

Media Release

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Developing a strong, harmonised voice to help grow Australia's organic industries

Industry leaders collaborating to establish a national peak body

Australia's organic industries have expanded rapidly over the past decade and have huge potential for further growth.

A clear and harmonised industry voice is seen by industry leaders as necessary to underpin continued strong growth.

Industry leaders from across Australia are collaborating with a view to establishing a national peak body for all organic producers, certifiers and the supply chain. An Australian Organic Industry Working Group has been established to guide the project.

The working group was formed following a round of consultations with the office of the Hon. Barnaby Joyce MP, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for

Agriculture and Water Resources, and the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources on how to increase the competitiveness of the organic sector.

The chair of the working group, Greg McNamara said, "We envisage this project could result in a new national representative body that will be the voice of Australia's organic industries. We are not yet sure of its final form, but it will have broad representation and be active in promoting sustainable industries at the national and state level."

Greg is also Chairman of the Board of Directors of Norco Cooperative in northern NSW. He is a dairy farmer with extensive experience across the agricultural sector, including dairy, beef, pigs, horticulture and genetics.

Greg said, "The project aims to have industry-wide input, through effective consultation and open communications. We are seeking involvement from all levels—from small boutique producers to major exporters and the organic certifiers."

The working group consists of leading organic producers and certifiers. These individuals and businesses have committed their time and financial resources to progress the project to this point. The working group has also been actively engaging the Australian Government to obtain further support for the project.

A project manager has been appointed by the working group to assist in the initial phases of considering options and processes for establishing a peak body for Australia's organic industries.

The project manager is [Policy Partners](#). The project team consists of Tony Webster and Jason Alexandra. Policy Partners has expertise in the delivery of complex projects spanning multiple stakeholders across industry, government and the private sector.

The project team leader and Managing Director of Policy Partners, Tony Webster, said, "One objective of the project is to consider how the working group could evolve to become more representative of Australia's diverse organic industries."

Policy Partners is assisting the Australian Organic Industry Working Group to:

- broaden communications channels across Australia's organic industries
- undertake initial consultations to identify the key issues facing the industry
- provide advice on the next steps towards achieving a harmonised industry voice

For more information on the organic industries project see <https://onevoice.organicindustries.com.au> or, for further information and interviews, contact the project team:

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Background information

Australia's organic industries are growing strongly

The latest [Australian Organic Market Report](#) indicates that Australia's organic industries could exceed \$2billion in sales by 2018!

These and other trends are outlined in the 2017 Australian Organic Market Report, based on research by the Mobium Group and the University of New England.

Organics is one of the most dynamic sectors in Australia. The report identifies that:

- the number of certified organic operations in Australia grew by 5%
- the tonnage of organic products exported from Australia grew by 17%
- exports of sheep/lamb meat, cosmetics, alcoholic drinks, dairy products, bakery goods and chicken all showed exceptional growth

In 2016, Australia's organic industries consist of:

- 2,075 certified organic producers
- 1,163 certified processors
- 513 certified handlers
- 53% of the world's organic farmland by area

The total value of Australia's organic market is estimated at over \$1.7billion, consisting of:

- the domestic consumer market, estimated at \$1.4billion in 2015
- products exported from Australia, estimated at over \$0.3 billion

The full report can be accessed at Australian Organic Ltd at <http://austorganic.com/ao-market-report/>