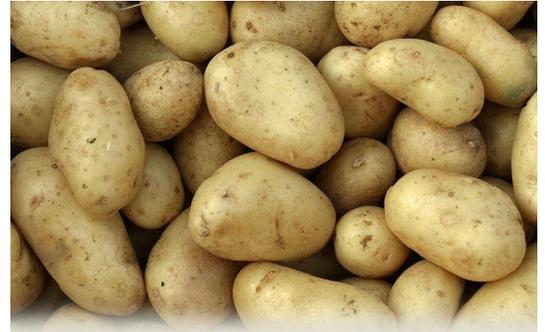




By Chris Komorek

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Future proofing Australian potatoes



Western Australia potato industry to work together to develop export opportunities, industry longevity

Concerns about industry growth and profitability led the Potato Growers Association of Western Australia (PGAWA) to commission an industry development plan, and subsequently an export development plan, that revealed current business models do not support growth and will continue to decline unless industry structures move towards collective models.

Four options to assist with the growth of export development in Western Australia were recommended in the report, with WA Potatoes chair, Vaughan Carter and CEO, Simon Moltoni, visiting South Africa.

They met with South African

citrus growers to discuss their journey to success in accessing and developing the United States citrus market.

Following the trip, Carter acknowledged growers must work together to drive the desired structural change, "Growers must control the supply chain to ensure they know what the customer wants, and to ensure they can guarantee that it's delivered to these discerning customers consistently."

The market analysis undertaken as part of the export development plan determined that the entity should focus on the opportunities in both the seed and processing categories for export initially.

Ware potato exports were considered a future prospect, but current opportunities are seen in seed and processing potatoes for export.

Moltoni said the next stage will be further industry consultation with meetings to be held across growing regions during August and September.

"We are on a very tight timeline with this project and aim to have a completed strategy plan in place by early 2020. It is crucial to have the whole of industry on board as we move towards an amazing opportunity for a more profitable future," said Moltoni.