

PETER DRAPER

INDEPENDENT MEMBER FOR TAMWORTH

MEDIA RELEASE

Wheat Streak Mosaic Virus

16th May 2003

Independent Member for Tamworth Peter Draper has called on State and Federal Governments to review their response to the wheat streak mosaic virus.

“Despite assurances from the State and Federal Governments, the virus continues to be found at more sites,” Mr Draper said.

“It is a real concern that the wheat streak mosaic virus has now been found at the Tamworth Centre for Crop Improvement. The State Government must move swiftly to ensure the virus does not spread further.”

“Both levels of Government say they have taken all possible precautions to stop the spread of the virus. I ask both to seriously consider whether there is more they can do.”

“I would also encourage wheat growers to carefully inspect any crops they may have. We need a co-ordinated approach between the industry and Government to try to halt the spread of this virus.”

“We must act quickly to ensure it doesn’t spread across the wheatbelt, if it hasn’t already. There is no time to waste.”

“Growers can access more information about the virus at the NSW Agriculture website. Photos have been posted on the site to help farmers identify the virus.”

The website address is www.agric.nsw.gov.au

The wheat streak mosaic virus has now been identified at two sites in Tamworth – a privately-owned breeding facility and the Tamworth Centre for Crop Improvement.

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