



## **Australian Government**

Australian Government response to the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Agriculture and Water Resources report:

Growing Australia

MAY 2024

## Introduction

On 22 August 2019, the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Agriculture and Water Resources (the committee) commenced an inquiry into growing Australian agriculture to \$100 billion by 2030. In December 2020, the committee released its report, *Growing Australia*.

The Australian Government thanks the committee members for their work in delivering the report and associated recommendations.

## Growing Australia – Final Report

### Recommendation 1

The committee recommends additional resources be allocated by the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment to significantly increase the number of concurrent market access negotiations that can take place with trading partners.

The Australian Government **notes** this recommendation.

However, given the passage of time since this report was tabled, a substantive Government response is no longer appropriate.

### Recommendation 2

The committee recommends that the Productivity Commission undertakes an inquiry into the regulation of agricultural exports to determine whether export regulations are operating as effectively and efficiently as possible.

The Australian Government **notes** this recommendation.

However, given the passage of time since this report was tabled, a substantive Government response is no longer appropriate.

### Recommendation 3

The committee recommends that the Australian Government works with representatives of the agricultural industry, including the agricultural technology industry, to develop a framework for the use of agricultural data in Australia. This framework should:

- be based on the principle that producers should have continuing ability to access and use data generated by their business
- include a nationally consistent set of common data standards to enable datasets to be used across a variety of software and technologies.

The Australian Government **notes** this recommendation.

However, given the passage of time since this report was tabled, a substantive Government response is no longer appropriate.

#### **Recommendation 4**

The committee recommends that the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment implement an Innovation Adoption and Extension program to promote the adoption of digital technologies by Australian farmers. The program could involve activities such as targeted events, small-scale grants, or the provision of information online. The program should also support and build upon the work currently being undertaken by industry groups and producer networks to disseminate information on beneficial innovations.

The Australian Government **notes** this recommendation.

However, given the passage of time since this report was tabled, a substantive Government response is no longer appropriate.

#### **Recommendation 5**

The committee recommends that the Australian Government supports further research and development in northern Australia. This should focus on driving investment into the development of large-scale integrated agricultural enterprises. In particular this should consider:

- Opportunities for greater use of on-farm or shared processing facilities and any barriers to the development of these facilities
- Regulatory barriers, including the limitations of pastoral leases, to diversification of production on properties
- Options for the repurpose of low-value or waste products for use as inputs into higher-value products.

The Australian Government **notes** this recommendation.

However, given the passage of time since this report was tabled, a substantive Government response is no longer appropriate.

#### **Recommendation 6**

The committee recommends that the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment review the regulations applying to the growing and processing of low-THC Industrial Hemp. This review should include the scheduling of Industrial Hemp products by the Therapeutic Goods Administration and consider how any barriers restricting producers from accessing the full value of the hemp plant including the food, fibre, and nutraceuticals can be overcome.

The Australian Government **notes** this recommendation.

However, given the passage of time since this report was tabled, a substantive Government response is no longer appropriate.

**Recommendation 7**

The committee recommends that the Productivity Commission undertakes a review of the effectiveness and value of risk management programs in agriculture. In addition, the review should consider the costs and benefits of alternative approaches to risk mitigation in agriculture.

The Australian Government **notes** this recommendation.

However, given the passage of time since this report was tabled, a substantive Government response is no longer appropriate.

**Recommendation 8**

The committee recommends that the Department of Treasury review the tax implications of the transferral of farm ownership within a family. The review should aim to remove financial disincentives and facilitate succession planning for retiring farm owners to transfer ownership to the next generation of farmers.

The Australian Government **notes** this recommendation.

However, given the passage of time since this report was tabled, a substantive Government response is no longer appropriate.

**Recommendation 9**

The committee recommends that the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, in consultation with the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment, develop a dedicated visa for migrants travelling to Australia to be employed in the agriculture sector in low skilled occupations. The visa should allow for migrants in the agriculture sector to stay in Australia for at least a year or to return to Australia seasonally over multiple years.

The Australian Government **notes** this recommendation.

However, given the passage of time since this report was tabled, a substantive Government response is no longer appropriate.

**Recommendation 10**

The committee recommends that the Department of Education, Skills and Employment develop a promotion and marketing campaign aimed at encouraging high school students to actively consider undertaking higher education in agriculture related studies.

The promotion campaign should be informed by existing successful small-scale programs such as the Victorian Workforce Development Program. Development of the campaign should be undertaken in collaboration with stakeholders including relevant state and territory agencies; regional higher education providers; and existing groups promoting an increased focus on agriculture in education.

The Australian Government **notes** this recommendation.

However, given the passage of time since this report was tabled, a substantive Government response is no longer appropriate.

**Recommendation 11**

The committee recommends that the Department of Education, Skills and Training, in collaboration with the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources, and in conjunction with industry, develop a nationally recognised qualification and professional development system for agriculture. This professional accreditation system should provide agriculture specialists with a formal pathway for updating their skills and developing their career in agriculture.

The Australian Government **notes** this recommendation.

However, given the passage of time since this report was tabled, a substantive Government response is no longer appropriate.

**Recommendation 12**

The committee recommends that the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment work with the Council of Australian Governments and relevant industry stakeholders to develop a National Biosecurity Strategy. This strategy should seek to:

- Harmonise regulations between jurisdictions wherever possible
- Develop new biosecurity technologies and ensure they are implemented consistently across Australia.

The Australian Government **notes** this recommendation.

However, given the passage of time since this report was tabled, a substantive Government response is no longer appropriate.

**Recommendation 13**

The committee recommends that the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Cities and Regional Development undertake a review of the Heavy Vehicle National Law and other regulations relevant to the use of high-capacity freight vehicles to ensure that all restrictions on heavy vehicle use are warranted.

The Australian Government **notes** this recommendation.

However, given the passage of time since this report was tabled, a substantive Government response is no longer appropriate.