



MEDIA RELEASE

National Agriculture Day: Grain Underpins Western Australia's Agrifood Trade in Asia

Tuesday, 21 November 2017

Today 21st November 2017 is the inaugural [National Agriculture Day](#), as conceived and promoted by the National Farmers Federation.

While Western Australian growers are busy harvesting, it's an opportunity to reflect on the state's ability to produce safe, clean, sustainable food.

To celebrate agriculture's contribution to the national economy and to Western Australia, GIWA encourages you to have a conversation about our ability to produce food for our neighbours and consumers in Asia:

- WA's total agrifood exports are worth \$7.6 billion
North East Asia: China, Japan, South Korea and Taiwan \$2.117 billion per annum
ASEAN: Indonesia, Vietnam, Malaysia and the Philippines \$2.579 billion per annum
- WA's total cereals and oilseeds exports are worth \$5.239 billion or 68.9% of total agrifood exports, and rank a close 5th after iron ore, gold, petroleum and alumina (2016-2017)
<http://www.jtsi.wa.gov.au/about-the-state/quality-of-life/economy>
- China is Western Australia's single largest market for agricultural exports, accounting for 22.3% or \$1.9 billion of total agricultural exports (barley, wool, wheat, oats, not including seafood)
<http://www.jtsi.wa.gov.au/about-the-state/close-to-asian-markets/established-regional-trade/china>
China is also Western Australia's largest merchandise export market, worth \$60.2 billion in total
- Indonesia is our second largest agrifood export market accounting for 9.6% or \$813 million in 2016-2017; down by 15.8% or \$152 million from 2015-2016 total of \$965 million (wheat, cattle and poultry meat) <http://www.jtsi.wa.gov.au/about-the-state/close-to-asian-markets/established-regional-trade/indonesia>

Western Australia has a proud agricultural tradition and we have come a long way. With respect to the state's traditional land owners, one hundred years ago the 1917-1918 Giles Royal Commission on the Agricultural Industries of Western Australia reported:

"We have ... reviewed the operations of our farmers and settlers and have found them as a class lacking in experience, and learning in a new country how to work land under new conditions with

little or no direction. The interests of agriculture are not served by dwelling upon admitted defects, but rather by suggesting latent possibilities....

"We have pointed out how, in our opinion, practical remedies may be applied to the situation. We are quite confident of the future of the country itself."

Referring to WA's latent possibilities in grain, GIWA's Chief Executive Officer, Larissa Taylor, said South East Asia were sending Australia clear market signals about demand for soft wheat and premium baking and milling solutions.

"There's competition from the Black Sea into our traditional markets but we have some long-standing customer relationships which we could leverage in Indonesia in particular," Ms Taylor, a former McKinsey analyst and Rabobank executive, said.

"They have been our single largest customer for wheat for 20 years and a strategic partnership with Indonesia in premium soft wheat and premium baking segments into ASEAN markets would make great sense."

So, have the conversation and celebrate Western Australia's agrifood sector.

WA Agrifood Statistics and Facts At A Glance ([2015/16 figures](#)):

- Western Australian gross value of agricultural production \$8.2 billion
- Food retail sales value \$13.8 billion
- Agrifood export value from WA \$7.6 billion
- WA agrifood exports as a % of national agrifood exports 16%
- Number of people employed in the sector 183,600 – remember, we work in long value chains to reach our consumers
- Number of agricultural producers in WA 14,469 or 7.8% of the total number of people employed in the sector
- Cereals, oilseeds, pastures and pulses \$4.946 billion pa or 64.8% of WA agrifood exports
- Meat and livestock producers \$1.236 billion or 16.2% of WA agrifood exports
- Fisheries \$598 million or 7.8% of WA agrifood exports
- Wool \$477 million or 6.2% of WA agrifood exports
- Horticulture \$119 million or 1.6% of WA agrifood exports

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