



Nelson Green, Northern NSW Rice Marketing Board Elections 2021

Question 1.

Please identify what you believe to be the three (3) most significant issues facing our industry over the next 5-10 years.

My view on the issues that the rice industry will face over the next 5 – 10 years are as follows:

- 1. Water** – Although growers currently have sufficient water allocations for the next crop, we know from recent history we will continue to face difficulties. Not only are growers competing with the weather but also pressure for environmental flows and other agricultural crops. Even though NSW farmers are efficient with their water usage more work needs to be done on cold tolerance varieties of rice with a shorter growing period.
- 2. Sustainability** – There will be an increasing focus on methane emissions from all agricultural production in Australia including rice growing. Being able to benchmark the NSW industry against the rest of the world will be critical to the promotion of our industry. Progress that is made in this space should be shared with all growers across the state. The minimisation of chemical use will also be an increasing focus of government and special interest groups for all agricultural products.
- 3. Energy and Input Costs** – The road to conversion from fossil fuels to renewable sources will require capital expenditure in processing and logistics. It will also require funds to be spent on farm. Growers are facing additional input costs of fertilisers, chemicals and transport as a result of external pressures and we need to ensure that any industry commitments are supported by government funding.

Question 2.

What skills and experience do you have to address the issues you have identified.

I accept that I am unknown to most rice growers however the company I lead, has been and is currently, supporting growers in Northern NSW. For an industry to succeed farmers need to be able to grow and sell their rice profitably. Infrastructure to receive, dry and store paddy is integral to this and the industry would not exist without it. The growing system that we are promoting is known as “aerobic” which historically uses less water. It’s true that the aerobic system is in its infancy, and that climate plays a part in its success however there is no reason why experience gained from pioneering new ideas cannot be shared across the industry in the spirit of cooperation. The development of new seed varieties will also be critical to the success of aerobic rice.

My involvement in food processing and marketing spans 40 years and I have brought many new products to the market with some becoming market leaders. During this time I listed the food business I founded on the ASX.

Diversity of skills and experience create organisational strength. The world has changed and we will as an industry have to adapt. The infrastructure around the NSW rice industry is some of the best in the world and as a passionate rice person I believe that as a RMB Board Member I could use my experience to assist in the planning of our future.