Re: Productivity Commission Draft Report - Rural Research and Development Corporations

Riverine Plains Inc congratulates the Productivity Commissions on the development and release of the report into Rural Research sector. Riverine Plains Inc is a progressive farmer group dedicated to improving the productivity of broadacre farming systems in northeast Victoria and southern NSW
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Riverine Plains Inc was established in 1999 as a way to improve the productivity of crop production systems on the duplex, acid soils of northeast Victoria and southern NSW.

We have a membership base of over 315 farming families and manage a significant portfolio of project and sponsorship funds. We believe that providing quality information, leading in research and sharing ideas with our members is key to achieving more progressive and resilient farming communities. By maintaining our focus on the needs of our members, we have been able to achieve results in research and extension which are highly regarded in the agricultural sector.

After reading the draft report we would like to draw to your attention several considerations:

1. Improving productivity can only be achieved with good quality information

Our grower members need strong and well funded RD&E to remain globally competitive. Industry based RD&E builds farm resilience and the ability to deal with change. A strong and profitable farming sector benefits rural communities.

2. The community benefits from RD&E outcomes need to be further quantified.

3. Community and Federal Government aspirations for sustainable land management in rural and regional Australia will only be met with quality information derived from RD&E.

4. The recommendation of most concern is the 50% reduction in federal funding to industry based Rural Research and Development Corporations and we believe it would devastate community driven organisations such as our own that are currently achieving significant results in improving farming system productivity and long term sustainability in the region.