

MEDIA RELEASE

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## **China recognises first mainland Australia region as fruit fly free**

Horticulture Innovation Australia (Hort Innovation) today welcomed a new export protocol, which will allow the trade of nectarines between Australia and China, saying it marks a number of wins.

Hort Innovation Chief Executive John Lloyd said the new protocol, which allows the export of nectarines from all over the country, was realised after extensive work from the Australian Government and industry.

“I congratulate the Australian Government Department of Agriculture and Water Resources and the summerfruit industry for their hard work in achieving the signing of the export protocol with Chinese Government,” he said.

“This is not only significant because it has occurred after extensive negotiations. It also sets an important precedent in that as part of this protocol, the Riverland region in South Australia has been recognised as fruit fly free and able to export nectarines without the pest management requirements that exist for other commodities that are exported to China.”

“This shows never before seen levels of confidence from China, as up until now, Tasmania was the only state in Australia that experienced this fruit fly free status from China.

He said Australia’s strict bio-security measures and stringent safety controls at all stages of the supply chain are working: “Now this precedent has been set in the Riverland region, there is a potential for China to be more receptive to importing other produce from the area without treatment, such as apples, citrus, cherries and table grapes.”

Mr Lloyd said export agreements such as that made with China open up opportunities for new markets to try Australian produce for the first time.

“It is really exciting that Australia’s nectarine growers will now be able to export their product to the second largest economy in the world,” he said. “Chinese consumers will now get to enjoy more Australian produce.”

To secure market access to China, nectarines being exported outside of Tasmania and the Riverland must adhere to stringent fruit fly treatments. For example, nectarines from Western Australia will need to undergo cold treatment at 2.1°C degrees for 21 days or a combination with methyl bromide.

Nectarines from eastern states can be shipped using cold treatment at 3°C for 18 days or a combination with methyl bromide.

China has also agreed to a new treatment using a low dose of methyl bromide, which reduces the potential for damage to the fruit by the treatment. This important development is based on an R&D project funded by Hort Innovation in partnership with Queensland’s Department of Agriculture and Fisheries. Nectarines currently attract a 6 per cent tariff into China, falling to 4 per cent on January 1, 2017 thanks to the recently concluded China-Australia Free Trade Agreement. This tariff will fall further to 2 per cent in 2018, and will be eliminated from January 1, 2019.

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