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<http://www.wernercairns.com/2010/12/australia-is-losing-its-heart-and-soul.html>



[Australia is losing its heart and soul to foreign interests.](#)

We were once called the “lucky” and the “clever country;” ex-cuse me for having a nostalgic vibe. The way things are going, it won’t be long before Australia is owned by foreign interests. When will our politicians take their blinkers off before all our land is in foreign hands and the profits go to their respective countries?

Our federal Independent, Tony Windsor MP, of National Party stock, who helped to get a Labor federal Government installed, is said to have sold his farm to Chinese interests for 3.3 Million dollars. He is not recontesting his federal seat, so he could easily thumb his nose at his rural electors and avoid the backlash and – is laughing all the way to the bank. **One has to wonder when some foreign investors will buy our governments.** The following is courtesy of ‘The Weekly Times’. - *Werner*



FOREIGN investors have snapped up billions of dollars in prime agricultural land and rural enterprises. Some of Australia's best-known farm brands - including Golden Circle, SPC, Dairy Farmers, CSR Sugar, SunRice and AWB - have fallen into foreign hands.

A Herald Sun investigation shows a swag of government-backed entrepreneurs - including from China, the Middle East and Singapore - are sizing up potential investments as global powers move to secure food supplies. More than \$9 billion of prized agricultural assets have been sold to offshore interests in the past two years. And there is more to come - though no one can accurately say how much is for sale.

A Chinese delegation will arrive next month, hoping to acquire farms and other agricultural assets. Tens of millions of dollars are being invested in water licences by American and British investors. Tasmanian real estate executive Betty Kay said she had five Chinese investors hoping to acquire dairy assets -part of the superpower's plan to provide milk to its 1.3 billion population. The investment is good news for depressed local farmers who can no longer make a decent living. But the sell off has raised alarm bells in the bush and Canberra. **MPs from across the political spectrum** are worried about unchecked foreign investment and are demanding greater transparency to ensure Australia's food supplies are not jeopardised.

Assistant Treasurer Bill Shorten has flagged plans to conduct an audit of farm sales and is keen to "further strengthen transparency" of foreign ownership in agriculture. Independent Senator Nick Xenophon, who will introduce a private member's Bill, argues the present rules around foreign investment are a "joke." "No one is even monitoring how much of our farmland we are selling," he

said. Australia, with its rich and fertile lands and sophisticated farming techniques, is a key target for some of the world's biggest agricultural enterprises.

Spanish Ebro Foods is bidding \$600 million to acquire Sun Rice and Singapore-based Wilmar International won a \$1.75 billion bid for CSR's sugar and renewable energy business.

Doug Chant, ex-president of the United Dairy Farmers of Victoria, said foreign interests were seeking freehold farms in western Victoria. "There appears to be interest there and, at the least, the Government should have a register of properties being sold to overseas interests," Mr Chant said. Greens' deputy leader Christine Milne is pushing for stricter controls. She said countries such as China, the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia had begun "a massive buy-up". "It is now imperative Australia protects its land and water as part of national sovereignty," she said.

WHAT'S BEEN BOUGHT.

NATIONAL FOODS - SOLD in 2009. Purchase: Australia's largest dairy food and juice company which sells brands such as Pura Milk, Moove, Vitasoy and Berri Juice Buyer: Kirin Holdings took over the company when it took over the Lion Nathan Group in late 2009. Country: Japan Price: \$3.5 billion

AAB GRAIN - SOLD in 2009 Purchase: The Australian Barley Board was Australia's largest agribusiness but was bought out in mid 2009. Buyer: Viterra, an international agribusiness which operates in Western Canada, North America, Australia and New Zealand. Country: Canada Price: \$1.6 billion.

DAIRY FARMERS - SOLD in 2009. Purchase: One of the largest and oldest dairy manufacturers in Australia, which was first established in 1900. Buyer: Lion Nathan purchased the company in 2008 but was purchased a year later by Japanese brewer Kirin Holdings. Country: Japan Price: \$675 million.

TIMBERCORP - SOLD in 2009. Purchase: 8096ha property for the farming of almonds and with water rights of 90,000 mega litres. Buyer: Olam a Singapore based company purchased the property which represents 45 per cent of the Australian almond crop. Country: Singapore. Price: \$288 million

NUFARM LIMITED - STAKE SOLD in 2010. Purchase: The crop protection and fertilisers company recently had to raise cash by selling a 20 percent stake. Buyer: Sumitomo of Japan an insurance company. Country: Japan. Price: \$250 million.

THE TASMAN GROUP - SOLD in 2008. Purchase: A Victorian-based meat processor purchased in 2008. Buyer: Swift Australia the nation's largest meat processor expands buying a competitor Tasman Group. Country: Brazil Price: \$150m.

AACO - SOLD in 2009 Purchase: Australia's largest cattle company with 22 properties owns 1.1 percent of the Australian continent. Buyer: Felda Iffco an international conglomerate with ownership in the Middle East and Malaysia now owns 19.9 percent of the company. Country: United Arab Emirates and Malaysia. Price: \$70m.

TATIARA MEAT COMPANY - SOLD in 2009. Purchase: Australia's largest exporter of chilled lamb purchased in December 2009 Buyer: Swift Australia, the nation's largest meat processor purchases expands buying the South Australian based company. Country: Brazil. Price: \$30m.

ROCKDALE BEEF - SOLD in 2010. Purchase: The feedlots and processing plant was purchased in March 2010. Buyer: Swift Australia the nations largest meat processor purchases the integrated beef cattle feedlot, feed mill, meatworks and farming business. Country: Brazil Price: \$28m. This was bought from Kirin Holdings, the Japanese company that owns National Foods and Dairy Farmers.

MURRAY DARLING WATER LICENCES - SOLD. Purchase: Water licences in the Murray Darling. Buyer: Summit Global Management a San Diego-based investment management firm that invests in Hydro commerce. Country: USA Price: \$20m.

MURRAY DARLING WATER LICENCES - SOLD. Purchase: Water licences in the Murray Darling.

Buyer: Guinness Peat Group a British Investment Group investing in licences. Country: UK. Price: \$35m.

IMPACT FERTILISER - SOLD in 2010. Purchase: The former family business has been operating for almost 20 years. Buyer: Ameropa a privately owned Swiss international grain and fertiliser trader had been in a joint venture with the company for four years when it bought the company in May this year. Country: Swiss. Price: \$50m.

WHAT'S CURRENTLY BEING BOUGHT.

AWB LIMITED – APPROVED. Purchase: AWB's profits suffered in the years following the Cole Inquiry. Buyer: The Foreign Investment Review Board this month approved the purchased by Canadian firm Agrium .Country: Canada. Price: \$1.2 billion

SUNRICE AUSTRALIA - PENDING APPROVAL. Purchase: The major Australian household brand is of one of the world's largest rice food companies and is currently being bought out by a firm out of Spain. Buyer: Ebro Foods is the world's largest producer of rice and the second biggest producer of pasta. Country: Spain. Price: \$600 million.

CSR SUGAR - APPROVED. Purchase: The major sugar producer has recently been given permission to go ahead with the sale to Wilmar International by FIRB. Buyer: Wilmar International is Asia's leading agribusiness group and is the largest global processor and merchandiser of palm and lauric oils. Country: Singapore Price: \$288 million. **SHENHUA WATERMARK COAL - PENDING APPROVAL.**

Purchase: More than 25 farms have been purchased in around the town of Gunnedah in order for the company to pursue coal mining interests in the area. Farmers are worried about the damage that a mine may do the local aquifer. Buyer: Shenhua Watermark Coal is the world's biggest coal company and is majority owned by the Chinese government. Country: China. Price: \$130 million.

FUTURE INVESTMENT TARGETS CUBBIE STATION. Purchase: The station is the largest irrigation property in the Southern Hemisphere and comes with water licences for 460,000 megalitres. Potential Buyers: Currently in administration but being circled by Swiss-based Western Gulf Advisory and Olam a Singaporean group which already has significant agricultural interests in Australia. Country: Companies from various countries looking at bidding.

QUEENSLAND SUGAR MILLS. Purchase: Following the announcement of the deal over CSR Sugar there is speculation that many of the mills in Northern Queensland such as Mackay Sugar, Maryborough Sugar Factory, Proserpine Sugar Mill and Mossman Mill may be bought. Potential Buyers: The interested parties are believed to include France's Louis Dreyfus, American group Bunge and China's Bright Foods Company. Country: France, USA, China.

WARRNAMBOOL CHEESE. Purchase: One of the last Australian Cheese manufacturers this week saw Bega Cheese buy into the company, however Canada's Saputo has also been eyeing the company.

Potential Buyers: Australian firm Bega Cheese appears to have beaten out its Canadian competitor for the moment however, Saputo appears to remain interested in the company. Country: Canada.

VICTORIAN AND TASMANIAN DAIRY FARMS. Purchase: Chinese investors are currently looking at a number of Dairy farms in Victoria and Tasmania. Potential Buyers: The buyers are seeking to invest in the farms in order to export milk powder to China. Country: China.

My thought for today: - Werner Australia is a lucky country run mainly by second-rate people who share its luck. - *Donald Horne*

Posted by Werner Schmidlin at [7:44 PM](#) Labels: [Australia sold](#) 