

Citrus Australia welcomes Australia China FTA

Citrus Australia has welcomed the long-awaited China Australia Free Trade Agreement, which will progressively remove tariffs on Australian citrus.

Australian Prime Minister Tony Abbott joined with his Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping today (Monday, 17 November) to announce the agreement.

China has agreed to eliminate all citrus tariffs over eight years. Orange tariffs are currently 11 per cent and mandarin tariffs, 12 per cent.

Citrus Australia Chief Executive Officer Judith Damiani said the new agreement is good news for citrus growers.

"Though the time frames are a little long, this is a great outcome for Australian citrus. China is our fastest growing and highest valued export market reaching \$30 million to September 2014."

She said Australian citrus exports to China have grown significantly over the past four years. That trend is now set to continue.

Citrus juice tariffs are also set to tumble. Unfrozen orange juice tariffs will reduce to zero from 30 per cent over seven years.

"While there is very little export of Australian juice to China this result makes future trade more likely, particularly with the recent success of fresh Australian milk," Ms Damiani said.

"I would like to sincerely thank Trade Minister Andrew Robb and Prime Minister Tony Abbott for their focus and determination to bring this to a positive conclusion.

"We now call for some urgency in the parliamentary process used to approve this historic trade agreement so that citrus tariffs can begin their phase down."

ends

For further information contact Currie Communications' Sarah Kulman on 0400 006 295 or Citrus Australia on 03 95023 6333.