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Taste Australia gaining momentum in overseas markets

Six months after the nation's most ambitious horticulture trade drive yet was launched, Taste Australia has been rolled out in 10 countries across Asia and the Middle East, attracting significant interest from importers, retailers and Aussie growers.

Developed by Hort Innovation with industry and after off-shore stakeholders reviewed the brand, [Taste Australia](#) encompasses trade show attendance, in-store promotions and seminars for buyers, media and influencers to spread the message about Australia's quality produce. Taste Australia is also supported by more than \$40M of research and development projects currently in the pipeline to help diversify and strengthen trade.

Hort Innovation chief executive John Lloyd said only six months in, Taste Australia is already getting traction.

"Taste Australia is big and ambitious, and the traction we have seen over the past six months far exceeds our expectations for the launch of this new, dynamic horticulture in-market position," he said. "We have been working flat-out with industry, Austrade and other partners to deliver unprecedented attendance at trade show events, in-market promotional activities, and record levels of research and development – and the results speak for themselves."

Over the past six months, a cohort of more than 300 industry representatives and growers have attended trade shows in Dubai, Beijing and Tokyo as part of Taste Australia activities. As a result, Aussie produce has gained exposure to almost 200,000 key buyers, importers and decision makers from retail, food service and wholesale industries from across Asia and the Middle East.

AUSVEG national manager of export development, Michael Coote, said he had already seen positive outcomes from the consolidated horticulture brand.

"Successful participation in recent international trade events further strengthens the vegetable industry's support for the unified horticultural brand. As a result of the unified brand, a number of vegetable growers have made enquiries about using the brand themselves, demonstrating the commercial value that growers see in Taste Australia," he said.

Over the past six months, Taste Australia marketing campaigns were also executed in 10 countries across Asia and the Middle East through more than 800 separate in-store promotions, reaching more than 100,000 consumers. While sales figures are still being compiled, early feedback from retailers is positive.

Tesco Thailand lead produce sourcing manager Alisa Wongstianchai said: "In relation to Taste Australia, we have a had extremely positive feedback from all parties including customers. These promotions have not only increased consumer awareness of Australian produce but have also drawn more people to our stores."

Another successful initiative occurred recently after Australian cherries regained access to Vietnam this season, Vietnamese celebrity chefs helped launch Australian cherries in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City under the Taste Australia banner. More than 220 people attended the events, including importers, distributors, wholesalers, retailers, hoteliers and local media.

Cherry Growers Australia president Tom Eastlake, who presented at the launch events, said the result was "phenomenal". "The venue was absolutely filled to capacity. I couldn't get out of the event, the engagement from the attendees was so high," he said. "I believe, comparative to impact, the small investment made by industry in Taste Australia will achieve a great return. I believe this has been money well spent."

As part of broader initiatives, five chefs from Japan and Macau visited Australia over the past six months to continue building the positive perception of Australian horticulture and food. This has generated keen interest in importing more Australian vegetables into Japan and opportunities in food service into Macau.

The collaborative Taste Australia work with the meat, dairy and wine industries continues to develop with plans for additional events in China through the year supporting the Australian food message.



“Australian horticulture has so much to offer countries overseas, and we are really just at the tip of the iceberg with Taste Australia, with so much more to come,” Mr Lloyd said.

Get involved:

Hort Innovation is keen to hear from growers who are interested in attending the following trade shows:

- September 5-7: Asia Fruit Logistica (AFL) in Hong Kong. Held in the gateway to Asia, this premier event attracted 13,000 top decision-makers from 76 countries last year.
- October 1-3: World of Perishables in Dubai. The only international expo for fresh fruit and vegetables in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) and attracts around 8000 key decision makers from the fresh sector.
- November 16-18: Fruit and Vegetable Fair in Beijing. Attendance is more strategic with opportunities to engage with Chinese officials and government and support continued market access into China.

Express interest or get more information via www.trade@horticulture.com.au

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