills and promotes agriculture - for secure, sustainable, progressive and profitable food and fibre into the future.*