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## IFAM boost for Australian Lychees



Australia's lychee industry grew exports to US despite a turbulent 2020

Australia's IFAM airfreight support programme has assisted lychee exporters maintain their market share through 2020.

Launched by the Australian government in [response](#) to the pandemic, the International Freight Assistance Mechanism (IFAM) was used by Queensland lychee growers to continue to service the US market.

In the 2019-2020 season Australia exported 25 tonnes of red lychees to the US. This season that figure trebled to 75 tonnes with the support of twice-weekly IFAM-supported flights from Brisbane to Los Angeles.

Jill Houser, executive officer of the Australian Lychee Growers Association, who runs a lychee farm at Mooloolaba on Queensland's Sunshine Coast, praised IFAM for keeping freight routes open.

"IFAM means we can get pallets on to planes destined for our key export markets at competitive rates," said Houser.

"Without the scheme it would have been much tougher to defend out hard-won market share around the world."

Around 170 farmers across a stretch of 2,500km grow lychees from Coffs Harbour in Northern New South Wales up to the Atherton Tablelands in Far North Queensland.

The industry produces around 3,000 tonnes per annum with a farm gate value of A\$34m (US\$26m). Between 20 per cent and 35 per cent of production is destined for export between November and February each season.

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