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MEDIA RELEASE

GRAINCARE – a more commercial approach

Australia's grain growers will be hearing more about developing their business through the on-farm quality assurance program Graincare following the transfer of the program's administration to Industry Services Australia, after a competitive tender process.

Previously run by the Grains Council of Australia, Graincare will now develop a more commercial focus, which will allow growers to become more aware of the benefits of being involved in the program. Lindsay Spencer, the Manager of accreditation company Industry Services Australia, indicated "Graincare is now being actively promoted to end users of Australian grain. There are benefits at both ends of the supply chain – growers and consumer."

Graincare is an industry developed code of practice for protecting food and feed safety. This code of practice sets out good agricultural practice standards for obtaining and storing chemicals, crop management, harvesting and harvesting equipment, and document control.

There are two stages to becoming a Graincare grower. Growers must first register with the voluntary program to obtain their on-farm quality assurance manual, which outlines the best practices required to become accredited as a Graincare grower. To become accredited, growers must then undergo an independent audit of the practices they have in place to meet the Code's requirements. Many growers will already meet the standards using their current on-farm practices, and as a result will not be required to make any change to their operations.

"End users of grain have more and more requirements placed on them for food safety all the time" Mr Spencer says. "From feedlotters to flour millers, each must have their own internal quality assurance programs to protect food safety. Their clients down the food supply chain also have quality assurance requirements to satisfy, including a need for the delivery of quality-assured inputs into their manufacturing processes. For example, feedlots need feed grain that is free from contaminants - quality assured."

"Users of Australian grain know the importance of on-farm quality assurance for food and feed safety. We will be looking to have them convey this message to grain growers. Some end users are already putting their hands up and saying, 'we only want quality-assured grain'. Australian growers must be able to deliver this – Graincare will give them that opportunity".

The GRDC and the Grains Council will continue their support for Graincare and will be closely involved in Graincare's progress and future development. "Graincare will not remain static but will also keep evolving in response to the needs of both end users and growers."

To obtain more information on Graincare, visit the Graincare website at www.graincare.com.au or call (02) 9428 6144.

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