

Media Release

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India interim agreement is a fruitful opportunity for Australian growers

The horticulture industry today welcomes the signing of an interim agreement between Australia and India. The interim agreement sees a range of tariff reductions and eliminations for fresh produce that will create new export opportunities for Australian growers.

“The future success of Australia’s horticulture sector is underpinned by creating and capitalising on export opportunities. Steps like the signing of an interim agreement between Australia and India are vital in setting up Australia’s horticulture sector for international success” said AFPA CEO, Michael Rogers.

The interim agreement will see tariff elimination over 7 years on a variety of Australian horticulture products including blueberries, avocados, onion, cherries, asparagus, lettuce and celery. Other significant gains for the sector include an immediate halving of the tariff within the tariff rate quota for oranges and mandarins.

From 2019 –21, Australian growers exported more than \$18 million of oranges and mandarins to India, demonstrating the emergence of India as a key market for Australian horticulture exports.

“The opportunities presented by the agreement will enable a number of existing exporters, like those in the citrus industry, to capitalise immediately. The longer term tariff reductions will allow commercial players to build and strengthen relationships within India over time” said Mr Rogers.

A key part of accessing vital export opportunities for the horticulture sector is the requirement for technical market access protocols. The AFPA has previously called on Government to prioritise new technical market access for fresh produce with key trading partners as a strategic objective.

“Trade agreements with other countries are a critical first step and must be followed up with the work developing technical pathways for trade that are negotiated separately. We welcome this agreement with India, but it is vital that we follow up with expanded technical market access. Without expanded technical market access, both in India and other markets, the industry’s export growth is very constrained” said Mr Rogers.

Despite the interruptions caused by the COVID19 pandemic, Australian horticulture exports continue to grow, with exports in 2021 reaching \$2.65 billion.

“Access to new, high value and diverse markets is a priority issue for horticulture. Export opportunities are driving growth in the sector, leading to increased investment and employment in regional areas. The Government must invest in improving technical market access and prioritise these negotiations to support the future of the horticulture sector” said Mr Rogers.

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***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.*