

Media Release
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Access to more consumers is the only way to grow the value of Australia's fresh produce industry

Australian Fresh Produce Alliance (AFPA) members are calling for a whole of Government approach to securing new technical market access to our key export markets.

The Australian horticulture industry has traditionally been domestically focussed, however with less than 5 per cent of the Australian population eating the recommended daily intake of fruit and vegetables, fresh produce growers can no longer just rely only on an increase in domestic consumption to grow their businesses.

Growth in Australia's fresh produce industry has been driven by export markets, where growers are able to access a greater number of consumers and larger volume of consumption. Export growth has been strong over recent years with fruit exports growing by 20% annually for the last 8 years and vegetable exports have nearly doubled over the last 7 years.

"Exports are key to the growth of Australian agriculture in order to meet the ambitious target of a \$100 billion agricultural industry by 2030. Access to and expansion of new global markets is vital to the long term growth of the fresh produce sector and the flow on benefits to regional jobs, families and communities" said AFPA CEO, Michael Rogers.

Despite strong export growth to date, there are significant opportunities for future growth that can only be realised with new and improved access to export markets. The challenge in fresh produce is that growers produce more than 100 different types of fruit and vegetables in Australia and often each of these individual products require their own protocols for export, all of which need to be agreed with trading partners. Without these agreed protocols in place the industry is unable to unlock new export markets.

"Australia's citrus industry is an example of success when examining how market access can have a positive impact on industry growth. With favourable market access to China and other high value Asian markets including Japan and Korea, more than half of the value of citrus produced in Australia is now exported. The citrus industry's growth over this time period could not have occurred without access to new export markets" said Mr Rogers.

In a recently released White Paper, the AFPA have called for greater Commonwealth leadership on market access including a focus on securing technical market access for fresh produce into key export markets; greater resourcing within the Department of Agriculture to ensure continued trade development; and a commitment to funding a new \$10 million technical exchange program with China and Japan.

"If the Government is serious about reaching their \$100 billion agriculture industry target, this needs to be reflected in their commitment to enabling fresh produce growers to access new, high value markets. Without new markets and more consumers to feed, the fresh produce industry will be limited in reaching its full potential as a core contributor to the Australian agricultural industry" said Mr Rogers.

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