

QUESTION ON NOTICE
No. 1254
Asked on 16 September 2009

MS O'NEILL asked the Minister for Primary Industries, Fisheries and Rural and Regional Queensland (Mr Mulherin)—

QUESTION:

What initiatives is Queensland Primary Industries and Fisheries progressing towards the future development of the tropical fruit industry?

ANSWER:

Queensland Primary Industries and Fisheries (QPIF) is committed to working with Queensland's tropical fruit industries in meeting challenges to productivity and trade and improving the sustainability of the industry.

At the Queensland Primary Industries and Fisheries Tropical Fruit Industries Achievement Review, held in Cairns in May 2009, industry was able to critically review the work QPIF has undertaken.

The Global Markets Initiative was one of a number of initiatives commended by industry as an important area of work to continue export market development.

The Global Markets Initiative export development program is harnessing QPIF's extensive expertise in on-farm production, market access, supply chain research, and trade and market development skills, and is linking with Queensland's overseas offices to great effect.

In 2009–10 the Global Markets Initiative will continue to proactively focus the resources of government, industry and business on export growth, taking the China market forward for mangoes. QPIF is also capitalising on new opportunities in the lychee industry through market access research work in conjunction with Chinese researchers.

The Achievement Review forum acknowledged that QPIF supports the development of the horticulture industry at all stages of the industry lifecycle and throughout the entire supply chain from production to consumption, maximising its economic potential for this important Queensland primary industry.

QPIF undertakes a number of plant breeding programs focused on providing the consumer with a better product and achieving their yield potential. The key commercial gains to be achieved from research and development activities will not only provide the consumer with a better eating experience but also produce a variety that is more profitable for the grower.

With regard to the lychee and tropical fruit industries, QPIF's research and development program focuses on productivity improvement work and the "unlocking lychee" research project. Work is being undertaken with the rambutan industry, in collaboration with Northern Territory scientists, focussing on improving productivity.

QPIF is providing significant research and development support to the \$400 million Queensland banana industry. In conjunction with industry and Horticulture Australia Ltd, QPIF scientists are re-engineering the production, harvesting, packing and transport chain to maximise efficiencies and reduce costs to compete with low cost countries. Fortunately, the national R&D and marketing levy for bananas is now fully implemented and this will assist with the funding of this ambitious work.

Biosecurity is an important issue for Queensland's tropical fruit industries. Biosecurity Queensland provides extensive service to growers with a particular focus on surveillance and eradication activities. The banana and mango industries in particular have benefited from the government's biosecurity investment aimed at protecting tropical fruit industries.