



## Media Release

21 January 2021

### **LaManna Premier Group's Anthony Di Pietro elected as next Chair of the Australian Fresh Produce Alliance**

Today, members of the Australian Fresh Produce Alliance (AFPA) unanimously elected Mr Anthony Di Pietro, CEO, LaManna Premier Group (LPG) as AFPA Chair for 2021.

Mr Di Pietro was appointed CEO of LPG in 2016, following the merger of LaManna Group and Premier Fruits Group. Prior to this appointment, Mr Di Pietro had been the CEO of Premier Fruits Group since 2003. In addition to significant experience within the horticulture industry, Mr Di Pietro is also currently the Chairman of Melbourne Victory FC. Mr Di Pietro will take over from Perfection Fresh's Michael Simonetta, who served as AFPA Chair during 2020.

"The past year has been particularly challenging for the horticulture industry, with the changing environment as a result of COVID creating uncertainty across domestic and export markets. During a year that has seen some of the toughest and most uncertain operating conditions for industry, Michael Simonetta has provided strong leadership to the AFPA and industry and I would like to thank him for his commitment and leadership over the past year" said Anthony Di Pietro, AFPA Chair.

Members of the AFPA are 13 of the largest growers, suppliers and marketers of fresh produce in Australia, representing half of the industry turnover annually. The AFPA is entirely funded by membership fees and membership is at the CEO level of each member company.

"The AFPA has been instrumental in delivering a number of industry critical outcomes over the past year including the extension of visas for horticulture workers unable to return to their home countries due to the pandemic; the successful restart of the Seasonal Worker Program; the establishment of a reference group on product integrity and food safety issues; and the successful Extraordinary General Meeting to make important changes to the constitution of grower owned RDC, Hort Innovation. Over the next year, we hope to continue to deliver important outcomes for industry" said Mr Di Pietro.

The election of a new Chair will start another busy year for the AFPA, with an ongoing focus on our industry workforce challenges, sustainable packaging and food waste and trade and market access.

"Despite only having been established two years ago, the AFPA has proven to be a leader in industry advocacy and a key force in driving collaboration between growers, industry associations, retailers and all levels of government. As chair, I look forward to ensuring that the AFPA continues to provide leadership on core industry issues" said Mr Di Pietro.

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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.*