



# Barley for beer research agreement with China

BEER drinking is on the rise in China, and Agriculture Region MLC Brian Ellis has welcomed a Memorandum of Understanding to develop new barley varieties to meet its increasing popularity.

Mr Ellis said China is looking to Australia because Chinese land and resource constraints limit the capacity to produce barley locally.

A third generation grain farmer, he said the MOU could pave the path towards exciting new market possibilities.

“This could further diversify Mid West and Wheatbelt trade interests with China which have mainly focused on mining interests,” Mr Ellis said.

The primary objective of the agreement will be to develop varietal traits such as tolerance to soil acidity, salinity, water-logging, drought and frost.

Western Australian farmers will gain

an additional benefit as it will also help identify prime barley growing areas.

To become a long term supplier, Australian barley must meet China's market specifications for quality and food safety.

The signing of the agreement, between the Department of Agriculture and Food and Zhejiang University, was witnessed by the WA Premier and the Vice Governor of Zhejiang Province.

With a population of more than six million people, Zhejiang is one of China's wealthiest provinces, with a strong private sector.

Western Australia has had a sister relationship with Zhejiang since 1987, and the MOU is one of five signed yesterday between the two States.

The other agreements relate to education, disability services, land administration and policing.



**Cheers:** Local Chinese restaurateur Peter Li enjoys a 'coldie' after a long day in the kitchen.