

## National Food Plan

May 2013

On 25 May 2013 Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry Senator Joe Ludwig, released Australia's first National Food Plan (the Plan). The Plan acts as a roadmap for the future of Australia's food industry by setting out key goals to grow the domestic industry and increase value of Australian food exports. Further, the Plan provides a framework for the food industry, the community and governments in the years to come.

The Minister's media release is available [here](#).

The National Food Plan is available in full [here](#).

### Background

The Australian food industry is facing a range of challenges in the years ahead, such as climate change, population growth, changing economic conditions, and competition for resources. On the other hand, the rapidly expanding Asian middle class offers an important opportunity for Australia's food industry. By 2050 world food consumption is expected to be 75 per cent higher than in 2007, and almost half of this increased demand will come from China alone.

### The National Food Plan

To meet the challenges and seize the opportunities, Australia will have to build on its strengths, such as its proximity to Asia and the skills and capabilities of its workforce. The Plan, informed by the national objectives set by the *Australia in the Asian Century White Paper*, outlines the long-term direction for Australia's food system by focusing on four priority areas. Each priority area encompasses a range of goals as well as setting out new initiatives to reach the goals by 2025.

Hawker Britton's Occasional Paper on the *Australia in the Asian Century White Paper* is available [here](#).

### Growing exports

Goals in this area include:

- Developing stronger food trade and investment relationships with countries across the region.
- Establish a globally recognised food brand that is synonymous with high-quality, innovative, safe and sustainable food, services and technology.



New initiatives in this area:

- \$28.5 million for an Asian Food Markets Research Fund to support Australian agriculture and food industries to capitalise on opportunities offered by growing Asian markets.
- Strengthening trade ties in the Asian region by investing an additional \$5.6 million to give Australian agriculture industries a stronger, government endorsed voice in key overseas markets.
- \$2 million to develop Australia's own trusted and recognised food brand, to ensure trading partners continue to associate Australia with quality, innovative, safe and sustainable food.

### Thriving Industry

Goals in this area include:

- Australia's agricultural productivity will have increased by 30 per cent, helping farmers grow more food using fewer inputs.
- Australia's infrastructure and biosecurity systems will support a growing food industry, moving food cost-effectively and efficiently to markets and supporting new export opportunities.

New initiatives in this area include:

- \$2.2 million for research and analysis of food industry trends to help business and governments plan infrastructure to support a growing industry to 2025. This research will be funded through the Asian Food Markets Research Fund.

### People

Goals in this area include:

- Australia will have built on its high level of food security by continuing to improve access to safe and nutritious food for those living in remote communities or struggling with disadvantage.

New initiatives in this area include:

- \$1.5 million to support community food initiatives by providing grants to community groups to support the establishment and development of initiatives like community gardens and farmers' markets.
- \$1.5 million to develop resources and provide professional development to support teaching about food and agriculture through the Australian Curriculum.



## Sustainable Food

Goals in this area include:

- Australia will produce food sustainably and will have adopted innovative practices to improve productive and environmental outcomes.
- Australia will have reduced per capita food waste.

New initiatives in this area include:

- \$1.5 million to support community food initiatives by providing grants to community groups to support the establishment and development of initiatives like food aid and food rescue organisations.

### **The Food Industry Innovation Precinct**

As part of the Government's *A Plan for Australian Jobs* the establishment of the Food Industry Innovation Precinct was recently announced. Industry Innovation Precincts will be industry-led national networks that will bring together our best industry and research capability in areas of competitive advantage and emerging opportunity.

The Food Industry Innovation Precinct will help Australia's largest manufacturing sector become more strategic, commercially targeted and coordinated in a sustainable way. It will help develop consumer insights to inform a long-term innovation agenda aimed at realising opportunities in the Asian century.

The Food Industry Innovation Precinct will also focus on developing Asian consumer insights capability. This will help realign some of Australia's significant food and beverage research and development investment across the supply chain. It will also reduce the risks of the innovation process, especially for small to medium enterprises (SMEs), providing them with a sounder basis for exporting to Asian markets.

The board of Australia's new Food Industry Innovation Precinct was announced along with the Plan.

The board members are:

- Peter Schutz, Chair
- Mr Dave Ashcroft, Petuna Aquaculture
- Dr Geoffrey Annison, Australian Food and Grocery Council
- Ms Catherine Barnett, Food SA
- Associate Prof Kim Bryceson, University of Queensland
- Mr Charlie Donnelly, National Union of Workers;
- Ms Margaret Haseltine, Agri-Food Skills Australia



- Mr Simon Talbot, Kraft Australia and NZ
- Dr Hermione Parsons, Victoria University
- Dr Christine Pitt, Meat and Livestock Australia
- Dr Alastair Robertson, Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation

The Food Precinct will work in conjunction with the Gillard Labor Government's \$236 million Industrial Transformation Research Program (ITRP), another key part of the Industry Innovation Precincts initiative.

The ITRP will fund projects in Precinct priority research areas; ensuring research is targeted to areas of existing industrial competitive advantage and emerging opportunities.

The first round of the ITRP was announced recently with more than \$23 million allocated to eight research projects advancing Australia's food and beverage industry.