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Committee Secretary
Joint Standing Committee on Treaties
PO Box 6021
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Re: Employment estimates and impact – Australian nut industry

This information is provided by the Australian Nut Industry Council (ANIC) – the federation of the seven Australian tree nut producing industries – Almonds, Chestnuts, Hazelnuts, Macadamias, Pecans, Pistachios and Walnuts in response to a request by the Joint Standing Committee on Treaties (JSCOT).

Based on information provided by its members, ANIC has made its best estimate with respect to the employment impact of the industry.

There are approximately 1,500 tree nut growers in Australia (with over 15 million trees), supported by the associated and specific hulling, processing and marketing activities. The industry estimates it directly employs approximately 6,000 full time equivalents (FTEs). Indirect employment from the industry (input suppliers such as fertiliser, machinery, etc.) is estimated to be 3:1.

It should be noted that all of this employment occurs in rural areas or regional centres. As one grower surmises:

“The permanent population of my local town is 34. I employ 6 of these people on a full time basis, supplemented with seasonal work during harvesting and pruning. Whilst it may not appear significant on a large scale, my nut enterprise provides stable direct employment for almost 20% of the local community.”

The Agri-Australis \$72 million hazelnut investment east of Narrandera estimates it will bring 50 permanent and a further 50 seasonal jobs to the community within 3 years.

Worth noting is the significant capital investment the industry also makes into rural and regional centres. The recent Walnuts Australia \$10.5 million walnut cracking and processing facility, completed at Leeton in NSW this year, provided employment for a vast array of services (concreters, air conditioning firms, engineers, electricians, etc.) throughout its development, and now up and running, has trained and employs over 70 people in the processing facility alone.



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It is not possible to quantify the impact on employment of one particular trade agreement such as AUSKOR. However, it can be stated emphatically that the opening of new market opportunities such as AUSKOR provides additional markets for the expanding production of the Australian tree nut industry. Additional markets improve the prospects for the continued expansion of the profitable status of the Australian nut industry.

The nut industry in Australia is high value, smart agriculture that is competitive globally. Profitable industries employ people, unprofitable industries without good markets, do not employ people.

Yours sincerely,

Chaseley Ross
Executive Officer