

News


[Academic profiles](#)
[Campuses and locations](#)
[Contact](#)
[Events](#)
[Faculties, institutes and divisions](#)
[Giving to QUT](#)
[Glossary](#)
[Jobs](#)
[Key dates and academic calendar](#)
[News](#)
[Expert guide](#)
[Our university](#)
[Policies](#)
[Services and facilities](#)
[Verify qualifications online](#)

Inept policies threaten farming collapse

12 April 2013

Urgent action must be taken to stop the fabric of Australia's character from unravelling, as mounting debt and unrealistic policy decisions force farming families off the land.

QUT Business School senior lecturer Dr Mark McGovern will tell The Agriculture in Crisis summit in Merredin, West Australia on Monday (April 15) that "rural Australia faces a systemic failure". His evidence shows that there has been no real growth in farm gains for 40 years.

"The foundations of (Australia's) prosperity and national contribution have been whiteanted by ill-conceived thinking that was carelessly adopted," Dr McGovern will say in his presentation .

"Australian agriculture is operating on an unsustainable basis. Current debt stresses are the logical outcome of decades of unbalanced markets, inappropriate fi practices and inept policies.

"We all need a new way forward."

Speaking today about the urgency of his presentation, Dr McGovern sa involve a national conversation about "what we are trying to achieve a:

"It is a communication problem," he said. "We have lost sight of what and we have ceased to be able to express them as a nation.

"Current policies about agriculture undermine what we have achieved this marvellous rural sector, and now we are slowly letting it fall apart."



Dr Mark McGover are being forced c

He said the global financial crisis had brought into sharp focus the impact "inept policies" has had on the sector, quickening its demise.

"The design of the current funding arrangements isn't working and theoretically it is not designed to work," he said. "It is an unrealistic design for a real farmer and industry."

He said one example was the scrapping of exceptional circumstances grants for farmers, without replacing them with effective alternate funding.

"If people did not like the way that the old system worked, that's fine," he said. "But come up with a better system. We really cannot expect a farmer to handle half-a-dozen droughts in a row without help.

"Farmers are Australians too. In this country we take seriously the commitment to give each other a fair go. It's part of the Australian character, and farmers are really not getting a fair go."

Dr McGovern said measures to fix the sector should include a focus on profit, affordable funding arrangements and a national commitment to build a more sustainable agriculture industry.

"Australia stands exposed to deteriorating global conditions so action is needed now, while the opportunity remains open," he said.

FOLLOW: Dr McGovern's blog RuralOz .

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Amanda Horswill | Communications Officer (Mon to Thurs) | QUT Marketing & Communication
07 3138 1150 | a.horswill@qut.edu.au

Where have I been?

[Home](#)

[News](#)

[Home](#)

[News](#)

Study

[Study areas](#)

[Applying](#)

[Student life](#)

About

[QUT Blueprint](#)

[Giving to QUT](#)

[Accreditation](#)

Research

[Research areas](#)

[PhDs and research degrees](#)

[Applying for research](#)

Alumni

[Benefits](#)

[Get involved](#)

[Keeping in touch](#)

Industry

[Partnerships](#)

[Expertise for industry](#)

[Ways to partner with us](#)

International

[QUT in your country](#)

[Student support](#)

[How to apply](#)

Faculties

[QUT Business School](#)

[Creative Industries](#)

[Education](#)

[Health](#)

[Law](#)

[Science and Engineering](#)

Institutes

[Health](#)

[Innovation](#)

[Future](#)

Acknowledgement to the Traditional Owners