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Rail link a boost for Sunraysia growers



Mildura line reopens after seven-month closure, with table grapes loaded on the first service

Growers in Australia's Sunraysia production hub have received a major boost with the reopening of the Mildura rail line.

A freight train bound for Melbourne left Merbein yesterday (27 February), marking the return of services to the line after a seven-month closure for upgrade works.

The Wakefield Transport Group container train, carrying table grapes and wine, travelled to the Port of Melbourne

via the recently reopened Maryborough to Ararat line, which has also been upgraded through the A\$440m Murray Basin Rail Project.

Stage two of the improvement works has allowed axle loading to increase from 19 tonnes to 21 tonnes, meaning more volume can be carried on each service.

"The Mildura line is one of our busiest rail freight links, playing a key role in transporting the Murray Basin region's grain, mineral sands, fruit,

vegetables and wine to our ports and to the world," said Victorian minister for regional development, Jaala Pulford.

The next stage of the Murray Basin Rail Project will upgrade the Sea Lake and Manangatang lines. The project is due for completion by late 2018.