



**Niall Blair**

Minister for Primary Industries  
Minister for Regional Water  
Minister for Trade and Industry

## MEDIA RELEASE

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### STATE'S POPPY CROP SET TO DOUBLE IN 2018

The first alkaloid poppy crops grown in NSW have now been harvested and were so successful that production is expected to more than double this year.

Six farms across the Riverina and Central West took part in growing the first NSW poppy crops.

Minister for Primary Industries, Niall Blair said the successful harvest in NSW was a significant milestone.

"We passed the legislation in 2016, farmers planted the seeds in the ground the following season and now we can all celebrate a successful harvest – this is a huge win for our primary producers and the regional NSW economy," Mr Blair said.

"Our reforms have given farmers a new option as part of their annual crop rotation and a new potential income stream.

"We expect the poppy industry in NSW to be worth up to \$100 million over the next ten years, enhancing many farming operations across the State."

After the poppies are harvested, they are transported to a specialised facility where alkaloids are extracted, isolated and purified. The alkaloids are then formulated into medication for use as pain relief.

Opiate-based medications, derived from processed alkaloid poppies, have a wide range of uses, including pain relief, palliative care and anti-addiction medications.

Australia currently supplies more than 50% of the world's opiate market. There are only eight companies worldwide that process poppies for opiate manufacturing and three of them are based here in Australia.

The NSW Department of Primary Industries is overseeing the licensing, cultivation, and management of poppy crops in NSW.

It remains illegal to take, use, sell or grow poppies without a licence in NSW. Illegal possession of opiate plant parts or substances derived from them is a criminal offence and attracts heavy penalties.

**Editor's note: Link to interviews with Minister and TPI + vision of recent harvest.**

<https://spaces.hightail.com/space/MiyybxD8O6>

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