Question on Notice

No. 1717

Asked on 23 October 2019

MR J MADDEN ASKED MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURAL INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT AND FISHERIES (HON M FURNER)—

QUESTION:

Will the Minister outline how Queensland growers are benefiting from international trade?

ANSWER:

I thank the Member for the question.

In 2018-2019, Queensland's agriculture and food industries were worth $17.59 billion. Just over half of the value of the industry was derived from trading with international markets.

The Palaszczuk Government continues efforts to promote Queensland produce internationally and this is driven by our network of offshore Trade and Investment Queensland (TIQ) offices. We understand that Queensland growers benefit from the efficiencies associated with scalability, and one of the best ways of achieving this is to fill the increasing appetite from our neighbours in Asia for Queensland produce. Global food demand is expected to increase by up to 70 per cent before 2050, driven by a growing middle class in Asia seeking high quality, safe, traceable and high protein foods, particularly beef.

The Department of Agriculture and Fisheries (DAF) works closely with both TIQ in Brisbane and its network of offshore offices to ensure that Queensland agri-business is showcased in key export markets. DAF also collaborates with Federal Government departments, regional councils, and industry groups to ensure that Queensland growers are exposed to international trade opportunities. A number of recent Free Trade Agreements have lowered, and in some cases removed, the import tariffs on Australian produce into our trading partners, making Queensland companies more price competitive and ensuring profitable margins.

The Palaszczuk Government continues to open up trade opportunities for Queensland growers through multiple strategic channels including Ministerial trade missions, supporting outbound industry missions, participation in international and domestic trade exhibitions, and inbound buyer delegations.

In 2018-19, DAF supported 25 international trade delegations to Queensland, in partnership with TIQ, Austrade and the former Federal Department of Agriculture and Water Resources. The majority of these delegations were from key Asian trading partners including China, Japan, Taiwan and Indonesia.

In May this year, I led a Trade Mission to Hong Kong and Chongqing. I was able to meet with key importers of Queensland produce and discuss their current needs and future plans. I invited each of these buyers and potential investors to visit Queensland this year, so that I could further support their companies' growth.

Also, I have just returned from a trade mission to Indonesia and Singapore where I investigated new opportunities for Queensland horticulture exporters and visited an operation that is a major Queensland cattle importer. There are many business opportunities for Queenslanders looking to expand globally.

The state’s exports are supported by reliable infrastructure including six (6) international airports, 15 sea ports, seven (7) bulk-shipping terminals and an extensive rail and road network.

Additionally, the Palaszczuk Government last year made a commitment to invest in building export opportunities for time-critical produce, such as horticulture. The Palaszczuk Government announced on 30 October 2019 that both Cairns and Toowoomba have been selected as two regional sites for a multimillion-dollar investment to develop export distribution centres in regional Queensland. These facilities will allow short shelf-life products to be exported to Asian markets including China.