

Media Release

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AFPA Board appoints new CEO to lead industry growth

Today the Australian Fresh Produce Alliance (AFPA) Board has appointed Claire McClelland as CEO of the AFPA to deliver improvements in export market access, sustainability and workforce. Claire's experience in commercial and industry fresh produce roles will mean the AFPA continues to deliver for industry.

Established in January 2019, the AFPA has become the major voice of the fresh produce sector, delivering real outcomes for industry in key policy areas including workforce, export access and sustainability. In 2019, AFPA funded research demonstrated the importance of fresh produce packaging to maintain freshness and reduce food waste. During COVID, the AFPA worked closely with industry and government to support the arrival of more than 10,000 Pacific visa holders to pick and pack fruit and vegetables. More recently, the AFPA has worked with industry and government to develop a new Agriculture Visa to complement the Pacific programs and deliver structural change.

After more than three years running the AFPA, current CEO Michael Rogers will take up a new senior executive role in the meat industry commencing from July.

"As the inaugural CEO of the AFPA, Michael has established the AFPA as a leading advocacy body within agriculture representing the interests of members and the broader industry to retailers, governments and the Australian community. Michael has made a significant contribution to our industry, including ensuring the continued operation of the fruit and vegetable sector during COVID, and achieving long term structural reform of the workforce. We thank Michael and wish him well in his next steps" said Mr John Said, Chairman, AFPA.

As AFPA Manager of Communication and Engagement over the last three years, Claire has driven the engagement on workforce and been a key industry representative on a wide range of issues. The AFPA Board unanimously supported Claire as their choice to lead the organisation forward.

"The AFPA Board and I are delighted that Claire has accepted the role of CEO and we look forward to working with Claire on the key challenges facing our industry. Claire has demonstrated experience in industry and with the AFPA, delivering results, working constructively with everyone in the supply chain, and working in the best interests of members and farmers" said Mr Said.

With continued cost pressures and inflation in the economy, and a complex consumer demand picture, it is vital that governments commit the necessary resources and effort to further open access to key international markets for fresh produce growers, such as Japan, to grow exports, jobs, businesses and regional communities.

"With access to more customers both in Australia and overseas, the fresh produce industry has the potential to grow significantly over the next decade. My priority is to see the fresh produce industry enter a new phase of sustainable growth to reach \$20 billion by 2030 through improved export market access, demonstrated sustainability credentials and embedding a productive and returning workforce" said Ms McClelland.

Claire's appointment as CEO is effective from 27 June 2022.

Download a headshot of Claire McClelland [here](#)

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.