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Aussie cherry industry sets 40 per cent of production export target

Australia's cherry growers are redoubling their trade efforts through a new \$1.2M export program that will boost support for existing and aspiring exporters amid plans to send 40 per cent of production overseas by 2025.

The initiative is being delivered through Hort Innovation using industry levies and funds from the Australian Government and led by Cherry Growers Australia with industry partners. The initiative will include more than 50 activities that will build export capability among Australian cherry growers, minimise trade risks during supply chain disruptions and other challenges and grow Australia's reputation for delivering quality cherries.

Cherry Growers Australia's chief operating officer, Andrea Magiafoglou said the nation's cherry industry, made up of some 200 producers, is poised for growth as it enters a new phase of export development.

"Industry has set an ambitious target of exporting 40 per cent of production by 2025 and this dedicated export program, with support being tailored to each region, will help us reach that," she said. "With many cherry growers being export ready, we are now in a position where we can build on our success to be an export-focussed industry."

Ms Magiafoglou said there is a strong willingness for industry to work together to share data and intelligence to preserve premium export prices in the face of increasing global competition; and thereby manage this risk.

Hort Innovation's chief executive officer, Brett Fifield, said this project would focus on emergency response planning, pest and disease management, data and supply chain traceability, as well as training workshops and supports such as an export helpdesk line.

"Industry has told us its priority is to increase exports. Therefore, this is Hort Innovation's priority," he said. "Research and development programs, such as this, are key to the vitality of trade. Investing in export activities is at the forefront of what we do. In this instance, a key focus is also looking at how trade markets can be maintained, expanded, and diversified to support industry sustainability."

Orange-NSW-based cherry grower Fiona Hall said fortifying the future of the cherry trade industry is crucial for growers.

"The pandemic has placed a tremendous amount of pressure on cherry growers over the past two years," she said. "This new export program is indicative of the positive way forward for cherry growers."

More than \$26M in research and development activities, from pest and disease management efforts to educational events to market access preparation work, underpins the Cherry Export Strategy.

Key facts. According to the [Horticulture Statistics Handbook](#):

- Australia exported almost 5000 tonnes of fresh cherries overseas in 20/21
- 24 per cent of that went to our largest market, Hong Kong.
- 23 per cent of Australian Cherry production was exported in 2020/21 (Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics).

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