

Media Release

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Removing technical trade barriers for fresh produce required to diversify growers export markets

Members of the Australian Fresh Produce Alliance (AFPA) are calling for a renewed focus on negotiating technical market access protocols for fresh produce to key export markets including Japan and South Korea.

Recent tensions with China have re-enforced the need to enhance technical market access for a range of horticulture's key export markets to better enable farmers to diversify their markets and manage their risk.

"AFPA members welcome the work undertaken by the federal government in securing the Indonesia-Australia Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement and recent market improvements for some horticultural products to India. However, markets like India present a much longer-term opportunity for most horticulture exporters" said Michael Rogers, CEO AFPA.

Australian horticulture producers face some of the highest production costs in the world and therefore require access to export markets that will offer a high value return to growers. Markets like Japan and South Korea have an appreciation for the high quality of Australian fresh produce and present strong opportunities for export growth.

"Australian fruit and vegetable exporters have had great success in the Japanese market on a number of key product lines including table grapes and citrus, valued at \$53M and \$69M respectively in 2019. The industry would like to build on the success of these products but require the government to undertake further negotiations to establish technical access" said Mr Rogers.

Industries seeking new or expanded access to the high value Japanese market include mango, table grape, citrus, avocado and blueberries.

The AFPA has previously called on the government to investigate a Japan Australia Food Security Agreement. The Agreement would provide Japan with greater certainty around their food imports, while providing Australian farmers with increased demand, in turn creating jobs, income for regional communities and greater export income for Australia.

"Japan is one of the world's largest net food importers. Australian growers are experiencing fluctuating demand domestically due to COVID-19 and increasing production volumes due to previous plantings. Enhancing our trading relationship with Japan just makes good sense, and the negotiation of technical access for products such as avocados and blueberries should be prioritised" said Mr Rogers.

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