Country Liberals beef up support for cattle industry and agribusiness

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A re-elected Country Liberals Government will continue to diversify the economy through support for agribusiness. Speaking today at the Royal Darwin Show, Primary Industry and Fisheries Minister Gary Higgins said the Country Liberals will assist new and traditional industries.

“We recognise that a strong economy has many pillars,” Mr Higgins said.

“The pastoral industry was the first to thrive in the Territory but was neglected under Labor, which banned live cattle exports.

“The Country Liberals are working with cattlemen to help them grow the industry and establish new markets.”

Mr Higgins said a re-elected Country Liberals Government will:

- Consult with stakeholders to consider removing pastoral leases from local government areas and adjust pastoral lease rents to compensate councils for lost revenue;
- Invest $4.1 million to upgrade the Berrimah Export Yards;
- Support plans to double the size of the crocodile industry by reducing red tape and provide certainty around crocodile egg quotas and remote crocodile breeding programs;
- Work with a private investor to establish a produce market in Darwin;
- Continue to support the Ord Stage 3 development works to release new agricultural land in the Territory;
- Continue the two-year $1.2 million Horticultural Development Program;
- Work to establish a new purpose-built world-class Aquaculture Research Centre.

Chief Minister Adam Giles said the Government recognises that agriculture is a vital component of the economy in Central Australia.

“We have initiated discussions with the South Australian Government to improve transport and access
arrangements for Territory cattlemen into southern markets,” he said.

“It will be a priority of ours in the next term to complete this work.

“We have also implemented plans to encourage the development of a sustainable bush foods industry, building on traditional foraging.”

Mr Giles announced a one-off $250,000 grant program to facilitate the development of commercial bush food products.

“We have already seen success with magpie geese and green ants from the Territory being sold in Adelaide markets,” he said.

“A re-elected Country Liberals Government will work with traditional owners and pastoralists to encourage growth in this innovative sector.”

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