



**Mark Harvey,
Seed Genetics Australia**

<http://www.seedgeneticsaustralia.com>

Seed Genetics is a South Australian-based agribusiness company that conducts R&D and produces and markets lucerne, clover and white clover seeds for dairy industries around the world. The company does business in the Saudi Arabian market through marketing licence agreements with medium-sized local firms. Mark Harvey has experience of 10 years working with Saudi firms.

Mark Harvey recommends flying your Saudi client out for a visit to Australia as a valuable way to build a business relationship.

‘Saudis enjoy getting out of their country. The client gets to see first-hand what your business operation is about. It’s also a chance for the client to meet your family.

‘The Federal government offers Export Market Development Grants which help you do this. It is well worth checking.’

For Mark Harvey one attraction of exporting to Saudi Arabia is the character of the people.

‘They have an honesty and an integrity. As well, they are good agriculturalists.

‘Once loyalty is established, it is valued and it is a thing to be respected and guarded.

‘You achieve this by doing exactly what you say you are going to do. It’s about honesty and integrity.

‘The misconception is that all business in Saudi Arabia is with large corporations that are owned by the Royal family. A lot of our business dealing is with mainly family-run, often small-sized businesses.

‘A lot of people are inclined to take the first offer of representation that comes along, but that may not be effective. Austrade can give good advice on who you should deal with.

‘Austrade does a particularly good job in Saudi. They’ve taken steps to localise their offices and have employed locals and other Arab nationals who really do know the market.

'When it comes to negotiation, you should always have a point below which you will not sell. The Saudis are straight-shooters and if you explain your position they will understand it.

'Getting official stamps is very important.

'It is very beneficial to join the Australia Arab Chamber of Commerce and Industry. It gives you immediate stamping of documents and it gives you standing in the eyes of the client.

'I always make sure I get the elements of the deal into a contract and ensure that it is stamped by the Australia Arab Chamber of Commerce and Industry or endorsed by the Saudi Embassy.

'When you are sending goods over to Saudi it is not enough to just package them up and send them off. You must make sure all your documentation is A1. If not, it won't get unloaded in Saudi Arabia.'