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Ag addressing Asian markets



THE Asian century is very much at the fore again this week with the release of today's Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences (ABARES) report *What Asia Wants*, following hot on the heels of Deloitte's economic forecast.

Deloitte predicted the Australian economy could grow by \$250 billion over 20 years by promoting five key industries that will benefit from growth in Asia, which included agribusiness.

ABARES said by tapping into niche markets and focusing on high-quality produce, Australian food producers can literally dish up what Asia wants as food demand soars.

Federal Agriculture Minister, Barnaby Joyce, released the ABARES report - [What Asia Wants: Long-term food consumption trends in Asia today](#) - at the Darwin ABARES Regional Outlook Conference.

The report found Asian food consumption is expected to increase significantly to 2050, driven by larger populations, higher incomes and bigger cities.

"This report helps Australian food producers and exporters identify opportunities in the marketplace. It provides trends and forecasts that we can use to plan our efforts to increase agricultural exports," Mr Joyce said.

The Minister noted that for Australian farmers to capitalise on these opportunities, the government needs to reduce market barriers and commit to comprehensive free trade agreements to bring a fair return to the farm gate.

The Deloitte report concurred, stating governments need to remove impediments to business and stop - subsidising low-return industries.



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In China, import demands are expected to rise for coarse grains, sugar, beef, sheep and goat meat, dairy products and vegetable oil.

As a largely vegetarian nation that relies on dairy as a source of protein, dairy imports in India are projected to increase to US\$13 billion by 2050. India is also projected to become a significant net importer of vegetables and fruit with US\$14 billion imports by 2050.

In the ASEAN member states vegetable and fruit consumption is projected to more than double by 2050, with net imports increasing to US\$8 billion in the region. By 2050, beef consumption in ASEAN member states is projected to be 120 per cent higher than in 2007, with imports expected to expand by US\$3 billion over this period.

National Farmers' Federation (NFF) president Duncan Fraser said the Deloitte and ABARES reports showed the "vast potential to be tapped in Australian agribusiness".

Mr Fraser said agribusiness emerges as a strong likely future boom industry for both growth and competitive advantage.

"This is unsurprising, given the opportunities ahead for Australian agriculture, with close to half of the world's population living on our northern doorstep," he said.

"Australian agribusiness has something most other sectors don't: the prospect of rapid increases in global demand meeting domestic comparative advantage.

"Our agricultural sector – from farmers through the supply chain to exporters – are well placed to meet the growing demand from a booming Asian middle class, and our geographical location means the opportunity is ours for the taking."

The NFF-led, industry-developed Blueprint for Australian Agriculture identified key issue to ensure farmers and the sector are capable of meeting the new markets:

- investing in innovation, research and development and infrastructure
- encouraging the next generation into agriculture
- breaking down barriers to trade
- using our natural resources in a sustainable way

"All must be addressed now in order to secure the future opportunity," Mr Fraser said.

"And, with the federal government committing to develop an agricultural white paper, we hope that many of these issues will be addressed from a government perspective as well."

<http://www.queenslandcountrylife.com.au/news/agriculture/agribusiness/general-news/ag-addressing-asian-markets/2674271.aspx?storypage=0>