

Agricultural Competitiveness Taskforce  
Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet  
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Regional Development Australia (RDA) Gippsland welcomes the opportunity to respond to the Australian Government's Agricultural Competitiveness Green Paper and looks forward to contributing to the development of the Government's forthcoming White Paper.

The agribusiness sector is a significant employer in the Gippsland region of Victoria, with over 37% of Gippsland's business involved in agriculture and fishing and a further 15% involved in upstream processing. Gippsland is well positioned to take advantage of international demand for increased food security.

Responding to the region's competitive advantage as a major food producer, RDA Gippsland developed the Gippsland Food Plan in partnership with industry, community, local government and Victorian Government departments. The East Gippsland Food Cluster, the Committee for Gippsland and Agribusiness Gippsland Incorporated specifically contributed to the development of the Gippsland Food Plan. The Plan has been informed by an extensive consultation process including an industry steering group, community meetings, interviews with representatives of principal businesses, interest groups and through community workshops. The Gippsland Food Plan was launched in March 2014 by Deputy Premier of Victoria Peter Ryan and the Plan identifies four main priorities with recommendations to achieve its vision.

The four priorities are:

- Promoting growth and attracting investment
- Enabling infrastructure and logistics
- Innovation and adapting to change
- Advocacy and policy development

The Gippsland Food Plan priorities directly link to the following issues raised in the Agricultural Competitiveness Issues Paper:

- Issue 1: Ensuring food security in Australia and globally
- Issue 4: Increasing the competitiveness of the agriculture sector and its value chains
- Issue 5: Enhancing agriculture's contribution to regional communities
- Issue 6: Improving the competitiveness of inputs to the supply chain
- Issue 8: Enhancing agricultural exports
- Issue 9: Assessing the effectiveness of incentives for investment and job creation

In addition, The Gippsland Food Plan closely aligns with the Australian Government's agriculture policy principles as outlined within the Green Paper.

Therefore I request that the Gippsland Food Plan be considered a key document when the Australian Government formulates its policy platform to grow agriculture's contribution to the Australian economy, job creation and national prosperity.

The Gippsland Food Plan Executive Summary document is attached to this submission. A more detailed evidence based document, titled the 'Gippsland Food Plan Resource Document', underpins the Plan's priorities and recommendations and can be viewed on the RDA Gippsland website [www.rdagippsland.com.au](http://www.rdagippsland.com.au) located under the 'Publications' tab.

The Implementation Committee for the Gippsland Food Plan looks forward to contributing to the development of the White Paper, providing input regarding the significant role that this major region can play in the country's agriculture and food production future.

Yours sincerely

*Tim Weight*

Tim Weight  
**Deputy Chair**  
**Regional Development Australia - Gippsland**