

Media Release

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Fresh produce sector provides best career opportunities in Australian agriculture

Fresh produce is one of the fastest growing sectors of Australian agriculture and as a consequence provides some of the best careers for people looking at opportunities in the sector.

A recent meeting of the AFPA Human Resources Reference Group, which collectively employs more than 22,000 people, highlighted that there are 3 distinct areas of employment opportunities in the fresh produce sector: Harvest, Technical Expertise, and Middle Management.

“The General Managers for Human Resources of 14 of Australia’s largest fresh produce businesses are telling us is that they are not only focused on recruiting for harvest labour but they are seeking highly capable individuals for careers in farm management, agronomy, irrigation, trades and machinery operations” said Mr Michael Rogers, AFPA CEO.

“AFPA member companies have graduate programs to attract skilled young Australians into careers in fresh produce, on the job training programs to support skills development, and recruitment policies to encourage diversity. Governments must therefore support skills and training programs which ensure people are equipped to be job ready and grasp these employment opportunities with both hands” said Mr Rogers.

AFPA members have further highlighted the need for industry to better promote itself as offering careers, not just jobs in the fresh produce industry. Collaboration between key employers and government will develop industry leaders to support the continued growth of fresh produce.

“Fresh produce employers are competing with all employers for Australia’s middle management talent to help grow and develop their operations into thriving businesses. The strong business growth opportunities in fresh produce are a key factor for managers looking to expand their careers” said Mr Rogers.

“As the fastest growing agriculture sector, the Australian fresh produce industry will experience growth challenges that need to be overcome. Industry must be committed to the development of a long term permanent local workforce and a significant improvement in the sector’s employment practices and reputation. A collaborative approach with Government to develop industry leaders, train and develop skilled specialists, and develop a long term harvest workforce is a priority for the Australian Fresh Produce Alliance” said Mr Rogers.

AFPA members have committed to the continued development of a permanent local workforce, creating opportunities for young Australians, improving the sector’s employment practices and reputation, and developing practical solutions.

Further information is available at: [Policy Brief: Career Opportunities in Fresh Produce](#)

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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.*