

12 March 2025

The Hon Julie Collins MP,
Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries & Forestry
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600
Via email: minister.collins@aff.gov.au

RE: Feeding Australia - Securing our Food Future

Dear Minister,

I am writing to congratulate the Albanese Labor Government's proposal to help secure Australia's food future with the development of a new national food security strategy: **Feeding Australia**.

Grain Trade Australia (GTA) shares the Government focus on the supply chain and the imperative to identify opportunities and to improve supply chain resilience, as such GTA would be willing to participate in a consultative and advisory mechanisms established under this strategy.

GTA through its [Modernising the Grain Supply Chain](#) strategy (MGSC) aims to support supply chain initiatives to improve the competitiveness of the Australian Grain Industry

The MGSC has a focus on four key 'Growth Pillars':

1. Skills and Capability;
2. Quality and Market Access;
3. Technology; and
4. Transport and Logistics.

These are foundation components of the grain industry and centre on the requirement to innovate and invest in the supply chain to ensure it remains competitive into the future and enables the industry to capture benefits and deliver economic growth for Australia. There appears to be a close alignment of the MGSC with the Feeding Australia strategy.

GTA also supports a coordinated focus on the food industry from a policy perspective. The food industry is integral to Australia's economic and social prosperity and its reputation as a safe, reliable and sustainable supplier is underpinned by the agriculture sector. Additionally, more than half of Australia's agricultural produce is supplied into global food chains. As such, Australia's food industry faces a complex policy and regulatory system touching a broad range of areas across the agriculture, food and manufacturing sectors.

1. About GTA

GTA is a national association and is the focal point for the commercial grain industry within Australia. **GTA members are the supply chain managers, marketeers, consumers and exporters of Australia's grain.** The role of GTA is to provide a framework across industry to facilitate and promote the trade of grain. GTA facilitates trade and works to provide an efficient, equitable and open trading environment by providing leadership, advocacy and commercial support services to the Australian grain value chain. GTA Members are responsible for over 95% of all grain storage and freight movements made each year in Australia. Over 95% of the grain contracts executed in Australia each year refer to GTA Grain Trading Standards and/or Trade Rules.

GTA is an active member of International Grain Trade Coalition (IGTC) and currently holds the position of President. IGTC has a strong focus on minimising trade distorting non-tariff measures (NTMs) and a rules-based framework to support global food security including advocating for trade as a critical component of food security.

2. Climate & Global Pressures

The Australian grain industry is Australia's largest agricultural industry with 65-75% of total production exported, it is a large source of foreign income. Whilst exports dominate, the domestic market in Australia is the largest single consumptive market for Australian grain.

The industry and its supply chain have managed to remain agile and resilient to many supply chain shocks, including Covid 19 and the Russian invasion of Ukraine and has weathered the increasingly disruptive and protectionist nature of international trade and geopolitics.

As a result of this environment and its challenges it is heartening to hear the Albanese Labor Government's commitment to a strategy that will provide a vision, support and focus to agricultural supply chains.

3. GTA Commitment & Support to the National Food Council

GTA and its members are uniquely placed to provide **input and support to the proposed National Food Council and offer to participate as a member of the Council.**

GTA is well placed as our members own and operate the vast majority of the post-farm gate grain supply chain assets and are responsible for marketing grain to domestic and global markets.. As such, GTA and its members are very connected to the food sector in Australia and globally.

As a trade exposed sector, the grain industry and GTA members, are dependent on open and fair access to markets. The grain industry like most agricultural industries is impacted by tariffs and quotas and is increasingly facing a wide range of non-tariff measures such as technical and phytosanitary barriers that are increasing the risk, difficulty and cost of doing business. While the costs relative to the benefits of technical barriers to trade are sometimes less tangible, they can create potentially significant economic and compliance impacts for Australian growers, exporters and the supply chain. As such GTA places a significant **focus on trade and market access** and seeks to proactively manage trade and market access for the grain industry via its trade and market access strategy, summarised below.

Figure 1 – Summary of GTA Trade and Market Access Strategy

Vision			
An effective and well-resourced capacity for proactive management of trade and market access for the grains industry			
Mission			
GTA provides leadership to the Australian grains Industry and coordinate activities to maximise the position of the Australian grains industry in relation to TMA activities and optimize outcomes for the industry			
Four pillars underpinning the TMA Strategy			
Policy	Advocacy	Support	Communication
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Ensuring the policy settings are supportive of the grains industry trade	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Proactively promoting the grains industry's priorities and positions in domestic and global forums	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Providing technical and operational support to the industry to address trade issues as they arise and assist to implement appropriate policies to maintain and enhance future trade	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Ensuring industry has transparent and open mechanisms for providing input into and receiving feedback on TMA prioritiesCreating a collaborative and shared commitment to TMA activities
Key Strategies			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Identify and communicate industry's positionAdvise Government on the impact of trade barriers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Monitor, articulate and address technical trade barriersEngage with and influence trade negotiations, regional initiatives and other market access initiativesCommunicate the value of grain trade and the importance of market accessBuild relationships with Government, cross sector representatives and global grain partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Provide informed analysis and support to Government and other initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Foster strong engagement with Government and industry in Australia and globally
Outcomes			
<ol style="list-style-type: none">GTA well-respected and sought out by Government and Industry domestically and globally for advice on TMA issuesGTA is recognised and respected for proactive engagement, self-regulatory approaches and technical inputReduced impact of trade barriers/more open and facilitative trade environment for Industry and GTA Members			

GTA plays an active leadership and technical support role across trade related functional areas including:

- a) **WTO /multilateral trade approaches**– GTA has had involvement in trade reform at the WTO in conjunction with DFAT and through GTA involvement in the International Grain trade Coalition (IGTC). GTA CEO is the current President of the IGTC.
- b) **FTAs and bilateral trade** – GTA has and continues to support and provide input into Government activity to establish meaningful Free Trade Agreements.
- c) **Non-Tariff Measures (NTMs)** – NTMs continue to be a source of frustration to the grain industry, in particular sanitary and non-sanitary measures, and more recently the spread of extraterritorial policies. GTA plays an active role monitoring and advocating in relation to NTMs. GTA has an established market access database to identify, track and respond to NTMs
- d) **International Forums** – GTA actively participates (and currently holds the presidency) in the International Grain Trade Coalition seeking to develop global grain trade solutions. The IGTC holds observer status with the WTO and the International Grains Council (IGC) of which Australia (DAFF) is anticipated to hold the Chair in June 2025. This provides Australia with a special opportunity to advocate in the global discussion on grain trade and food security.

Through these forums and activities, GTA supports and promotes a free, open and predictable trading environment and advocates for policies and practices that facilitate trade. An open trade environment will best facilitate a secure, safe and nutritious food supply. Climate change, geopolitical conflict, and supply chain shocks place immense pressure on food systems. As such, resilient supply chains and facilitative trade policies will be even more important to enabling food security.

GTA and its members through involvement in these trade and supply chain activities can provide the Albanese Labor Government the experience and knowledge to assist with the development of its Feeding Australia strategy.

4. Conclusion

Thank you again Minister for the commitment you and the Labor Government have and continue to provide to the agricultural supply chain. The concept of the Feeding Australia strategy is welcomed by GTA and we commit to providing the Government and its National Food Council all the assistance you require including membership of the Council.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you require further information on this and any other grain industry issues.

Yours faithfully,



Pat O'Shannassy
Chief Executive Officer