

NSW steps up to help primary industries sector navigate COVID-19

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The NSW Department of Primary Industries (DPI) has activated a new specialist Primary Industries Liaison Team and launched an online resource to help the State's \$15.9 billion primary industries sector navigate the challenges and impacts of COVID-19.

NSW DPI Director General, Scott Hansen said as each day brought new information and new challenges, it was critical to ensure the sector had access to accurate and timely information.

“The new specialist industry liaison team will establish a pathway to accurate information and assistance, especially related to international and interstate trade,” Mr Hansen said.

“Food supply for Australians is solid – in fact most of the food we produce is exported with more than 70 per cent of the country's agriculture and fisheries production sold overseas, so there is plenty to go around.

“The liaison team will operate from the DPI's Head Office in Orange and includes the expertise of an in-market specialist located in China, NSW's largest export market which is valued at approximately \$1.97 billion.

“It will draw on DPI's International Engagement Unit and on our industry specialists across horticulture, intensive and extensive livestock, grains, biosecurity, seafood and aquaculture.

“DPI is already using video technology to replace face-to-face international industry negotiation. For example, instead of a group of Riverina citrus growers visiting China to open trade discussions, DPI is facilitating these using video conference technology.”

The new specialist Industry Liaison team will:

- Provide a central point for up to date COVID-19 information affecting NSW primary industries;
- Assist industry with pathways to appropriate Government services;
- Distribute information to the sector; and,
- Work across the food supply chain to help ensure continuity.

DPI will also continue to provide an essential service to primary producers, their families and communities throughout NSW.

“DPI will continue to protect the biosecurity of our primary industries, ensure our food safety and animal welfare,” Mr Hansen said.

“We will continue to help industries, communities and families recover from the ongoing drought and the recent bushfires, as well as protect our marine and aquatic environments.

To keep up to date with relevant information relating to the NSW primary industries sector during these unprecedented times, visit www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/covid-19 or email covidinfo@dpi.nsw.gov.au.

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