

QUESTION ON NOTICE
No. 902
Asked on Thursday, 7 June 2007

MR LAWLOR asked the Minister for Primary Industries and Fisheries (MR MULHERIN)-

QUESTION:

With reference to the Australian Centre for Lifestyle Horticulture which recently entered into a 12 month partnership agreement with Singapore's Centre for Urban Greenery and Ecology—

Will he advise how this Memorandum of Collaboration will benefit the local lifestyle horticulture industry?

ANSWER:

Queensland's lifestyle horticulture industry will receive a significant boost from the Memorandum of Collaboration recently signed between Singapore's Centre for Urban Greenery and Ecology and the Australian Centre for Lifestyle Horticulture (ACLH) based in Brisbane.

The Centre for Urban Greenery is part of Singapore's NParks, a statutory body within the Ministry of National Development that is responsible for managing parks, greenery and related services in Singapore.

The Memorandum of Collaboration will initially operate for 12 months, but can be extended for an additional year with the agreement of both parties. The Memorandum focuses on the identification and promotion of trade and investment opportunities in lifestyle horticulture products and services between Queensland and Singapore.

NParks and the Singapore market generally offer significant export opportunities for Queensland's lifestyle horticulture industry, particularly the service-related sectors that include technical horticulture advice, landscaping and irrigation services. NParks reports that an estimated \$2 billion will be spent on lifestyle horticulture projects in Singapore over the next five years and it is expected that the Memorandum will assist Queensland lifestyle horticulture businesses to tender for some of this work.

The development of mutual recognition standards in relation to industry certification programs and enterprise accreditation are also a strong focus of the Memorandum. It also identifies projects to develop industry exchange, scholarship, internship, apprenticeship and professional speaker programs. These will help to foster increased collaboration between the two industries.

Queensland has established a strong reputation for the production of high quality and disease free tropical and sub-tropical plants, as well as delivering professional horticulture services. Furthermore Queensland's proximity to key Asian markets and extended growing season gives local businesses a significant advantage in the

Singapore market. The Memorandum will help to extend this advantage by building even closer relationships between Singapore and Queensland.

A number of Queensland businesses have already benefited from the growing relationship with NParks. Some Queensland businesses have won contracts to supply a range of training, irrigation and technical advisory services to NParks, as well as to develop certification programs to improve the professionalism of the Singapore lifestyle horticulture industry. Further opportunities will be identified as the relationship continues to grow.

The Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries (DPI&F) has worked very hard to assist the ACLH to secure the Memorandum, including supporting an NParks delegation to Queensland in 2005, and also organising and hosting an ACLH lifestyle horticulture trade mission to Singapore in early 2006.

DPI&F officers are also currently assisting the ACLH to finalise a Lifestyle Horticulture Export Strategy that will capitalise on the industry's competitive advantages to build an export culture in the industry and to open up new international markets. Singapore has been identified by the industry as one of the three priority international markets in the draft Strategy.