



## Media Release

6 February 2020

### **New Agriculture Minister needs to restore funding and support to grow Australian Agriculture**

The Australian Fresh Produce Alliance (AFPA) is calling on the next federal Agriculture Minister to restore funding to the Department of Agriculture and remove the ever increasing fees and charges on the export activity of Australian farmers.

Australian farmers are paying more than \$400 million in annual fees and charges to the Australian government to export their product to overseas markets, with the threat of new proposals set to see these fees and charges significantly increase. While at the same time according to OCED data, in the last 10 years Australian Government support to agriculture has declined to historically low levels, well below the levels of our global competitors.

“This situation is simply not sustainable and is not the way to achieve the government’s ambitious target of growing Australian agriculture to a \$100 billion industry by 2030” said Michael Rogers, CEO, AFPA.

Australian fresh produce farmers are reliant on export markets to grow their industry. Under the new export charging arrangements proposed by the Department of Agriculture, the export fees and charges for fresh produce will increase by more than 40%.

“At a time of drought, bushfires and weak consumer demand, a 40% increase in export fees and charges will cripple the growth plans of industry. Government support to the fresh produce industry is vital to open up new market access to our key trading partners through the negotiation of technical export protocols and supporting the physical export of produce to those markets” said Mr Rogers.

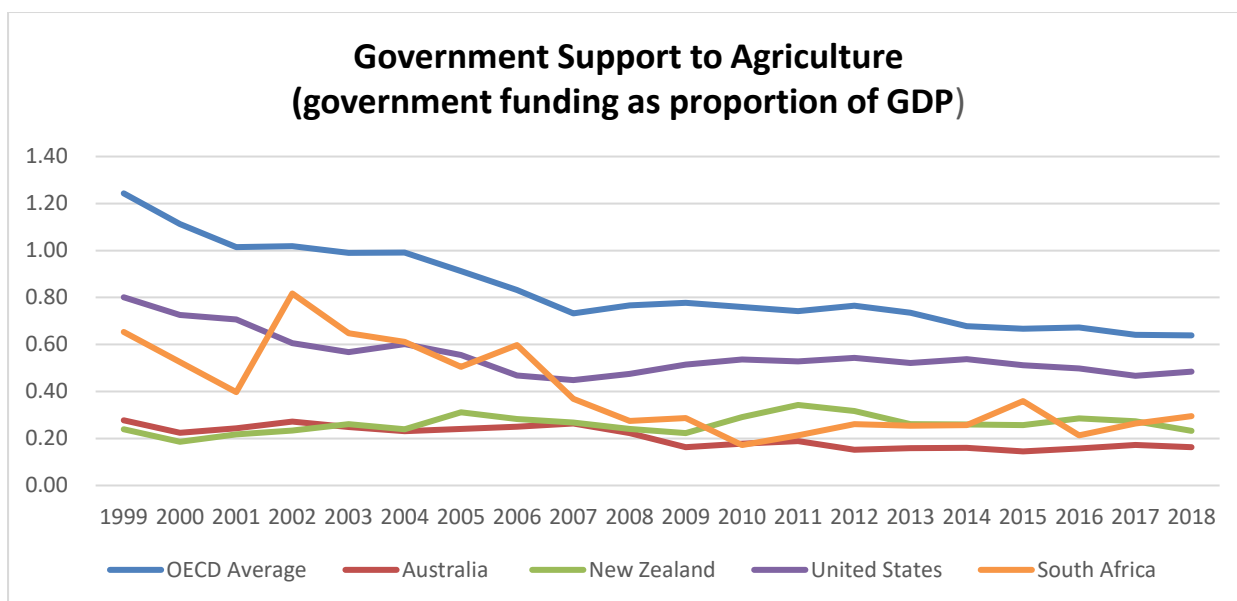
Australian agriculture, and more specifically, the Australian fresh produce industry is a significant contributor to the Australian economy through jobs, exports, and most importantly, healthy and nutritious fruit and vegetables for every Australian family. The fresh produce industry has plans to more than double the size of the industry, from \$9 to \$20 billion by 2030.

“Of all the sectors in Australian agriculture, the fresh produce industry has some of the strongest growth prospects. AFPA members currently employ more than 22,000 people across Australia and will provide more jobs for Australian families as the industry grows through exporting our high quality produce to overseas consumers – the future of the industry is in export”.

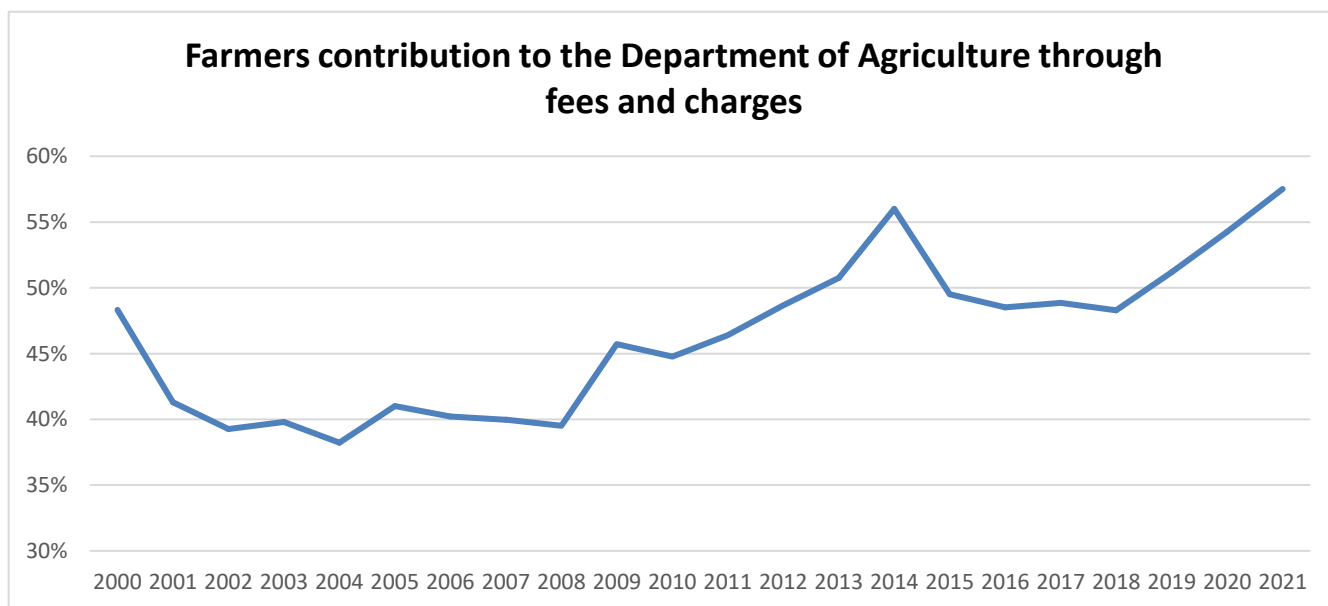
Australian fruit and vegetable farmers are not looking for a handout, they are looking for a fair go. We call on the Prime Minister and the Agriculture Minister to restore funding to the Department of Agriculture and allow Australian farmers to grow their businesses and grow our future” said Mr Rogers.

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

***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.*



Source: OECD Total Support Estimate <https://stats.oecd.org>



Source: Department of Agriculture Financial Statements, and expected increase in fees from 2020

### Comparison of industry cost recovery across government agencies

Government Agency	Revenue Cost Recovered from Industry	Total Expenditure	% of Costs Recovered from Industry
Department of Home Affairs	\$125,422,000	\$3,041,400,000	5%
Australian Trade and Investment Commission	\$24,436,000	\$245,708,000	10%
Department of Industry, Innovation & Science	\$74,598,000	\$508,195,000	15%
New Zealand Ministry of Primary Industries	NZ\$205,279,000	NZ\$714,543,000	29%
Department of Agriculture	\$409,371,000	\$847,741,000	48%

Source: Departmental Financial Statements 2018/19