

## **Rice Industry Report 2017/18**

The 2018 crop year saw a harvest of 620 000 tons of paddy rice with the top grower getting 1.4 tons/ML, which is outstanding use of water. This related to 13.2 tons/ha, which was also the highest yield in 2017/18.

The weather outlook remains a concern for the rice industry and consequently, water remains a key policy focus for the Rice Industry. The RGA has been working to seek opportunities for additional water to be made available for General Security allocation in particular in the NSW Murray Valley.

The RGA is also progressing the Rice Research and Development Levy Review as a result of unanimous resolutions from growers. As part of this review, it is recommended that the levy be increased from \$3 per ton to \$6 per ton. The project is currently in the consultation phase after which a ballot will be conducted in late September. Levy payers will receive information to assist them to make an informed decision about the levy increase.

The RGA supports the SunRice ASX proposal, as it believes that this proposal will enable SunRice to raise the capital it requires to implement its 5-year Growth Strategy. The 5-year Growth Strategy is critical to ensuring the future of the rice industry in the Riverina. In particular, this is the key mechanism that will enable SunRice to deliver a more competitive price for rice into the future.

The RGA encourages growers to:

- review the information available carefully;
- to speak with your advisors; and
- to participate in the vote for the SunRice ASX proposal on 22 September.

Rice grown in the Riverina and Murray is regarded as a premium product that continues to attract global market interest.

The R&D update was held at Yanco in early August and the workshop booklet is available on the Rice Extension website with the details of 21 different current RD&E occurring in rice. The Rice Extension team coordinated the days to bring researchers together from Queensland, NT, and PNG as well as those from closer to home – opportunities for collaboration, networking, sharing ideas for better RD&E into the future. For example, the researchers at University of Queensland are undertaking work on cold tolerance, which Brian Dunn is utilising in his trials this season.

The RGA saw the opportunity to continue to develop leaders in the rice industry and the wider community. It has been successful in receiving a total of \$662,760 from Government funding via the Leadership in Agricultural Industries Fund and other key Rice Industry organisations. These being AgriFutures Australia, SunRice, The Rice Marketing Board of the State of NSW and Rice Extension. Opportunities to participate in these have been widely advertised.