

GPA to attend International Grains Council

Grain Producers Australia director Barry Large will attend a series of international meetings in London and Geneva in the week of 8 June, in company with Tony Russell, executive manager of the Grains Industry Market Access Forum (GIMAF). Mr Large, who is also a director of GIMAF, and Mr Russell are attending at the invitation of the Australian Government.

The meetings will include the 41st session of the International Grains Council (IGC) and the 24th IGC Grains Conference in London, along with a series of meetings in Geneva with representatives from major wheat exporting and importing countries around World Trade Organisation initiatives concerning wheat's role in world food security.

The IGC exists through the Grains Trade Convention, which has evolved since 1949 to progress cooperation in the international grains trade. The Australian Government represents Australia the IGC, with GIMAF invited to attend in an observer capacity.

Mr Large said Australia participated in world forums like these due to its significance as one of the world's larger exporters of grains, particularly wheat and barley.

"World trade doesn't just happen randomly – it's facilitated through agreements between countries and groups of countries, all aimed at encouraging smooth product flows and with constant efforts to reduce or eliminate trade distortions," Mr Large said.

"The IGC consists of 27 member countries or groups of countries concerned with trade in grains, including Australia.

"The conference, which follows the Council session, will see a great many more countries, trading companies and industry sectors represented, so the opportunities to meet people and foster relationships are tremendous.

"There will be other people from Australia there as well because for Australia forums like this are vital; trade is a competitive business, however relationships and understanding between countries and the people who conduct the trade are what make it work.

"GIMAF was formed by Australia's industry to promote all aspects of market access, hence the name *Grains Industry Market Access Forum*.

"Wheat in particular is the most important traded grain in the world, which is why we are participating in a series of meetings with government representatives and senior officials of the WTO in Geneva to pursue initiatives to remove barriers to trade.

"Every step we take to facilitate improved trade in wheat is significant and can benefit a large proportion of the world's population.

"Improvements in wheat trade can subsequently help market access for other grains, with the overall effect being positive for the world economy", Mr Large said.

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About Grain Producers Australia

Grain Producers Australia (GPA) represents Australia's broadacre, grain, pulse and oilseed producers at the national level. Broadly stated, GPA exists to foster a strong, innovative, profitable, globally competitive and environmentally sustainable grains industry in Australia.

About GIMAF

GIMAF was established in 2011 by the grain industry to work together with the Australian government and its agencies to develop and implement international market access plans for the grains, fodder and seeds industries. Its members are the peak industry bodies: the Australia Grain Exporters Association, Australian Fodder Industry Association, Australian Oilseeds Federation, Australian Seeds Federation, Grain Producers Australia and Pulse Australia.