



Niall Blair

Minister for Primary Industries
Minister for Regional Water
Minister for Trade and Industry

MEDIA RELEASE

Thursday, 22 June 2017

POPPIES BEGIN TO POP IN NSW

Today marks an historic milestone for the State's agricultural sector, with the announcement of the first poppy crops in NSW starting to germinate.

NSW Minister for Primary Industries, Niall Blair said almost 200 hectares of poppy seeds have been planted at five farms around the State.

"The NSW Government is delighted to have given the 'green light' for poppies to be safely and securely grown, it provides regional NSW with another new high-value industry," Mr Blair said.

"The first poppy crops have been planted in the Central West and the Hunter Valley and are expected to be harvested around October.

"The global demand for poppies is increasing rapidly and at current rates will potentially be worth up to \$100 million in 10 years.

"The opiates extracted from poppies are used for a wide range of conditions, including pain relief, palliative care and anti-addiction medication."

The NSW Department of Primary Industries (DPI), under the [Poppy Industry Bill 2016](#) and associated [Poppy Industry Regulation 2017](#), has issued five cultivation licences to farmers who have a contract with TPI Enterprises – the State's licensed processor.

Poppies grown for commercial purposes look identical to other poppy varieties but are extremely toxic to humans because of the different alkaloid compounds they contain.

The industry is highly regulated at state, national and international levels with licence conditions and guidelines providing clear and rigorous requirements for the industry.

Chief Executive Officer of TPI Enterprises, Jarrod Ritchie, said as the only Australian-owned licensed poppy processor, the company is excited to be working with farmers in NSW.

"NSW farmers will now be able to include poppies as part of their rotation, providing a valuable additional income stream and ensuring Australia remains a global leader in the supply of essential pain relief medicines," Mr Ritchie said.

It remains illegal to take, use, sell or grow poppies without a licence in NSW. Illegal possession of opiate poppy plant parts or substances derived from them is a criminal offence and attracts heavy penalties.

****Editor's note:** Interviews and vision available

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