

HD **FED:Students quiz RBA chief on milk, jobless**

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RBA Reserve Bank governor Glenn Stevens fielded questions on milk prices and high youth unemployment when students had their turn to quiz him.

By Stephen Johnson

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BRISBANE, Aug 20 AAP - Reserve Bank governor Glenn Stevens had to admit milk prices weren't his area of expertise as a student quizzed him during a parliamentary hearing in Brisbane.

Cheneya Freese, the community captain at Faith Lutheran College in southern Queensland's Lockyer Valley, is also the 17-year-old daughter of former dairy farmers.

"No farmer, either in Australia or New Zealand has been paid \$8 to \$9 per litre which is the retail price sold in China after freight," she said.

"How does a lowering Aussie dollar impact local exports?"

In reply, Mr Stevens told the student from the Plainland school the Chinese market offered opportunities for Australian producers.

"I'm not an expert on milk pricing to be honest," he said, before a committee of federal MPs.

Later another student, Melonie Gabrielle, from St Francis College at Crestmead, asked about high youth unemployment in her home city of Logan, south of Brisbane.

"There are very high levels of youth unemployment in some areas, including ours, in Logan where it's currently above 20 per cent," said the year 12 business student who turns 18 in two days.

"What can you do to channel investment into these areas to improve employment prospects for young people?"

Mr Stevens said policy settings needed to stimulate employment.

"We can ask, more broadly, what we do to make it easier for young people to get a job," he said.

Melonie is planning to study to become a special education teacher while Cheneya has her mind set on becoming a beef cattle producer, after completing a degree in agribusiness.

After watching Labor and Liberal MPs, minus an absent Clive Palmer, grill Australia's most powerful central banker, only Mitchell Brimblecombe, the 17-year-old school captain at Faith Lutheran College, expressed an aspiration to become a politician.

"Politics could be something of interest," he told AAP.

But after a career in agriculture.

AAP saj/km

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