



PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA

Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade

Trade Sub-Committee

MEDIA ALERT

Issued: 24 March 2015

Chair: Hon Bruce Scott MP

Deputy Chair: Maria Vamvakinou MP

Australian industry opportunity to provide high-value convenience foods to the Middle East

The Department of Industry and Science will outline its role in supporting Australian trade with countries of the Middle East at a public hearing in Canberra tomorrow.

In its submission to the Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade inquiry into trade and investment with the Middle East, the Department highlighted the importance of developing new export markets in the Middle East as a driver of growth for the Australian food industry.

As more Middle Eastern people look to shop at supermarkets, the Department sees opportunities for Australian food processors to provide high-value convenience foods, including ready-to-eat, chilled, canned, preserved, frozen and baked foodstuffs. The growth in supermarkets and Western-style restaurants, especially in the Gulf States, is also pushing demand for premium cuts of beef and lamb from Australia.

According to the Department, Australian food processing is at its most competitive against other international exporters in markets where Middle East consumers are willing to pay a premium for quality Australian-grown food. With more than 350 million people to feed, future food security, including meeting demand for imported higher-value products that Australian food producers can provide, dominates the economic planning of Middle Eastern governments.

The Trade Sub-Committee may also explore the future role of the Australian automotive industry - in particular, its car parts export business beyond the closure of local car manufacturing in 2017. Australia exported \$1.47 billion in vehicles and parts to the Middle East in 2013 and providing parts for these vehicles, such as the Toyota Camry, may be important for an Australian car parts industry in transition.

Public hearing

Date/Time	Wednesday 25 March 2015, 11:05 am
Location	Committee Room 1R3, Parliament House, Canberra
Organisation	Department of Industry and Science

Live audio broadcast will be available at www.aph.gov.au/live

For media comment: contact the Trade sub-committee Chair, the Hon Bruce Scott MP on (02) 6277 4949 (Parliament House)

For background information: Further details about the inquiry, including the full terms of reference and how to contribute, can be obtained from the committee's website at www.aph.gov.au/jfadt or by contacting the committee secretariat on (02) 6277 2313 or emailing jscfadt@aph.gov.au.