

Level playing field for Australian citrus exporters

Ratified FTA with China, in tandem with elimination of export subsidies, set to increase trade

Citrus Australia is encouraging its members to make the most of tariff reductions under the China-Australia Free Trade Agreement (ChAFTA).

The trade pact came into force on Sunday (20 December), resulting in an immediate tariff rate cut, followed by a secondary on January 1, 2016. The agreement will see all tariffs on Australian citrus exported to China eliminated within the next eight years.

“China has become the highest valued export market for Australian citrus this year reaching A\$52.6m by the end of October – up 71% from 2014,” said Citrus Australia chief executive Judith Damiani. “Their demand has helped raise Australian export volumes and value to record levels this year to A\$263m – up 38% from 2014.”

Damiani encouraged Australian citrus exporters to qualify for the preferential tariffs by completing a certificate or declaration of origin.

In another surprise but welcome announcement, the World Trade Organization's member countries have decided to eliminate A\$15bn worth of agricultural export subsidies, which will also create a more level playing field for Australian citrus exporters.

“It's all the more positive to see historical agricultural subsidies and tariffs being eliminated while demand for premium quality safe food increases around the world,” Damiani said.

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