

# 56 million eskies: Supporting Australia's largest barley market

■ By Australian Export Grains Innovation Centre

**T**HE amount of Australian barley exported to China every year could fill 4.5 Melbourne Cricket Grounds, 2900 Olympic sized swimming pools, or 56 million eskies. It's Australia's largest barley market, which is why the Australian barley industry is so committed to maintaining and enhancing the long-term relationship with Chinese brewers, maltsters, processors and traders through continual technical support.

Recently the Australian Export Grains Innovation Centre (AEGIC) and Barley Australia hosted two Australian Barley Technical Conferences in Guangzhou and Beijing, in collaboration with Seed Force, University of Adelaide and Victorian grain grower Simon Tickner. Three Australian government agencies – DFAT, DAWR and Austrade – provided valuable support.

AEGIC Barley Markets Manager Mary Raynes said the conferences had been run for three years and were highly valued by attendees.

"These events are an effective way to help maintain and enhance the excellent relationship between the Australian barley industry and the Chinese brewing industry in the long term," she said. "The response this year was again excellent, with 130 people choosing to take part, including representatives of brewing companies, maltsters, traders and students."

Mary said China imported 4.5 million tonnes of Australian barley each year worth \$1.2 billion on average.

"Like Australians, Chinese people love a beer and premium Australian malting barley is in high demand. Feed barley is an even larger export volume and this sector is still showing strong growth," she said.

"Helping Chinese brewers, maltsters and traders boost their understanding of the production, accreditation and processing of Australian barley helps enhance the value of Australian barley in the long term."

■ At both conferences, Mary and Barley Australia CEO Dr Megan Sheehy provided an explanation of the Australian barley industry and accreditation system.



AEGIC Barley Markets Manager Mary Raynes.

- AEGIC Barley Malting Quality Research Biochemist Dr Qisen Zhang provided an overview of his research into the possibility of using existing barley grain protein more efficiently.
- Victorian grower Simon Tickner gave an insight into the barley industry from a grower's perspective and what factors influence farmers' decision making processes.
- Seed Force Technical Services Manager David Leah provided an overview of Australia's newly accredited malting barley variety RGT Planet.
- The University of Adelaide's Associate Professor Matthew Tucker spoke about his team's exciting research into the barley grain components that contribute to germination and flavour.



The Australian barley industry delegation.



Wimmera grower Simon Tickner at the 2019 Australian Barley Technical Conference in Beijing.