



Media Release

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Streamlined Government to deliver better services

The Australian Fresh Produce Alliance (AFPA) welcomes the Prime Minister's announcement today that Government departments will be merged to improve decision-making and deliver better government services.

The merger of the Department of Agriculture with the Department of Environment recognises the importance of the natural environment in the context of the Prime Minister's commitment to grow agriculture to \$100 billion by 2030.

Australian agriculture needs effective, efficient and responsive government policy making, regulation, and service delivery to reach \$100 billion by 2030. Australian farmers are investing in their future, and need strong and effective government to grow.

"The Australian fresh produce industry is the fastest growing agriculture sector in Australia and has the brightest growth prospects to 2030. While fruit and vegetable growers are investing in their future, we need government to deliver effective regulation, open up export markets, provide efficient audit services and respond to the changing needs of farmers" said AFPA CEO, Michael Rogers.

As significant land and water holders, Australia's farmers manage vast amounts of Australia's natural capital. The merger of the Department of Agriculture with the Department of Environment provides the opportunity to provide better integrated policy, regulation and service delivery for Australia's environment.

"Australia's fruit and vegetable growers own and manage high value irrigated agricultural land across Australia and the critically important water holdings and licences to grow our fruit and vegetables. The creation of a Department responsible for agriculture, water and the environment provides government the opportunity to better work with farmers to manage Australia's natural capital and achieve the objective of economic growth and environmental sustainability" said Mr Rogers.

Australia's government support to agriculture is among the lowest in the world according to the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). While this has been part of delivering a globally competitive Australian agriculture sector, we need to ensure that we invest in the future of agriculture in Australia.

"Much of what is required of government to support agriculture's growth to \$100 billion in 2030 is the hard work of government – policy development, legislative change, and regulatory improvement. An adequately resourced, aligned and well equipped Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment is a key component of the future success of Australian agriculture" said AFPA CEO, Michael Rogers.

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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.*