

Media Release

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AFPA welcomes Senator Murray Watt as Federal Agriculture Minister

The Australian Fresh Produce Alliance (AFPA) membership welcomes the announcement that Senator Murray Watt will be the new Federal Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry.

“The AFPA congratulates Senator Murray Watt being appointed the Federal Agriculture Minister by Prime Minister Anthony Albanese. We look forward to working closely with Senator Watt to implement practical and pragmatic solutions for industry” said AFPA CEO Michael Rogers.

Priorities for the fresh produce industry centre around unlocking opportunities to grow the value of the sector; growth through export, investment in sustainable agriculture, and the development of a productive, returning workforce.

“The fresh produce industry has aspirations to grow to a \$20 billion sector by 2030. This growth can only be achieved by ensuring we have sustainable, productive businesses with access to consumers both here in Australia and overseas” said Mr Rogers.

Ongoing rain events in Senator Watt’s home state of Queensland demonstrate the difficulties farmers can face, and the need for effective government policy to underpin successful operation of the fresh produce sector.

“Some vegetable farmers in Queensland have lost multiple crop rotations due to ongoing and significant rains, which has contributed to higher prices for some vegetables for consumers and significant lost income for farmers.

“We need strong underpinning policy from government on workforce and exports, and investment in sustainability, which will support the resilience of farmers and the sector, to work through these hard times” said Mr Rogers.

To grow the industry and diversify risk for farmers, horticulture needs more technical market access to a range of key export markets. Without new export markets, the industry will not grow.

“We need new technical market access to key export markets which will mean all fruit and vegetable producers improve their returns through export. We look forward to working with Senator Watt to develop more Ministerial level engagement with key export markets for Australian fresh produce” said Mr Rogers.

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