

# FREE Eyre research continues

**By Bonnie Puckridge**

[bonnie.puckridge@warrilpress.com](mailto:bonnie.puckridge@warrilpress.com)

FREE Eyre is furthering its research into EP Sheep Meat and EP Carbon projects with funding accumulated from its prospectus, which closed on May 27.

FREE Eyre managing director Susi Tegen said a significant amount was raised, which had allowed for further research into the meat project and mallee trials to continue.

She said FREE Eyre increased its membership by over 100 grow-

ers in the time the prospectus was open to raise \$5 million for the EP Sheep Meat and EP Carbon projects.

Building from 248 shareholders, there were now about 375 members, including some from Yorke Peninsula, she said.

There had also been interest from farmers in Western Australia, New South Wales and Kangaroo Island.

She said interest had risen because people wanted to support farmers' initiatives, as it was locals coming up with solutions to common farming problems.

Ms Tegen said FREE Eyre was in the midst of the meat project with more information to be compiled in the next few months.

Working with FREE Eyre to research the project is Primary Industries and Resources SA and Meat and Livestock Australia, as well as consultants who are working with end markets.

Ms Tegen said because of the low sheep numbers in Australia and New Zealand it was a good opportunity in the next few years to work with sheep farmers on Eyre Peninsula to explore new and emerging domestic and inter-

national market opportunities for sheep meat.

"Eyre Peninsula farmers have produced really good quality lamb over the last couple of years and we're looking toward producing a FREE Eyre branded product," she said.

"The research into the meat project is really exciting.

"It doesn't happen overnight but we are making sure it is in the best interest of the shareholders."

FREE Eyre was expected to come to more consolidated conclusions in the next six to 12 months in regards to the meat project and

the mallee project was ongoing with trials at at least three properties on Eyre Peninsula with another few being established.

Ms Tegen said with the trials underway now, when national and international regulation policy regarding carbon is enacted FREE Eyre's farmers would importantly be well placed in having experience in mallee growing.

"At present, from a commercial perspective, we would like to prove that we are the region that can grow the trees which can in future offset carbon emissions from other companies."