



PRESS RELEASE

Co-op champion elevated to office of Deputy PM

Sydney, 12 February: The Business Council of Co-operatives and Mutuals today congratulated the Minister for Agriculture, Barnaby Joyce, on his unopposed election to leader of the Nationals and on becoming Deputy Prime Minister elect.

Commenting on the leadership change, BCCM CEO, Melina Morrison said, "I wish to congratulate Minister Joyce on the Nationals leadership and elevation to the office of Deputy Prime Minister. As Minister for Agriculture, Mr Joyce has been very supportive of the co-operative sector and we hope this great work will continue in this new capacity."

In July, the federal government announced a \$13.8 million package to help farmers form co-operatives, as a key measure in the White Paper on Agricultural Competitiveness. A two-year pilot programme will provide farmers with information and training on co-operatives and collective business models aimed at getting better returns to the farm gate and reinvestment on farm.

"The Council is looking forward to the roll out of this programme to improve access to information on co-operatives so that farmers can get better returns up and down the supply chain. I am sure in his new role, the Deputy Prime Minister elect will continue to champion the sector."

"The role of co-operatives and mutuals in supporting strong, regional economies is recognised by the Nationals support of other initiatives aimed at enabling the growth of the sector, including the current Senate inquiry into co-operatives, mutuals and members owned firms co-proposed by Victorian Nationals Senator, Bridget McKenzie and South Australian Independent Senator Nick Xenophon," concluded Ms Morrison.

Notes for editors

1. For further information, please contact:
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2. You can also receive the BCCM's news and press releases by following us on Twitter @BCCM_AU or signing up to our newsletters at www.bccm.coop
3. The Business Council of Co-operatives and Mutuals (BCCM) is the national peak body representing the co-operative and mutual models of enterprise in Australia. Formed in 2013, the BCCM is led by the chief executives of Australia's leading co-operative and mutual businesses and is the only organisation uniting the entire, diverse range of member owned business.