

# EP Storage to double intake

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## Key points

- EP Storage receives major community support
- Business negotiates third party access requirements
- Site to be empty by mid-August

By DEANNA LUSH

**E**P STORAGE is gearing up to receive more than 75,000 tonnes of grain from this year's harvest on Eyre Peninsula – double its intake last harvest.

The business's storage and handling facility was commissioned in October last year on a 42-hectare site south of Rudall, at the former Taragoro railway siding, and received its first load of grain in November.

In 2009-10, the business received 36,000t – including 30,000t stored in bunkers and 6000t in silo bags – of wheat, rye, barley and lupins.

Operations manager Louise Jackson says the past nine months has been a steep yet exciting learning curve in which the business has been built "block by block" by its staff, service providers and shareholders.

"We are not a major corporation with endless reserves. EP Storage is a dedicated, independent third party storage site, we are not a grain trader," she said. "All our decisions are made with the knowledge that we are building a grower-owned facility with growers' hard-earned money. We have to be innovative and creative in the way in which we develop the site, the business and our team.

"Our focus is to give EP graingrowers and grain marketers a serious, professional and flexible alternative when it comes to grain storage and warehousing. One of the great advantages of this operation is that growers and EP businesses own it. Every tonne that comes through the site is directly supporting the Eyre Peninsula community."

EP Storage has been working



**ON THE RISE:** EP Storage operations manager Louise Jackson and outside works manager Kerry Smith at the storage site, south of Rudall, which received 36,000t of grain during its first harvest in 2009-10.



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through the assessments required for third party storage access status to export grain through Viterria's port facilities.

Outloading of grain to Port Lincoln will commence shortly for an EP Grain shipment in August. While the vast majority of grain stored was sold to EP Grain, a number of enterprises used the facility to store other grains, including rye and lupins.

With its current capacity to store 50,000t in fixed bunkers, about 6000t of wheat, barley, lupins and rye are currently stored in silo bags, making Taragoro the single largest silo bag storage site in Australia.

The professional use and management of silo bags offers a flexible, cost-effective

and complementary way to store a wider variety of grain types.

"The team 'walks' the bags seven days a week, searching for signs of any feral activity on the bags. Foxes have found them to be particularly appealing as a playground," Ms Jackson said. "Just as a rip in a bunker tarp can compromise the quality of the grain it stores, so too can a scratch from a fox or roo in a silo bag."

The site will be enclosed with a feral-proof security fence in future, eliminating the daily chore and cost.

EP Storage will increase its inloading stations from three to four for the 2010-11 harvest.

"At harvest time, it's all about speed of delivery and turnaround time for growers,"

Ms Jackson said. "We have been searching far and wide for cost-effective and efficient inloading tools and this season will bring equipment to Taragoro that is not used anywhere else in South Australia."

FREE Eyre owns 51 per cent of EP Storage with the remaining 49pc held by 19 other local farmers and businesses.

As a result, Ms Jackson said the company had received huge community support in its establishment phase with some farmers donating equipment, such as tractors, fuel tanks, vehicles, and mother and chaser bins, to help get the business under way.

She said another part of EP Storage's strength was its preference to use local businesses wherever possible.

"We feel we have done exceptionally well by using what was available to us and with generous support from the community. We are proud of our achievement and we have firm plans for future growth of this Eyre Peninsula grower owned and controlled business."