

Ardmona

FOODS LIMITED

A . C . N . 004 090 082

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AUSTRALIA'S RELATIONSHIP WITH THE WORLD TRADE ORGANISATION

SUBMISSION TO THE JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON TREATIES

Background:

Ardmona Foods Limited commenced operation in 1921 as a processor of deciduous fruits with a substantial export focus from those earliest days. To-day Ardmona exports more than half of its deciduous fruit production and it is therefore vitally interested in issues to do with market access and free trade.

Over the years our Industry has been adversely affected by the emergence of the EC, its high tariff protection and subsidised agricultural sector. Similar policies within the U.S.A. have also had an important impact on our industry.

Over the years the market pressures that have been applied to our Industry have resulted in the strong surviving with the result that our fruit suppliers are at least the equivalent to the best in the world as are the processors within the Industry.

Current Position:

The difficulty has been that, whilst Australia has an open market with 5% tariff protection, or zero from developing countries, the large population bases, namely the EC and U.S.A., have protection rates of:

EU	19.2%	All canned fruit
U.S.A.	14.9%	Fruit Cocktail
	17%	Peaches
	15.3%	Pears
	29.8%	Apricots

Clearly, as an Industry, there is only so much that we can do and the issues of market access fall squarely on the shoulders of Government.

W.T.O. Agriculture Negotiations:

Ardmona Foods Limited recognises and strongly supports the bilateral and multilateral Government negotiations and, to the extent that our Government plays an active role in WTO negotiations, we can only endorse their efforts and emphasis the importance of their work, particularly in the processed food industry.

We therefore strongly support Australian involvement in the WTO and the need for us to optimise our efforts in this area.

DAVID TAYLOR
C.E.O.
Ardmona Foods Limited