

ATMAC funding to help continue export trade development for Berries

Jenny Van de Meeberg, Export Manager, Berries Australia

Berries Australia has been successful in their bid to further develop export market opportunities for the Australian Berry industries following approval of an ATMAC Grant from the Australian Government.

The objective of the Agricultural Trade and Market Access Cooperation (ATMAC) program is 'to open, improve and/or maintain access to overseas markets for Australian agricultural products by building stronger relationships with trading partners, neighbouring countries and international organisations'.

The purpose of the Grant is to support trade expansion in key markets, so Berries Australia has developed a project which aims to reinstate export confidence through a series of market insight reports that educate growers on the market dynamics in key countries. It will also provide growers with resources and opportunities to proactively re-ignite conversations with importers and retailers.

To achieve its objectives, the Berries Australia export team, led by Export Manager Jenny Van de Meeberg, will develop a suite of 'market insight' reports for each berry's key markets and materials to support in-market trade development. The development and execution of an in-market Australian Berries trade seminar for importers/retailers will also contribute towards elevating the position that Australian berries hold in the market.

The blueberry and strawberry industries share the key target markets of Singapore and Thailand. In addition to these combined priority markets, blueberries are also focused on India and strawberries are focused on the UAE. These markets are captured in the respective industry export strategies and will be the focal points of this project.

The primary beneficiary of the project will be Australian berry growers across all locations in Australia. With many growers very keen to export, this project will provide them with the means and know-how to do so in a strategic manner. And for non-exporting growers, there exists a strong understanding that moving product off the domestic market benefits everyone.

Whilst the berry industry in Australia is coming from a low exporting base, it represents tremendous opportunity for growth. In Australian supermarkets, berries represent the single biggest fresh produce line with a combined value of more than \$1 billion. There is enormous potential to translate this Australian success into a global export powerhouse, especially since Australia holds the genetics to a number of the most prized varieties. The industry's transformation to being export-focused had already begun before COVID19 disrupted international airfreight and market dynamics. This project seeks to put the industry back on track to reach its export potential.

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