



Media Release

3 July 2020

Farmers welcome airfreight boost for Australia's fruit and vegetable exports

The Australian Fresh Produce Alliance (AFPA) welcomes the Australian Government's new \$240 million commitment for Australia's airfreight exporters, which will allow the ongoing export of high-quality Australian fruit and vegetables.

The Government's funding commitment to extend the International Freight Assistance Mechanism (IFAM) to the end of this year, supports Australia's fruit and vegetable exporters at a time of great uncertainty, and also helps Australia to continue supporting consumers overseas by providing high quality Australian produce.

"The extension of IFAM is a very welcome boost for Australia's fruit and vegetable exporters. This extension provides certainty to exporters that despite fewer international passenger flights, freight for exports will still be available" said Michael Rogers, CEO, AFPA.

Australia's exports of fresh fruit and vegetables has grown steadily over the past 5 years with strong demand from a number of markets across Asia and the Middle East. This is in line with more Australian fruit and vegetable farmers investigating export opportunities to diversify their markets and manage their risk.

"Export markets will be vital to the ongoing growth of the fresh produce industry and IFAM offers growers and exporters the opportunity to continue to supply their international customers during these uncertain times. This further enhances Australian farmers' reputations as reliable trading partners" said Mr Rogers.

While welcoming the extension of IFAM, AFPA members believe the program needs to be continued with the same commercial approach with the potential to expand efforts to consolidate orders for small exporters to ensure as many farmers as possible benefit from the program.

"We know that where products, such as citrus and table grapes, have been able to develop strong export markets there has been real flow on benefits to farmers and their communities. Export growth in fresh produce underpins jobs, investment and infrastructure across regional communities and we'd like to see as many fresh produce growers as possible benefit from the IFAM program" said Mr Rogers.

Media Contact: Michael Rogers - CEO, AFPA: 0409 648 911

***About the AFPA** - The Australian Fresh Produce Alliance (AFPA) is made up of Australia's key fresh produce growers and suppliers. The AFPA represents half the industry turnover of the Australian fresh produce sector - \$4.5 billion of the \$9.1 billion total; 1,000 plus growers through commercial arrangements and more than 15,000 direct employees through peak harvest, and up to 25,000 in the grower network.*