



Scott Barrett

Nationals Upper House Member

MEDIA RELEASE

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NSW LABOR FAILS FARMERS AGAIN ON CACTUS CRISIS

The NSW Government's ongoing neglect of the agriculture sector is once again on full display as it fails to take action against the devastating spread of Harissia cactus.

Harissia cactus is rapidly invading farmland in Northern NSW from Queensland with entire paddocks being overrun by the nasty weed.

Harissia cactus has been known to maim, injure and kill livestock and wildlife and can even puncture tyres.

Despite repeated calls from farmers and industry leaders for urgent funding and intervention, Agriculture Minister Tara Moriarty has offered little more than empty words – leaving farmers to battle this highly invasive weed alone.

Nationals MP Scott Barrett has repeatedly raised the issue in Parliament this week.

"Farmers have been crying out for help, yet the Government continues to drag its feet.

"Meanwhile, they've announced \$10 million for the Good Neighbours Program, which is welcome, but it includes no specific funding to address Harissia."

"When there's a growing incursion, we need swift, decisive and targeted action to get on top of it," Mr Barrett said.

Mr Barrett is calling for immediate long-term funding for strategic control and eradication where possible, proper resourcing of Local Land Services and investment in more biocontrol programs like mealybug.

"Severe infestations can render entire paddocks unusable, making it impossible for farmers to manage their land effectively. The time for action is long overdue."

"How many invasive weeds have to take hold before NSW Labor realises, they need to act swiftly when these threats occur," Mr Barrett said.

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