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Industry input sought on future agricultural policy

Farmers and food producers were today asked to contribute to recommendations that will help shape the future of Australia's agriculture and food sector.

The chair of the Agriculture and Food Policy Reference Group, NFF President Peter Corish — in a call for submissions — said it was an important opportunity for industry participants to provide input to the Group in developing its recommendations.

Australian Agriculture Minister, Warren Truss, announced the formation of the high-level Reference Group in March.

Mr Truss said the Group, which would report to him by the end of the year, would develop broad recommendations to improve the profitability, competitiveness and sustainability of the Australian agriculture and food sector.

“We are keen to hear from a wide range of individuals and organisations engaged in the agriculture and food industries,” Mr Corish said.

“It's an important opportunity to shape the future of the sector and should not be missed.

“Submissions from stakeholders — including farmers, food processors, regional communities and state and local governments — will ensure we consider a cross-section of views.”

Submissions close on Monday 18 July 2005.

“The Group has prepared a paper on what we see as the key challenges the sector will face in the next 10 to 15 years,” Mr Corish said.

“The paper will assist those who make submissions to focus on major issues across the sector.

“However, submissions on other issues that providers consider to be relevant to our terms of reference are also welcome.”

Further information on making submissions, including a downloadable submission pack containing the issues paper, terms of reference and submission guidelines, is available on the Reference Group's web site www.agfoodgroup.gov.au, on FreeCall **1800 427 978** or by emailing secretariat@agfoodgroup.gov.au