



By Matthew Jones

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Coles accepts Fair Farms certification



Industry standard for ethical employment practices now backed by Australia's three major retailers

Coles has formally endorsed the Fair Farms training and certification programme.

The Australian retail giant confirmed it will accept Fair Farms certification as a way by which fresh produce suppliers can demonstrate compliance with the Coles Ethical Sourcing policy.

"Coles is pleased that we can now offer a choice in the path our suppliers follow to become approved under the Coles Ethical Sourcing Program," said Coles general manager fresh produce Craig Taylor.

"The Fair Farms programme has been designed with input from Australian farmers and retailers and offers local training support to participating farms."

Fair Farms was developed by Queensland horticultural body Growcom, with support from Ausveg, the Fair Work Ombudsman, and the Australian Department of Agriculture, Water and Environment.

Coles joins fellow leading Australian supermarket chains Woolworths and Aldi in endorsing the certification programme.

Fair Farms national programme manager, Thomas Hertel, said having an industry standard for ethical employment practices agreed across the three major retailers would make compliance easier and less costly for fresh produce suppliers.

"This means that more farm businesses are likely to adopt the Fair Farms Standard, leading to improved conditions for workers on farm," explained Hertel.

"The Fair Farms programme supports all members of the Australian horticultural supply chain. It is built on the idea that compliant and ethical employers should be recognised and rewarded for their efforts by their customers and consumers, who may choose to buy Australian produce from ethically verified sources."