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Horticulture confirmed as big contributor to Coffs regional economy.

Horticulture production in the Coffs region is worth more than \$441 million at farm gate and is set to reach \$522 million by 2030, according to a recently released report from the Centre for International Economics.

The report, commissioned by Horticulture Australia Ltd, highlights that horticulture in this region also directly contributes \$349 million to the regional economy and employs the equivalent of 2262 full-time workers.

Berry production comprises 80% of horticulture production in the region and more than 50% of Australia's berries are produced in the Coffs area.

Berries Australia Executive Director Rachel Mackenzie said the report confirmed that berry production was a real economic powerhouse in the region and the industry a significant employer.

"The report has independently confirmed the figures we have already generated but even more importantly it has highlighted the potential for the industry to grow over the next few years," Ms Mackenzie said.

"The Coffs Harbour region should be proud of its status as the biggest berry producing region in Australia and the ethnically diverse community of growers who generate this value for the region.

"The industry is investing heavily in developing export markets to drive this growth, particularly for blueberries and we are confident the sector will exceed the 18% growth in value estimated in the report."

Local Berries Australia Director Christian Parsons said the report highlighted the potential for the industry but also acknowledged the need for the sector to really promote its sustainability credentials.

"Our export opportunity relies on high quality fruit produced to the highest global sustainability standards, and we continue to encourage and support local growers to ensure their practices meet those standards," Mr Parsons said.

"We know that we grow some of the highest quality berries in the world and we look forward to sharing them more widely with the international community whilst at the same time generating economic benefits at home."

The Australian horticulture industry is currently worth \$17.8 billion to the Australian economy, employs 68,700 FTEs and is predicted to reach \$21.8 billion by 2030.

For more information and comment contact Berries Australia Executive Director Rachel Mackenzie on 0408 796 199.

The CIE report can be downloaded from the Hort Innovation website:

<https://www.horticulture.com.au/growers/help-your-business-grow/research-reports-publications-fact-sheets-and-more/mt21010/>

Berries Australia is a joint venture between the Australian Blueberry Growers Association, the Raspberry & Blackberry Association and Strawberries Australia Inc.