

# **SunRice records a solid earnings performance for the 2007 Financial Year**

Friday, 24 August 2007

SunRice, a leading Australian exporter of branded rice food products, today announced a strong financial performance for the year ending 30 April 2007 with a 22% increase in consolidated revenue to \$738 million.

Addressing members at the SunRice Annual General Meeting in Jerilderie, Chairman, Mr Gerry Lawson said he was pleased the business could deliver a medium-grain paddy return of \$265 per tonne for the 2006 crop year, despite the difficult conditions facing many Australian agricultural businesses with export markets.

"Market share in key product categories remained solid during the year. A remarkable job was done at keeping our brands on supermarket shelves around the world through our global trading program. This has been a very successful strategy for our business.

Our complementary businesses performed very well this year with Riviana and CopRice delivering record sales and profits. In light of business performance, the Board was pleased to be able to deliver to shareholders a dividend of 21.5 cents per B Class Share. This dividend represented approximately \$6 million of the profit for the business" said Mr Lawson.

Mr Lawson also announced the results of SunRice's Director Election at the Annual General Meeting. Current Director and Deputy Chairman Mark Robertson, was re-elected, along with Alan Walsh and Norm McAllister. Laurie Arthur is the newly elected Director to the Board, following on from the recent announcement by Bruce Barber that he would retire from the Board after a period of 23 years.

In congratulating the Directors, Mr Lawson noted that Laurie Arthur will bring a wealth of experience to the Board through his long association with the Ricegrowers Association of Australia, the National Farmers' Federation and the NSW Irrigators Council.

Chief Executive Officer, Gary Helou, highlighted the volatility of recent crop sizes during the four years of drought. The 2006 crop represented a welcome, if short lived, return to normal production levels, at 1.04 million tonnes. This provided the opportunity to re-establish the presence of much sought after Australian grown rice in local and international markets.

Mr Helou said that "given the business is facing another year of drought, we will continue to focus on global trading to defend brands around the globe, meet market demand and maintain profitability. We will also continue to reduce costs to deliver good results.

The continued focus on product innovation and marketing excellence maintained SunRice's leadership position across key rice food categories around the globe and was another pleasing achievement of the 2006 crop year," said Mr Helou.

The SunRice Board is encouraging rice growers who have water available to grow rice in the upcoming season by offering contracts for specific varieties at very competitive prices.

"We will be offering prices above those guaranteed last year. For the limited tonnages, \$404/t is the minimum price offered for medium grain with varietal premiums taking the prices much higher for niche varieties. For example, \$520 per tonne will be offered for Koshihikari" said Mr Lawson.

**About SunRice**

*Ricegrowers Limited, trading as SunRice, is one of Australia's largest exporter's of branded food products, exporting 80% of its production to over 60 countries around the globe. SunRice is a major employer in the Riverina region of NSW.*