

EMBARGO: 11 p.m. Wednesday, 15th June, 1960

P.M. No.21/1960

WORK AT KIMBERLEY RESEARCH STATION TO BE  
DOUBLED

Statement by the Acting Prime Minister, Mr. J. McEwen

The Commonwealth Government has agreed to increase its assistance to the work of the Kimberley Research Station.

An expanded programme of agricultural research is to be carried out over the next five years at the Station, which is located in the Ord Valley, North-Western Australia.

Annual expenditure on this work will be almost doubled.

The station has been operated jointly by the Commonwealth and Western Australian Governments since 1946. The agricultural research is carried out by the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation and the Western Australian Department of Agriculture. Each Government meets half the costs involved. The results of the Station's work in irrigated agriculture are already being applied in several northern Australian areas.

The Station's annual funds (exclusive of salaries) for carrying out its work will be increased from £50,000 to £92,000. The research staff will be increased.

The programme decided upon for the next five-year period provides for an expansion of work on rice and safflower. These two crops are giving very encouraging results. Further work will be done on a number of other crops which appear to have good agronomic prospects.

It will be recalled that the Government of Western Australia decided to spend in the Ord Valley part of the £5 million grant provided by the Commonwealth for new development works in the northern part of Western Australia. It is now proceeding with the construction of a weir on the Ord River to serve an irrigation area of from 10,000 to 15,000 acres.

This decision of the Western Australian Government has emphasised the necessity for expanding the work of the Station, so that it can handle technical problems arising from the commercial venture.

CANBERRA, 15th June, 1960