

# Chairman's Message

## A.O.C.C.



**Trevor Hookway,  
Chairman, A.O.C.C.**

**As Chairman of the A.O.C.C. it gives me pleasure to report on various aspects of the onion industry.**

The only bright spot for the onion industry for 1985-1986 has been the strong demand for export onions, although the price has not been high. I believe we could have exported more, but for a wharf dispute. The fall in the dollar must help exports this coming season and if exporters quote higher prices we should still be able to sell.

Our Federal Government has acknowledged, belatedly, the importance of exports to our economy and future, although they are on the wrong train, suggesting that an export recovery will be led by our manufacturing industries, which the unions have almost destroyed.

I am indebted to Julian Cribb, Editor of the "National Farmer" for his editorial of September 4th and I quote the figures from Brian Haig of the Australian National University, on the comparison of performance between Australian farmers and three similar nations consisting of Britain, Germany and the United States.

The Australian Farmer produces 155% more than his British counterpart, 220% more than a German farmer and 57% more than the average American, whilst our manufacturing, transport and service industries lag badly behind these same countries.

Julian Cribb has pointed out that Australia, instead of investing in those industries in which it has a clear global superiority in productivity, is instead going to specialise in the fields in which it does worst in world terms.

The Haig study clearly shows Australian farmers have outperformed their counterparts in other countries by miles in terms of production per head. Our other sectors have mostly turned in a consistently poor result in world terms.

It is not hard to conclude from this that the bulk of the real productivity growth in Australia has been supplied by farming and by mining—not by the other sectors.

Yet Australian workers in these unproductive industries have been rewarded with consistent pay increases, while farmers, through the combined effects of world prices and domestic costs, have sustained a 50% real terms pay cut.

We have created a system which rewards the least productive and penalises those who produce the most.

Until governments cease their ludicrous practise of rewarding the unproductive and penalising those who generate national growth, Australia will, without a shadow of doubt, become poorer and poorer.

Following on these points, we must strive as an industry to make all politicians aware of our need to receive every help to export our product.

I feel the D.P.I. export standard for onions is almost finalised and I would like to convey thanks to Graeme Brooks for his work on this very important task.

In closing, I thank our exporters for their efforts, all members of the A.O.C.C. for their contribution to our organisation, especially Reg Miller, for his tireless enthusiasm, and John Salvestrin and Phil Sinclair for our informative, well-designed magazine. I wish everyone a brighter 1986-1987.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Trevor Hookway".