**Rice farmer, Jeremy Morton, new Irrigators’ Chair**

The National Irrigators’ Council (NIC) has elected Moulamein rice farmer, Jeremy Morton, as its new chairman.

Jeremy Morton steps into the role after long term Chairman, Gavin McMahon, from the Riverland in South Australia retired.

NIC CEO Steve Whan said “Gavin has been NIC chair for eight years and under his leadership the organisation has built a reputation for making a constructive and positive contribution to very difficult policy debates around water and energy.

“At the AGM this week NIC members were unanimous in their appreciation for the huge effort Gavin has made for the organisation and, more broadly, on water policy. Gavin has also been a leader in driving home the message that high energy costs harm Australia’s capacity to be a competitive producer of food and fibre.

“NIC over that period has made it clear that we seek that vital triple bottom line outcome healthy rivers, healthy communities and a continuing capacity to produce food and fibre.

“Gavin is retiring from the role but continues on the NIC board.

“NIC’s new chair, Jeremy Morton, brings a wealth of leadership in the irrigation sector. Jeremy is a Board member of ASX listed Sunrice, a former Chairman of Ricegrowers and a farmer – among other things. He lives in an irrigation community that has felt the day-to-day impact of water recovery and drought.”

NIC Chairman, Jeremy Morton, said “firstly, a sincere thank you to Gavin McMahon for his commitment & leadership as Chair of NIC.

“It is an honour to represent the interests of our members, and to work with all stakeholders, to ensure we can maximise the opportunities from the use of our limited access to Australia’s water resources. Australian irrigation farmers grow much of the food we enjoy and clothes we wear every day, in every sense, irrigation is an essential industry.

“We are heavily invested in ensuring that the management of water enhances the natural, modified & productive environment. It is my dream that the controversy in this highly contested space can become a thing of the past. I look forward to the challenge.”

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