



**Niall Blair**

Minister for Primary Industries  
Minister for Regional Water  
Minister for Trade and Industry

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **DON'T LOSE CONFIDENCE IN OUR FARMERS**

Despite the severe drought conditions across the state, the NSW Government and farmers representatives are reminding consumers that NSW produce should still be at the top of their shopping list.

Minister for Primary Industries, Niall Blair said there is huge domestic and international demand for NSW's high quality food and fibre products and rightly so.

"We boast an abundant and diverse range of primary industries from quality beef, dairy and poultry to world-class wool, wheat, cotton and pulses," Mr Blair said.

"NSW has a strong reputation as a reliable source of premium food products, particularly to markets such as China, India, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, and Singapore.

"Right now we are facing one of the driest winters on record, but no matter where I travel farmers are reminding me that although times are tough, they are continuing to produce some of the world's best agricultural output.

"When looking for ways to help our farmers, everyone should be buying NSW produce.

"It's important we don't talk ourselves out of our trade markets, they're vital to our continued growth in the industry."

NSW is home to some of the country's most resilient, driven and innovative farmers and the NSW Government remains committed to investing in world-class research and development to help them prepare for future challenges. The NSW primary industries sector is worth more than \$15.4 billion and supports over 100,000 jobs in regional NSW.

Mr Blair said the Government will continue to work with producers, industry and exporters to deliver our world-leading products to NSW, Australian and international consumers.

"It's so important that our farmers continue to capitalise on their high-quality agricultural produce."

GrainGrowers CEO, David McKeon said grain farmers are doing it particularly tough in NSW and parts of Queensland.

“However, grain farmers are an innovative group and many of them will make it through this season without support because of the ongoing measures they have taken to make their business more resilient and prepare for seasonal volatility.

“It is important that our focus remains on long-term prosperity of the sector through policy focus on key elements such as trade and market access; innovation; improving freight efficiencies; and regional development.”

AUSVEG CEO, James Whiteside said while we acknowledge that we are in the midst of a severe drought, the Australian horticulture industry is resilient and continuing to produce high-quality produce for local and international markets.

“We support the role of Government in providing the tools to help farmers better manage the risk of a changing climate, and calls on consumers to recognise the role they can play in supporting our primary producers by choosing locally-produced food.

“We urge everyone to look for Australian-made food and fibre products to support Australia’s agriculture industry so it can continue to produce world-leading products for local and international markets.”

Chairman of the Australian Cotton Shippers Association, Cliff White said our trading partners are not new to the commodity market, and they understand our farmers have to manage their production capabilities in line with fluctuations in the weather.

“We know though, when it comes to cotton – spinners will always buy Australian cotton - our trading partners recognise that we have a premium product.”

MLA Managing Director, Richard Norton said we have a rich network of trading partners which make Australia one of the largest red meat exporters in the world.

“There continues to be strong demand globally for Australian red meat, underpinned by our reputation for delivering high-quality products.”

CEO of Rural Bank, Alexandra Gartmann said many of our NSW and Queensland farming customers have shared with us the challenges both financially and emotionally in responding to the current drought conditions.

“However, Australian farmers are modern, resilient and sophisticated businesspeople, who understand the vagaries and cycles of Australian agriculture. They are focused on operating and sustaining their farming enterprises, whilst remaining dedicated to producing high-quality food and fibre for Australia and the world.”

President of NSW Farmers’ Association, James Jackson, said farmers were overwhelmed by the support they’ve been receiving from the wider community as the state battles drought.

“It’s been wonderful to see people across the country and in particular in metropolitan areas, showing their support for farmers,” Mr Jackson said.

“One of the best ways they can help the NSW farming community is by purchasing local produce in the supermarket or at the greengrocer.”

**MEDIA: Evie Madden | Minister Blair | 0409 682 163**