

Free Eyre eyes \$1m investment strategy on EP

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FARMER co-operative FREE Eyre is seeking \$1 million investment to move forward its oil mallee trees and sheep meat finishing projects.

The company held its annual general meeting at Cummins on Friday, attended by more than 130 people.

Managing director Susi Tegen said while great gains had been made in the past year, \$1 million needed to be raised before the prospectus closes on May 27.

Ms Tegen said there were no plans to release another prospectus, because it was a costly exercise.

FREE Eyre's joint venture with the Emerald Group, EP Grain, had been a strong performer for the company.

All profits from EP Grain are shared 50/50 between FREE Eyre and Emerald.

"Our EP Grain business is doing really well, we have now signed up 200,000 tonnes of grain, 15 per cent of the EP's grain production this season," Ms Tegen said.

"This has only been possible due to farmers supporting us and providing the capital to establish the now successful business.

"Farmers' investment mean they now have 50 per cent equity in a business that is expecting a first year profit of between \$600,000 to \$1 million."

Ms Tegen said it was particularly important in a globally uncertain environment that FREE Eyre continued to develop identified business opportunities and commercialise them on the Eyre Peninsula but each major project required its own funding.

"We know it's tough, but we are trying to do something about how tough it is," she said.

Chairman Michael Tilley said FREE Eyre directors identified the need for the injection of a further \$1 million in new capital, in order to establish the sheep meat finishing and oil mallee tree projects.

There are three oil mallee trials being undertaken on the EP.

*** Extract from a full report in *Stock Journal*, February 26 issue.**

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