

**ROBBIE KATTER**

Member for Traeger



## MEDIA RELEASE

September 13, 2019

### FINAL BLOW TO QLD AGRICULTURE ONLY MONTHS AWAY

In less than three months the Palaszczuk Labor Government led by Minister Mark Furner, “the Farmer’s Friend”, will deliver a crucial blow to Queensland agriculture, when the state’s last remaining and iconic agricultural and pastoral colleges are officially closed.

Minister for Agricultural Industry Development Mark Furner announced the closure of the colleges at Emerald and Longreach in December last year, claiming they were “outdated and unviable”.

The decision followed a review into the education facilities by former Queensland University of Technology (QUT) Vice-Chancellor, Peter Coaldrake.

The colleges are due to be closed on December 6, and uncertainty remains over how the facilities will be used after this date.

It’s understood local “transition” advisory committees are looking at applications for the sites, and the final decision will be made by the State Government.

In recent weeks dozens of former Queensland Agricultural Training College horses have been sold via online auction platform, AuctionsPlus.

State KAP Leader and Traeger MP Robbie Katter said the closure of the iconic institutions was a national tragedy.

He said the college’s 50-plus years’ contribution to the Queensland economy, by training and encouraging younger farmers to stay on the land to produce food and fibre, had been invaluable.

Mr Katter said he would seek support from the LNP and would prepare a motion in Parliament against the planned disposal of the two multi-million dollar facilities.

“The closure of colleges at Emerald and Longreach represents so much more than losing two educational facilities,” he said.

“It is the closure of one of our greatest chapters and I believe is symbolic of our leaders and our governments formally turning their back on the state’s agricultural industry and the bush more broadly.

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"It is a crying shame, and it is going to hurt us in the future.

"It is not something I can sit idly by and watch happen, and I hope the LNP Opposition sees the issue the same way and is willing to support our planned motion to stand up for the bush as well."

**—ENDS—**

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