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North Coast berry collaboration

Berries Australia establishes new working group to discuss challenges and opportunities in key growing region



A new group established by Berries Australia will bring together growers from the Coffs Coast and Clarence Valley regions to promote best practices.

The North Coast working group is designed to give major berry producers a forum to discuss the challenges and opportunities berry production in the region faces.

Berries Australia chair Peter McPherson said The North Coast region brings more than A\$400m into the regional economy.

"We are focused on promoting sustainable farming practices and are working closely with the Department of Primary Industries, agricultural advisors and other experts to improve farm management," McPherson said.

"As an industry we acknowledge that our rapid expansion has led to some challenges in terms of community perception and our goal is not only to promote the positive aspects of the industry but also tackle some of the concerns head on."

McPherson said the industry was one of the largest employers in the region and the influx of seasonal workers generated significant income for small businesses.

"Our growers, their families and their employees are all active members of this community. The vast majority of people in our industry are passionate about the need to farm sustainably and to protect the environment for their children and future generations," said McPherson.

"We are very willing to take on genuine community concerns and work with the regulators to address poor behaviour. Like any industry, we want to weed out those growers not doing the right thing, whilst at the same time enable good growers to get on with the business of growing."

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