



Senator the Hon Richard Colbeck

Assistant Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources

Liberal Senator for Tasmania

MEDIA RELEASE

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New Free Trade Agreements under threat from Labor

From 1 January 2019 the latest round of tariff cuts came into effect for Tassie exports around the world, including to China, South Korea, and TPP-11 countries such as Canada, Mexico.

Assistant Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources Richard Colbeck said removing tariff barriers was leading to strong export growth but Labor protectionism was a threat to that success.

Assistant Minister Colbeck: “Tasmania has what the world wants and removing tariff barriers has allowed our primary producers to compete globally and take advantage of booming demand.”

“From 1 January tariffs are now eliminated on 5418 products with China alone - a benefit to Tassie exporters - which has been opposed by Labor MPs and threatened by their blatant protectionism.

“Bottled wine, for example, will now be exported to China tariff-free, meaning our spectacular Tasmanian cool climate and sparkling wines will have unparalleled access to the Chinese market.

“Australian wine exports to China grew 51% last year to exceed \$1 billion for the first time, which makes China both our largest market and our most significant growth opportunity.

“Chinese tariffs have been eliminated on Atlantic salmon, rock lobster and other Tasmanian grown fishes, as well as horticultural produce like potatoes, cherries, raspberries, blackberries and apples.

“Tasmania’s sheep meat producers will have big new opportunities too, with a tariff reduction of 2.2 per cent on sheep meat exported to South Korea.

“Much of Tasmania’s recent growth success can be traced directly back to the success of the Coalition’s trade agenda.

“As a trading nation we can’t afford to return to the lost years of Labor-Green protectionism, where not a single Free Trade Agreement was initiated and delivered in six years of government.

“The union movement in particular has been brazen in holding Australian exporters to ransom, with new changes to the Labor Policy Platform making signing new agreements virtually impossible.

“Labor has been further hog-tied by their union masters with Platform demands that even undo reforms of Hawke and Keating – Tasmania’s growing export sectors will be harmed by such backward-looking madness.

Full details of the latest round of tariff cuts can be found on the FTA Portal: ftaportal.dfat.gov.au

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