

MEDIA RELEASE

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Fresh produce industry committed to reducing and recycling packaging

Today the Australian Fresh Produce Alliance (AFPA) has released a commitment to minimise packaging waste, and to work with government and industry to increase recycling.

Food waste is a growing global problem, with significant economic, social and environmental consequences. Fresh fruit and vegetables are perishable, which means they start deteriorating as soon as they are picked and if not handled and stored properly, can lead to wastage.

The purpose of packaging is to reduce fresh food waste and its disposal to landfill, because nobody gains if tonnes of freshly grown, healthy and nutritious food are thrown away because of inadequate or no packaging.

“The Australian Fresh Produce Alliance is committed to ensuring that packaging is focused on providing consumers with freshly grown, healthy and nutritious food, and minimising food waste” said Michael Rogers, AFPA CEO.

“More than 75% of Alliance members’ current retail packaging (by volume) is recyclable, compostable or reusable, and we are committed to meeting the 2025 target of ensuring all packaging is recyclable, compostable or reusable” said Mr Rogers.

“Industry is focussed on removing non-functional or surplus product packaging, and reducing the amount of packaging through the broader supply chain. We are committed to working with industry, suppliers, recyclers, and retailers to deliver outcomes and develop a circular economy for packaging (where current packaging is recycled into new packaging) including recycled content” said Mr Rogers.

“Packaging solutions cannot be developed in isolation. Stakeholders including manufacturers, fresh produce growers, recyclers, retailers, wholesalers and every level of government must work together to build and sustain the infrastructure to deliver and promote the use of recyclable and recycled packaging. Only then can we seriously contemplate achieving the goal of a circular economy” said Mr Rogers.

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About the Australian Fresh Produce Alliance (AFPA):

The Australian Fresh Produce Alliance (AFPA) is made up of Australia’s key fresh produce growers and suppliers. The members include Costa Group, Perfection Fresh, Montague, One Harvest, Pinata Farms, Fresh Select, Mitolo Group, Mackay’s Banana Marketing, Driscoll’s, 2PH Farms, LaManna Premier Group, Rugby Farming, Freshmax and Fresh Produce Group. These businesses represent half the industry turnover of the Australian fresh produce (fruit and vegetables) 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.

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