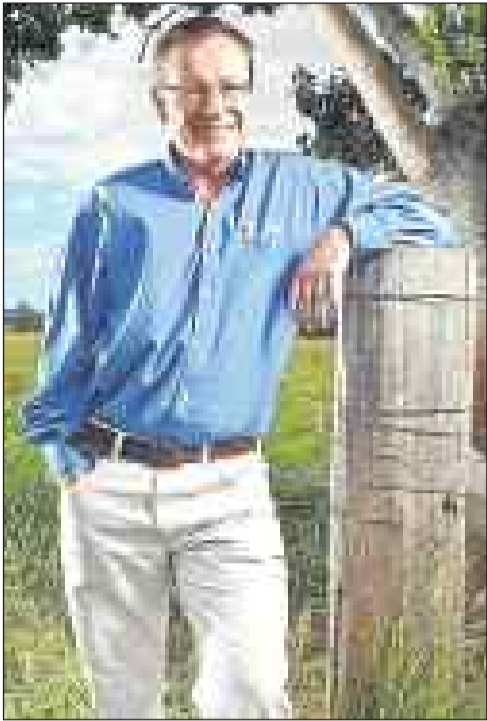


Finance, Investment and Banking



Suncorp Bank's executive general manager for agribusiness, David Marshall.

Uniting projects, investors

CENTRE Capital Securities Pty Ltd has created the Agri Frontiers Pty Ltd concept which is designed to bring potential investors and suitable projects together. Agri Frontiers director, Michael Norman, Sydney, said the company had observed there was a gap between those who have agricultural projects and the necessary capital required to develop those projects. "We believe there are opportunities globally to take advantage of the increasing demand for agricultural commodities and predicted supply constraints," said Mr Norman (pictured).

"These opportunities have been typically difficult to access for the local Australian farmer or investor."

"The investment strategy is generally to invest in companies involved in the production, processing, transportation, trading and marketing of soft commodities, as well as those which supply products and services to the agricultural industry," he said.

He said some key investments to date had included some of the world's key agricultural equipment, fertiliser, seed, crop protection and supply chain companies.

■ Contact Agri Frontiers Pty Ltd, (1300) 132 214.



Rising to the rural challenge

WHEN Suncorp Bank first opened its doors in 1902, it was as the Queensland Agricultural Bank.

It has a long history of cultivating deep relationships with rural producers as well as developing a solid understanding of the businesses it operates.

Suncorp Bank's executive general manager for agribusiness, David Marshall, said the company's experience sets it apart and makes it the largest Australian regional bank with a strong agribusiness offering in NSW.

"Suncorp Bank's commitment to agribusiness has been engrained in the company's culture for more than a century, and this is something we take pride in," Mr Marshall said.

"It's testament in itself that agribusiness is still a core component of our bank's operations.

"It's my job to make sure this proud heritage is upheld.

"Agribusiness has changed beyond all recognition since 1902, but in my view, there's still no substitute for relevant products, flexible service and a straight conversation.

"That's why I'm getting out and about to meet some of our primary producers."

He said Suncorp ensured there were experienced agribusiness specialists in branches throughout the State, ready to supply superior industry knowledge, local leadership and the ability to make decisions on the ground.

"We have an expansive network of agribusiness centres throughout the State, but we're also more than happy to come to you," he said.

"Our mobile team travel far and wide to take our outstanding products to the people who will benefit from them.

"We're committed to the important NSW market and have embarked on an expansion strategy here in NSW that has seen us open more than eight branches and five district banking centres over the past 18 months."

He said the company has 30 dedicated agribusiness managers in the State, many of whom are rural producers themselves.

"They truly understand the challenges and issues farmers and producers face year-to-year-through droughts, interest rates and commodity price fluctuations, and the cycles within a farming business.

"Having supported primary producers across the country for more than a century, connecting with local communities is at the heart of what Suncorp Bank does."

He said the bank was actively involved in a range of sponsorship and fundraising initiatives to support the communities in which it operates.

"I'm proud of Suncorp Bank's agribusiness heritage here in Australia, and I want to do my bit to develop existing partnerships, and build new ones."

■ Contact Suncorp Bank, (0414) 789 381.



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