

Emerald Announces \$175 million Boost to Harvest Funding for 2008/09

Melbourne 20 October, 2008: Emerald Group Australia Pty Ltd has today announced details of its funding arrangements for the 2008/09 harvest. Major facilities totalling \$175 million have been finalised over recent months with both ANZ and NAB to cover seasonal funding for its wheat, barley and canola activities.

In announcing the companies funding arrangements for 2008/09, Chairman Alan Winney said Emerald had increased the funding options available to the company to allow for continued growth of its grain management operations. Emerald's performance over recent years has meant that the company has been able to achieve a significant increase in its facility limits despite the ongoing turmoil in global financial and credit markets

"Emerald's relationship with major Australian banks continues to grow and I am pleased to announce the finalisation of a \$150 million seasonal facility with our primary banking partner ANZ for the 2008/09 marketing year. Emerald's joint venture in Victoria, SQP Pty Ltd, has also secured a \$25 million inventory facility with NAB."

"Emerald is a growing company that plays a significant role in the Australian grain market. Through our joint ventures and alliances with Australian growers, including WAFarmers, Ravensdown United Farmers, Southern Quality Produce Co-operative and FREE Eyre, we are continuing to develop our business based around open and transparent grain marketing services. Our brand names of Emerald Group, SQP and EP Grain have all established strong positions in their respective regions."

"The capacity to fund grain purchases competitively is integral to our business and fundamentally important to our grower partners. It is especially pleasing for us that despite the significant uncertainty in global credit markets Emerald has been able to increase its funding capacity this year at very competitive rates." Mr Winney also advised that Emerald have further standby funding capacity available should it exceed its budgeted volumes for the 2008/09 harvest.

Mr Winney said a number of volatile factors impacting global commodity markets had seen strong grower interest in Emerald's grain marketing pools for wheat, barley and canola for the 2008-09 season.

"International bulk freight markets have collapsed over recent weeks realigning the interaction between bulk and container freight, index and hedge funds in the US have sold off massive portions of their long positions in global commodity futures markets and the Australian dollar has weakened considerably. In volatile times grain marketing pools, such as the major products Emerald manages, are seen as a measured and secure option for farmers who are trying to lock in a competitive return managed by experienced industry professionals."

"The announcement now of our strong position in relation to funding for the 2008-09 season is intended to provide a welcome and timely assurance for growers in this the first year of deregulated wheat marketing that Emerald will be there as a very competitive provider of services to farmers" Mr Winney said.

For further information: Alan Winney, Chairman Emerald Group Australia Pty Ltd, on 03 9882 4835

General media enquiries: Emma Field, Marketing & Communications Co-ordinator, 0439974490