

QUESTION ON NOTICE
No. 315
Asked on Tuesday, 22 March 2005

DR CLARK asked the Minister for Primary Industries and Fisheries (MR PALASZCZUK)—

QUESTION:

With reference to the highly successful Feast of the Senses event held in far north Queensland—

How is the Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries promoting and assisting the exotic tropical fruit industry?

ANSWER:

The Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries (DPI&F) has undertaken the following activities in promoting and assisting the exotic tropical fruit industry:

- On 5 April I launched a new book 'Tropical Tastes of north Queensland'. This book features all of the major commercial exotic tropical fruits and many of the lesser known fruits, vegetables and spices. Copies will be widely distributed to the catering sector and restaurateurs. It was also distributed to exhibitors at the Enterprising Women in Rural Industries Trade Show held in Brisbane on 6 and 7 April 2005.
- Departmental staff initiated The Feast of the Senses Market Day extravaganza held on 12 March 2005 in Innisfail. It was attended by 4,500 people and provided 56 stallholders with an opportunity to showcase their primary and value added product. Among these were many individual exotic tropical fruit growers, nurserymen and a large information display from the Rambutan and Tropical Exotic Growers Association (RTEGA). Exhibitors used the opportunity to perform sensory evaluations on new product lines prior to commercialisation.
- Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries, in South Johnstone, staff are planning a forum to bring all stallholders together to look at business opportunities that can be created among the exhibitors to help grow the individual businesses.
- A tropical fruit Agrilink for rambutan, mangosteen and durian has been compiled to assist existing and potential new growers to evaluate the prospects of investment in the exotic tropical fruit industry.
- Numerous past and current research projects that focus on increased profitability, environmental sustainability and supply chain management of mango, banana, papaya, rambutan, longan, lychee, durian, mangosteen and beverages such as tea, coffee and more recently cocoa.
- Through disinfestations research activities to assist industries to meet market access protocols for countries such as New Zealand, Japan, China, United Arab Emirates and potentially South Korea.

- Departmental officers attend all monthly industry meetings to keep producers abreast of current project findings.
- Departmental staff have collaborated with Advance Cairns to have Exotic Tropical Fruit featured on the Advance Cairns website.
- The department's Call Centre assists growers, researchers and consumers with information on Exotic Tropical Fruit. As well, information is available on the department's website, and tropical fruit is featured in departmental newsletters, press releases, and the department's sponsorship of major conferences and industry events.
- Currently, departmental trade and business staff are finalising a report on the potential for a market category for exotic tropical fruits and vegetables, to be published by the Rural Industry Research Development Corporation.
- Departmental trade and business staff have recently completed a market research study of local market opportunities for several exotic fruits and delivered the findings to the industries that sought the information. The project included an economic decision tool which is shortly to be released for use by fruit processors.
- Exotic Tropical Fruit Industry Development and Marketing will also be captured under the framework of the three recently released strategic documents entitled Queensland's future - renewing primary industries and fisheries: a discussion paper, Food and Agribusiness Export Strategy and Research and Development Strategy which set a clear direction for primary industries in Queensland.