



Farmer confidence flagging

Dissatisfaction over the Federal Government's live export ban and ongoing anxiety about coal seam gas are just two of the many issues that have led to the lowest levels of producer confidence in nine years says state peak broadacre group AgForce.

AgForce CEO Robert Walker said the figures from the latest Rabobank Rural Confidence Survey showed a lack of recognition and support from government had fuelled the drop in producer sentiment.

"Rabobank found 52 per cent of surveyed Queensland farmers expected the agricultural economy to worsen over the next 12 months – AgForce is concerned but unfortunately not surprised by these figures," Mr Walker said.

"The Federal Government's kneejerk ban on Indonesian live cattle exports earlier this year showed little understanding of the value of this industry to Australia, and how damaging ill-conceived government policy can be on grass-roots producers.

"With just the stroke of a pen a government minister slashed the yearly income for many northern cattle producers, so it is no wonder confidence is flagging."

The survey also found 71 per cent of Queensland farmers viewed coal seam gas exploration and production as a threat to agriculture, while only six per cent viewed it as an opportunity for the sector.

"Our members continue to tell us, and AgForce will keep sending a clear message to federal and state government that there are just too many unknowns in the coal seam gas industry and not enough science for landholders and the broader community to find positive opportunities in this lucrative but temporary industry."

The Rabobank Rural Confidence Survey questions an average of 1200 primary producers across a wide range of commodities and geographical areas throughout Australia on a quarterly basis.

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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.