



David Littleproud MP

Federal Member for Maranoa

Media Statement

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Federal Government Focused on Growing Local Jobs and Boosting Rural Economies

Whether it's cotton grown and harvested in Dalby; beef grown and sold at Australia largest cattle-selling centre in Roma; or Western Downs grain – the Coalition's agricultural counsellors are great news for the Surat Basin and surrounding communities.

The \$51 million we announced in the recent budget to get more market access for our growers, by investing in more agricultural counsellors who work to win us market access, will help give farmers more market and more choice when they sell.

Wherever there are opportunities in the world for Australian businesses to export - whether it is raw materials, food, agricultural products, services or new technology – this Federal Government will create opportunities to help grow local jobs and boost our rural economies.

We want to throw open the doors wider to more markets and the biggest single economic market in the world is of course, the European Union. This week we welcomed the announcement by the Council of the European Union that negotiations for the Australia-EU FTA will kick off in coming weeks.

The previous deal saw us win good access so we need to fight first to protect what we've got.

In 2016-17, our wool was worth \$333 million; beef and veal were at \$229 million and nuts exports raked in \$226 million.

This deal is all about ensuring that Australians are able to get the best produce in the world out onto the supermarket shelves and onto the restaurant tables of the world.

In addition to fantastic trade news, the recent Budget promised a \$3.5 billion to the Roads of Strategic Importance initiative and a targeted \$1 billion Urban Congestion Fund. This will improve the flow of trade within the region by ensuring our products are transported efficiently.

The Budget also included incentives for the Rural Doctors Association which should lead to more than 3000 doctors over the next ten years, 3000 nurses and countless allied health professionals practicing in the regions over the coming decade.

That's what this government is about: making strategic investments in regional, rural Australia to make sure that we reach the full potential we have.

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Media Contact:

Annabelle Douglas

M: 0468 901 548

E: annabelle.douglas@aph.gov.au
