

GROWERS UNITE | First wheat shipment leaves

Grist for Iraq's mills

The Advertiser, 22/11/09, Pg 32

EYRE PENINSULA

CARA JENKIN

GRAIN farmers who banded together in an effort to make it on their own are reaping the benefits of hard work.

EP Grain, which represents Eyre Peninsula grain farmers, this week watched its first shipment of 50,000 metric tonnes of wheat being loaded at Port Lincoln.

The wheat is bound for Iraq, where it will be used for flour milling and flatbread.

The grain has been grown by about 400 farmers, or about half the growers on Eyre Peninsula.

The first shipment is a significant achievement for the company, which formed through the collaboration of FHEE Eyre Ltd and grains manager Emerald Group Australia Pty Ltd.

FREE Eyre Ltd is a grower-owned company formed to give farmers more control of their future and the future of their produce after the grain market was deregulated last year.

General manager Tim Burrow said the sale of the wheat to such an export market was



ALL HANDS: Dean Waters, of Wudinna, Gus Glover, of Lock, Tom Blitmead, of Sreaky Bay, Graham Waters, of Wudinna, and EP Grain director Mike Wake, of Dark Peak, with wheat being loaded for shipment to Iraq.

important to local growers involved with the group.

He said it also allowed farmers to take greater control of how their product was

marketed and to focus on producing the desired quality. "Iraq is a wheat market that, like Australia, is adamant about quality," he said.

"We are proud to be able to ensure that the quality-conscious Iraq wheat market is now once again a buyer of Eyre Peninsula grain.

"We will continue to focus on markets that will deliver dividends for our growers, where quality is paramount and valued."

Picture: REUBEN TURNER