

Tree Breeding Australia receives boost for national research facility in Mt Gambier

Tree Breeding Australia (TBA), the national peak body for tree breeding and genetic improvement, has received \$450,000 from the South Australian Government to support the development of a purpose-built research facility in Mount Gambier.

TBA will match the government's contribution, ensuring the successful establishment of the new facility. TBA General Manager Dr. Tony McRae welcomed the support, emphasising the importance of the investment.

“The state-of-the-art facility will play a crucial role in the future of Australian tree breeding and gene conservation efforts as part of national tree improvement programs for pines and eucalypts,” Dr McRae said.

“Key features include a purpose-built laboratory for processing and storing biological samples such as pollen, seeds, needles, and foliage for DNA analyses.”

“Importantly, the facility will enhance safety, support a more efficient and effective working environment for employees and consolidate all activities on-site.”

TBA, a not-for-profit cooperative, has been at the forefront of research and genetic improvement for plantation timber species since 1983, and is supported by Green Triangle forest growers.

Collaborating across industry and research sectors, the organisation leverages cutting-edge science to enhance genetic outcomes.

Dr. McRae highlighted the transformative impact of the new facility.

“This investment will turbocharge our tree improvement programs, significantly improving the rate of genetic gain. New tree varieties used in regional plantations will grow ten percent faster over a decade, with even better wood quality than current plantings.”

The benefits will extend beyond the forest.

“Forestry is such an important sector in the Green Triangle and the region's economy. Local sawmills will receive better logs, and communities will enjoy better wood products,” Dr. McRae added.

“Complementing the Forestry Centre for Excellence, also located in Mount Gambier, the research facility will address critical challenges associated with climate change, and resilience to pests and diseases.”

“Improved genetics and innovative tree varieties will be essential for future productivity and plantation resilience.”

“The SA Government's Timber Industry Master plan aligns with a key goal of TBA breeding programs which look to optimise economic gains across the supply chain.”

“We are grateful for the recognition and support from Government and the South Australia Forest Products Association for the role TBA plays in ensuring Australians have quality timber products for generations to come.”



TBA Board Chair Dr Andrew Jacobs, Minister for Primary Industries and Forestry Clare Scriven MLC, TBA General Manager Dr Tony McRae, SAFPA CEO Nathan Paine, Independent Member for Mount Gambier Troy Bell



TBA staff welcome the SA Government's support for a new purpose built research facility



Dr McRae said the investment will turbocharge tree improvement programs



Improved genetics will be essential for future productivity and plantation resilience.