

Food Alliance WA

Media Release

27 March 2020

Western Australia's Farmers, Fishers and Food Producers – Here for WA

Western Australians will have access to a stable and secure food supply for the duration of the COVID-19 pandemic and local food, farming and fishing industries will provide much needed job opportunities for hundreds of workers.

Representatives of Food Alliance WA, a network of food, farming, beverage and fishing industries, met with Premier Mark McGowan this week to assure him the State would continue to enjoy a reliable and safe food supply.

Food Alliance WA spokesperson and WAFarmers President Rhys Turton, said the food, farming, beverage and fishing sectors would continue to work through this challenging time to provide an essential service to all Western Australians.

“Now, more than ever, the importance of the food and agriculture industry to our State and nation is clear,” Mr Turton said.

“Your bread, meat, milk, eggs, fruit, vegies and many more of your daily essentials are in safe and reliable hands – the hands of Western Australian producers.

“These are turbulent times, but our members are working hard for you by continuing to produce food reliably and safely.”

“The biggest issue our supermarkets are facing is just not being able to restock shelves fast enough due to ongoing panic buying.

“From the country to the city we say, don't panic, we will get through this together.”

Mr Turton said the Food Alliance WA network had been engaging with the Western Australian Government and was encouraged to receive assurances that food and agricultural supply chains were considered an essential service, and that farm workers would be able to move interstate through borders, and intrastate.

However, travel restrictions on international workers implemented as a result of the Coronavirus crisis could lead to labour shortages for the State's food, farming, beverage and fishing industries. These could represent welcome job opportunities for West Australians who have lost work in the wake of COVID-19.

“In incredibly challenging circumstances the WA state government has been very responsive on these issues,” he said.

“Every year our industries employ thousands of people in seasonal tasks, particularly in horticulture and aquaculture,” he said.

“We want to make sure that Western Australians looking for work have the opportunity to take up these jobs.

“This could include people who have lost their jobs, such as those in the hospitality and tourism sectors, due to the COVID-19 control measures.

“If you’re keen to learn and happy to work hard, our industries can offer a lot of opportunities.”

Mr Turton said the sector had collaborated on a new information hub to help connect regional employers with casual skilled and unskilled workers.

“This interim site allows people in Western Australia to register interest for work in the food, beverage, agriculture and aquaculture sectors,” he said.

“While not a recruitment site for individual jobs, we want to make sure that people who may be seeking work in our sector know where to start, and where to go for further information.

“The next step for us is to participate in policy coordination with other sectors around jobs and skills in WA.”

To ensure regional communities were not adversely impacted, job seekers should only travel to a potential workplace if they had secured a job.

All travel within Western Australia must also comply with the latest advice from the Western Australian Government.

For more information about how to find work in WA’s food production, farming and fishing sectors visit the website: jobsinwafoodandag.com or Facebook page “WA Jobs in Food & Ag”

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About Food Alliance WA

Food Alliance WA is an informal network of Western Australia’s food producers, farmers and fishers. The network aims to reinforce Western Australia’s reputation as a world class food producer, trusted by Western Australians.



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Primary Industries and
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