

**Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport**

**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

Additional Estimates February 2008

**Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry**

**Question:** ID 01

**Division/Agency:** International Division

**Topic:** New Zealand Apples

**Hansard Page:** 82 (18/02/2008)

**Senator McGAURAN asked:**

**Senator McGauran**—Can I get from the minister the government's policy in regard to defending the industry all the way to the WTO?

**Senator Sherry**—I will take that on notice.

**Answer:**

A World Trade Organization (WTO) dispute over imports of New Zealand (NZ) apples is now underway (Australia – measures affecting the importation of NZ apples). On 21 January 2008, a WTO dispute settlement panel was established, at NZ's request. And on 12 March, the WTO's Director-General appointed panellists to hear the case.

The United States, the European Communities, Japan, Chile, Taiwan and Pakistan have joined as third parties to the dispute.

The timeframes for the dispute are still being finalised, however it is expected that the first Panel hearing is likely to take place in Geneva in June 2008, with a Panel report likely to be issued in late 2008 or early 2009.

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) is the lead agency in the WTO dispute process. DFAT is working closely with the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry and the Attorney General's Department in building Australia's defence to the NZ claims that Australia's import conditions for NZ apples are too stringent.

The Australian Government's approach is to vigorously defend Australia's science-based quarantine system and the import conditions as contained in the Final Import Risk Analysis Report for apples from New Zealand.

In accordance with usual practice, the Government will continue to consult relevant stakeholders regularly, including representatives of the Australian apple and pear industries, in relation to progress in the dispute.

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**Question:** ID 02

**Division/Agency:** International Division

**Topic:** Value of Australia's stone fruit exports to Taiwan

**Hansard Page:** 92 (18/02/2008)

**Senator Scullion asked:**

**Senator SCULLION**—Thank you, Mr Chairman. I have some questions in regard to some of the discussions we are having with Taiwan about stone fruit exports. Could you indicate the value of this market in the past?

**Mr Morris**—I do not have the figures in front of me but, from memory, we had horticultural trade worth something like \$30 million. That was affected by the change in the quarantine requirements at the beginning of 2007, I think it was. A portion of that was the stone fruit trade—around half or a little less than that. If you want the exact figures, we can take it on notice and get that to you.

**Senator SCULLION**—That would be good.

**Answer:**

The value of Australian stone fruit exports to Taiwan (excluding cherries) averaged A\$14.1 million a year in the five years 2001-05. The average value of Australian cherries exported to Taiwan over the same period was A\$1.9 million a year.