



Serving Dalrymple

SHANE KNUTH MP

This document has originated in Shane Knuth's Charters Towers Office

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Media release

Knuth slams Wilmar over stalling tactics as it tries to label grower choice legislation 'unconstitutional'

Sugar marketing giant Wilmar has struck cane growers another blow, arguing in court that a section of legislation giving growers marketing choice is unconstitutional.

It comes as growers face the dilemma of not being able to supply cane this season if the deadlock with contract negotiations between growers and Wilmar does not resolve.

Burdekin District Cane Growers opted for formal arbitration under the KAP's Sugar Industry (Real Choice in Marketing) Amendment Act, but Member for Dalrymple Shane Knuth can reveal Wilmar is now trying to deem the arbitration process unconstitutional and has unsuccessfully tried to keep its pathetic stalling tactics secret from the public.

Wilmar's request to keep its unconstitutionality submission confidential was dismissed by the Supreme Court of Queensland last week and the information was exclusively disclosed to two politicians including Mr Knuth.

Wilmar was also ordered to pay the Burdekin District Cane Growers' costs of the application.

"I am appalled but sadly not surprised that Wilmar is stooping to this level to get its way and rob growers of fair choice," Mr Knuth said.

"Meanwhile, the real business of growing sugar is in jeopardy as Wilmar can't strike a fair deal with growers, meaning they might not be able to secure the cane supply agreements they need to supply cane to the mills."

Mr Knuth said Wilmar was the only one of the seven sugar milling companies that hadn't yet signed a cane supply agreement.

“Wilmar is the problem; this signifies the uncooperative and unfair behaviour of a multi-national company not getting its way and fighting tooth and nail.”

Mr Knuth said he would keep working hard to ward off more attacks by Wilmar and ensure the future of sugar production in Queensland.

The KAP introduced the Sugar Industry (Real Choice in Marketing) Amendment Act in 2015 giving growers choice in who markets their sugar and arbitration to handle disputes.

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