

FREE Eyre producer boost

A PRIMARY-PRODUCER driven company, FREE Eyre Limited focuses on a few key activities which have the most impact for Eyre Peninsula farmers.

Owned by farmers and local business people, the first business up and running is EP Grain, the joint venture with the grain marketing company Emerald, which will provide a locally owned competitor in the marketplace and competitive prices for grain growers.

In addition, it aims to bring returns to FREE Eyre, which it can use to develop further projects and to FREE Eyre's shareholders.

FREE Eyre's next projects in development include mapping and developing a regional approach for bringing sheepmeat from the Eyre Peninsula paddocks to consumers by developing relationships with customers and meeting their quality and quantity requirements.

FREE Eyre has been supported by Primary Industries and Resources SA and the Eyre Regional Development Board to develop regional marketing for sheep enterprises.

The first trials of Oil Mallee plantations for environmental and economic opportunities are currently being established in conjunction with FREE Eyre farmers, the Oil Mallee Association of WA and Greening Australia (Port Lincoln).

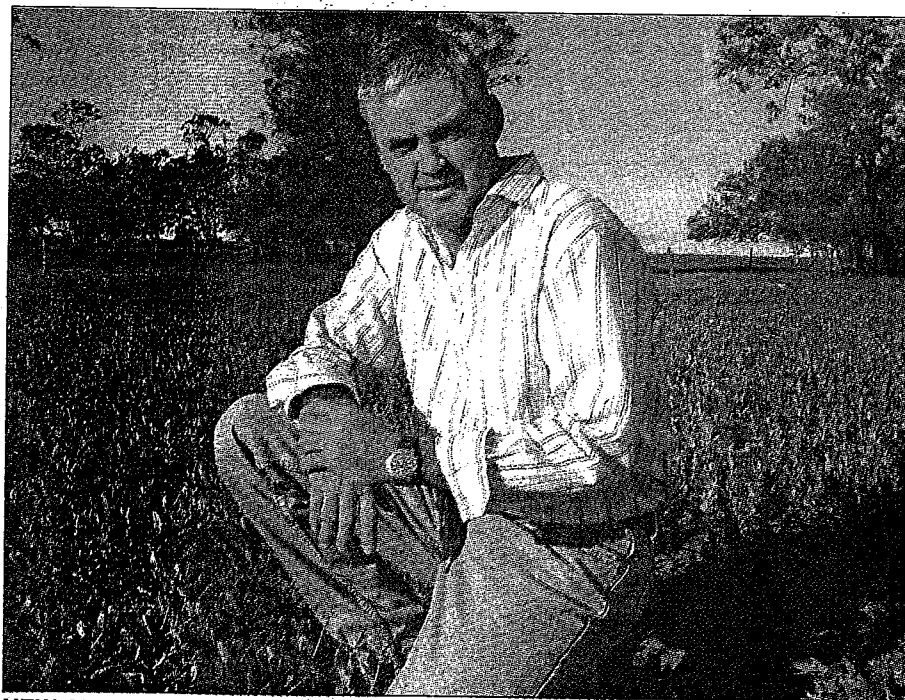
FREE Eyre's membership continues to grow and currently has more than 315 shareholders.

Well known EP identity and business developer Mark Cant has been appointed chief executive officer of EP Grain Pty Ltd.

EP Grain chairman Mike Chaseling said a nation wide search had been undertaken to fill the role.

"I am particularly pleased that after searching nationally for someone to fill this key role we have been able to appoint a local candidate who has demonstrated such a clear passion for and commitment to the community and economic prosperity of the EP," he said.

"Mr Cant was a standout candidate given his extensive business and economic development experience in the EP region, his strong commitment to the local rural community and a broad business and agribusiness experience that will assist EP Grain to



NEW APPOINTMENT: Well known Eyre Peninsula identity Mark Cant has been appointed chief executive officer of EP Grain Pty Ltd, a joint partnership between FREE Eyre and Emerald.

be one of the major players in the local grain market."

Mr Chaseling said Mr Cant's previous leadership roles would be a major benefit for EP Grain.

"Mark has been the chief executive officer of the Eyre Regional Development Board for the past eight years, over which time he has amassed a significant number of major milestones," he said.

"Under his stewardship the ERDB amassed in excess of \$15 million in funding for a range of projects with an estimate value of \$465 million. He has had a major and positive impact on the economic prosperity of the region."

Mr Cant's local experience includes five years as CEO of Kimba District Council. His agribusiness credentials span his own cropping operations on the EP to four years managing and operating a cattle station at Spirit Hills in the East Kimberley district of the Northern Territory. He is a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and has a range of formal qualifications spanning agriculture and export management.

Mr Cant said he was excited by the opportunity and challenge of developing EP Grain into one of the major grain marketing forces operating on the EP.

"EP Grain is poised to be in a position to make a real and positive impact in the market on behalf of growers on the EP and that is an exciting prospect," he said.

FREE Eyre chairman Michael Tilley said the ability of the joint venture to attract such a high calibre candidate reflected the strong support the company was enjoying from FREE Eyre members and proved the value of the strategy to partner with a respected grain industry operator such as Emerald.

"We are attracting the right partners and we are attracting the right people and that is what ultimately will make the EP grain venture a success," he said.

Field days visitors can talk to board members about the activities of FREE Eyre and the benefits of membership at the FREE Eyre site near the Farmers Market.

• Details: 08 8311 7110 or www.free-eyre.com.au.