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## **SUBMISSION**

Rising fuel prices will adversely affect the rural industry, again. I'm a horticulturalist, growing mangoes, avocados and lychees. Whilst for me the direct cost of fuel is not too substantial, the indirect cost, the cost of transport to markets will be significant. Through no fault of the transport companies, they will raise their rates which growers will essentially have no choice but to pay to get produce to markets. This has often been more than a quarter of the gross value of product. Retailers will be paying more for their transport from markets to store, for which the consumer's will have to pay extra for. So the transport companies and the retailers are all able to pass the extra cost of fuel on to someone else. The growers have to cop further costs with no gain in income. The consumer will have to pay more, but obviously someone will have to. It seems as usual, the grower who operates with the lowest margins and bears all the risk is expected to absorb even more expense. Little wonder there is an ever increasing exodus of farmers leaving the land. And I will be one as well. How long are Australian primary producers expected to be as profitable as the corporate giants when we are at the bottom of the ladder with the current market structure and conditions.

Regards,

Dave Ritson.