



## You have rights, says AgForce

### Media release: 6 February 2012

Landholders have a better understanding of their legal rights when negotiating with CSG companies thanks to information sessions hosted by AgForce Projects last week.

More than 160 local producers attended sessions in Brookstead, Cecil Plains and Tiaro, receiving information about the current legislation surrounding CSG, landholder rights and responsibilities and how to negotiate a fair conduct and compensation agreement.

Cattle producer and president of Gympie District Beef, Ivan Naggs, "Spring Ridge" said many locals had no idea of their rights before the session in Tiaro on Wednesday night.

"Everyone who attended came out far more informed than when they went in," Mr Naggs said.

"Without this information many of us would feel we had no rights; but if it ever happens in our district we now know who to go to, what to look for and the big question - don't sign anything until you are sure of the facts and get professional legal advice."

Mr Naggs, who runs a Brahman stud east of Gympie said he benefited from hearing from Legal Aid solicitor Glen Martin who specialises in CSG and mining issues, and now felt he would not be alone if a CSG company came knocking on his door.

"I would encourage all landholders to go along to a session, there is just no other service providing this vital information for producers and I will be requesting the team hold a presentation in Gympie so that no one misses out."

AgForce Projects CSG officer Daniel Phipps said the sessions aim to provide all landholders impacted by CSG with information about their legal rights under the legislation implemented by the Queensland Government and not about discussing CSG policy.

"We are here to give landholders an understanding of the legal framework surrounding the CSG industry and practical tools they can use when approached by a CSG company," Mr Phipps said.

"Under amendments to Land Access laws introduced in October 2010, any company with an Environmental Authority must avoid any unreasonable interference with a landholders' lawful farming activity."

Mr Phipps emphasised the importance of undertaking bore and environmental baseline assessments in order to monitor and manage any environmental impacts of CSG activity on property.

"While CSG companies are required to undertake baseline bore assessments when moving into CSG production, it is important all landholders consider getting an independent expert to conduct these tests before advanced exploration activities commence – in order to have their own evidence should CSG activity affect their property."

"Landholders should also consider conducting baseline assessments of environmental assets such as vegetation, biodiversity corridors and surface water as well as property features including roads, noise levels, dust and erosion to ensure any future impacts from CSG activities can be identified, managed and compensated."

Launched last year, AgForce Projects CSG information sessions have already assisted more than 1300 landholders across Queensland. AgForce Projects CSG information sessions will continue to be delivered free throughout Queensland with funding support from the Queensland Government. To request an information session in your town visit [www.agforceprojects.org.au](http://www.agforceprojects.org.au) or call 07 3238 6048.

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