

Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Additional Estimates February 2012

Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Question: 16

Division/Agency: Trade and Market Access Division

Topic: Food Security Summit

Proof Hansard page: 36

Senator Heffernan asked:

Senator HEFFERNAN: I surrender. We haven't got much time. Did any ministers attend the recent

Indonesian Food Security Summit in Jakarta?

Senator Ludwig: We can check on that.

Answer:

No.

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Additional Estimates February 2012

Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Question: 109

Division/Agency: Trade and Market Access Division

Topic: Boxed Meat Quotas

Proof Hansard page: Written

Senator COLBECK asked:

Has there been any discussions between the Australian and Indonesian Ministers re boxed meat quotas?

Answer:

Yes. A number of representations have been made by Ministers Ludwig, Emerson and Rudd.

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Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Question: 120

Division/Agency: Trade and Market Access Division

Topic: Impact of Australian Quarantine Inspection Services – Biosecurity Name Change

Proof Hansard page: Written

Senator EDWARDS asked:

1. Has the DAFF consulted with countries importing Australian goods as to whether the change in name from AQIS to Biosecurity Australia will impact on their import regulations (which currently contain the AQIS name)?
2. Has the DAFF had to renegotiate import protocols with an importing country due to the change in name from AQIS to Biosecurity?
3. If yes, which countries? What were the changes to the protocols?

Answer:

1. Yes. Name changes for Australian Government entities occur routinely and this is recognised by trading partners. Australian Quarantine Inspection Service has never been a separate legal entity. It was the title of a group within the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry.
2. No. The name change makes it clear that the Australian Government has provided certification of exports. The change does not affect the authority under which our audit, inspection and certification activities are conducted.
3. Not applicable.

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Question: 149

Division/Agency: Trade and Market Access Division

Topic: Ministerial Overseas Travel

Proof Hansard page: Written

Senator COLBECK asked:

For all overseas travel undertaken by Minister Ludwig since Supplementary Estimates, provide details of:

- a) the countries visited,
- b) topics of conversation / negotiation and
- c) outcomes for Australian primary producers / agrifood businesses.

Answer:

Countries	Topics	Outcomes
North Asia (China, Japan and Korea) 7–14 December 2011	Visited China, Japan and the Republic of Korea, accompanied by industry representatives to strengthen Australia's relationship with markets that purchase around 35 percent (\$12.6 billion) of Australian farm exports.	Progressed trade issues including Free Trade Agreements. Promoted Australian produce. Strengthened bilateral relationships. Facilitated commercial linkages. Pursued market access. Announced the 2012–13 round of successful applicants under the Australia-China Agricultural Cooperation Agreement.
Middle East (Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Kuwait, Bahrain) 26 January-3 February 2012	Visited key livestock export markets to discuss implementation of the framework on livestock exports and promote Australian agricultural industries.	Improved understanding of new framework for livestock exports. Strengthened bilateral relationships. Promoted Australian produce.

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Question: 193

Division/Agency: Trade and Market Access Division

Topic: New Markets

Proof Hansard page: Written

Senator COLBECK asked:

What are the qualifications and experience of the government negotiators that are sent in to “open new markets”? What is their success rate?

Answer:

The Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) supports Australia’s negotiators (the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade) in bilateral and multilateral trade negotiations through the provision of technical assistance and advice on portfolio issues. In addition, DAFF sends senior officers (SES 2, SES 1 and experienced Executive Level staff) to lead DAFF delegations in negotiating with key trading partners. In doing so, DAFF ensures that matters affecting Australia’s agricultural sector are considered in the government’s broader negotiating strategy.

Over 2011 and at February 2012 DAFF negotiators have successfully achieved market access for various commodities to a range of countries including Taiwan, China, Chile, Egypt, Ecuador, Peru and Saudi Arabia. These include:

- plums and carrots to Taiwan in January 2012
- table grapes propagative material to Chile in December 2011
- honey to Egypt in October 2011
- citrus, pears, table grapes and avocados to New Zealand in July 2011.
- lentils to Saudi Arabia in July 2011
- mango nursery stock to Peru in May 2011
- citrus to the United States in March 2011.

In addition to these highlights, DAFF has made many improvements to technical market access arrangements in partnership with portfolio export industries.

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Question: 210

Division/Agency: Trade and Market Access Division

Topic: Revision of International Trading Standards

Proof Hansard page: Written

Senator RHIANNON asked:

There is mention in the DAFF Budget of 'assisting in development of international trading standards'.

1. Are these standards currently being developed?
2. If so by whom and what is the current status of these standards?

Answer:

There are a number of international standard setting bodies of which Australia is a member. These include the:

- Organisation for World Animal Health which sets health standards for international trade in animal and animal products;
- Codex Alimentarius Commission which develops harmonised international food standards, guidelines and codes of practice to protect the health of consumers and ensure fair trade practices in the food trade; and
- the International Plant Protection Convention which provides an international framework for plant protection that includes developing International Standards for Phytosanitary measures for safeguarding plant resources.

These bodies have established a range of standards for international trade in agricultural and food products which are referenced by the World Trade Organization Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures. The development of standards is an ongoing process with new standards being developed and already established standards being revised to meet changing conditions and scientific developments. The Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry makes a strong contribution to the work of the bodies to ensure that international standards are based on science and are, where ever possible, consistent with our production and regulatory systems.