



FOOD AND AGRIBUSINESS WORKING GROUP

WORKING GROUP MEMBER UPDATE

May 2010

The purpose of this document is to outline the current progress on a range of work plan initiatives for the working group and to foreshadow some thinking ahead of the next working group meeting that is being scheduled for late May.

Food and Agribusiness Member Capability Matrix

At the 17th March working group meeting (and subsequently) members have been asked to provide information relating that will allow development of an *AustCham Beijing/Shanghai Food and Agribusiness Member Capability Matrix*. This would be a key marketing and promotional document for the working group and its members as it outlines broad areas of capability within the food and agribusiness membership. It is also a document aimed at promoting greater collaboration within the membership and between the membership and Chinese based food and agribusiness organisations.

To date, only a very small number of food and agribusiness working group members have responded to the request for information. More responses are needed to make the exercise viable so if you haven't already responded please do so or contact Nigel Haywood at the AustCham Beijing secretariat for more information. Nigel can be contacted via email strategy@austcham.org or by phone on 6595 9252.

"Invitation Australia"

Following the 17th March working group meeting, a revised draft of the *Invitation Australia* proposal has been developed (see attached). This document has been discussed with many food and agribusiness operatives (both individual and companies) as well as a range of other institutions that operate in the food and agribusiness sectors.

The comments received have been overwhelmingly positive and provide a strong indication that people see value and benefit in the proposal from both a local and Australian perspective.

The proposal has also been discussed with Embassy based staff and it is intended to seek a meeting with the Ambassador to bring him up to speed on this and other aspects of the working group's activities. It is proposed to seek the Ambassador's endorsement of the *Invitation Australia* proposal through some comments of support that could be included in the program documentation.

Shanghai World Expo 2010

Luisa Rust from Austrade provided an update on planned Austrade activities at Expo during the 17th March joint working group meeting. Since this time, Austrade has updated its business events program and the latest version is attached.

In addition to the Austrade Business Program, individual States and Territories are running specific food and agribusiness events which will collectively provide opportunities for food and agribusiness working group members to promote the group to inbound Australian food and agribusiness operators as well as their own capabilities.

The AustCham Beijing secretariat is currently putting together an events calendar for Expo that covers food and agribusiness events (whether Austrade Business Program or individual State/Territory events) and will circulate this to members in the week commencing 10th May 2010. The collective intelligence and networks of members will be important in completing this task.

If sufficient interest exists, it would be possible to organise a Food and Agribusiness Working Group delegation to Expo that will coincide with a significant food and agribusiness Expo event.

It is understood that some Working Group members have been invited to attend particular agribusiness related events at Expo which is an indication of the importance that Austrade and other organisations (State and Territory representative offices in China) place on the Working Group and its activities.

Position Paper

Work is continuing on revamping the June 2009 position paper that was produced by Ms Helen Murray. Food safety issues (integrity) have been highlighted by some members as on-going issues in the market. Comments from members on the paper that was discussed at the 17th March 2010 meeting are most welcome.

5 key areas of activity have been highlighted in the position paper and these are as follows:

Trade Access (technical issues, FTA's, trade policy, trade barriers etc)
Awareness (raising the profile of Australian food and agribusiness)
Integrity (logistics, quality assurance, supply chain management)
Technology, Skills and Capability (knowledge, education, skills transfer) ; and
Investment (venture capital, equity arrangement, strategic alliances)

It is planned to engage speakers to attend future Working Group meetings to discuss issues around the 5 key areas mentioned above.