

Question on Notice

No. 953

Asked on 22 August 2024

MRS BENNETT asked the Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries and Minister for Rural Communities (HON M FURNER)—

QUESTION:

With reference to Queensland contributing 65 percent of the total volume of avocados grown in Australia, and noting the Central Queensland region makes up a huge contingent, with 66 growers who unfortunately cannot currently export to Japan, the most lucrative market for avocados in South East Asia— Will the Minister advise what actions the State Government is taking to ensure Queensland avocado growers, including those in my electorate, get access to the Japanese market they so desperately need, so they can also enjoy the same access that West Australian avocado growers currently have?

ANSWER:

The Queensland Government recognises and supports the significant role that Queensland avocado producers play in supporting our regional economies, specifically central and north Queensland communities.

Market access negotiations are the responsibility of the Federal Government. The Queensland Government provides important research that underpins these negotiations.

Queensland fruit fly, or Qfly, is a pest impacting access for Queensland avocados to key international markets, including premium markets like Japan. Western Australia and South Australia's Riverland region are currently recognised by the Japanese Government as Qfly-free zones; Queensland is not.

Department of Agriculture and Fisheries scientists continue to research improved methods for Qfly host-status testing and treatments. Treatment options under consideration include cold treatment (higher temperatures to maintain fruit quality), systems approaches and fumigation. They are also working with industry to develop a Research and Development strategic plan to open new markets.

The Queensland Government is supporting Avocados Australia on major projects that will assist industry to grow their exports in both new and existing markets, where market access protocols are in place, such as Singapore and India. These projects include:

- the \$130 million Fresh and Secure Trade Alliance, an ambitious trade initiative, led by the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries and delivered through Horticulture Innovation. The Alliance aims to deliver robust and timely data to underpin market access negotiations and develop phytosanitary treatments to open new export markets
- the \$6.9 million Serviced Supply Chains II project to manage supply chain risks, and deliver high quality horticulture, including avocados to Asian markets
- the Food and Fibre to Market: Industry Partnerships program: Avocados Australia received \$100 000 in 2023 to increase their exports of Shepard avocados to key markets – Hong Kong, Singapore and Malaysia.