

39 O'Connell Street
North Melbourne
Victoria 3051
p: +61+ (0)3 9329 3511
f: +61+ (0)3 93293522
e: applenpear@apal.org.au



Apple & Pear Australia

Media Release

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Federal candidates support greater controls on imported fruit

Federal candidates standing in this weekend's election have confirmed their support for increased regulation of imported apples during a recent survey carried out by industry body, Apple and Pear Australia Ltd (APAL).

The APAL survey, which aimed to gauge the attitudes of Liberal, National, Labor and Greens candidates, revealed across the board support for government-enforced country of origin labeling.

All candidates also confirmed their backing for the strengthening of chemical and pest analysis of imported fruit, through testing to make sure chemical residues comply with Australia's Maximum Residue Levels and through changes to the Import Risk Analysis appeals process to ensure failure to assess any pest is grounds for a successful appeal.

There was unanimous support for the commissioning of research into pests and diseases in imported fruit when there is doubt about their impact on Australian industries.

Coalition and Greens candidates believed growers should receive transitional assistance once apple imports begin in order to adjust to the more competitive environment, but Labor candidates suggested there were already avenues of support through existing assistance programs.

Coalition candidates, meanwhile, promised that if they formed government, their Minister for Agriculture would be a Cabinet member and would be open to meeting and championing industry concerns.

APAL General Manager, Tony Russell, said that the response to the APAL survey was encouraging, and responses suggest that whichever government wins power, it will be supportive of a productive, profitable and sustainable industry.

"We sent our survey to federal politicians across Australia to force them to focus on the issues faced by our apple and pear growers," he said.

“We received encouraging responses which will enable us to work closely with them, once the election results are known on Saturday night.”

The politicians and candidates who responded to the questionnaire included Stuart McKenzie, Senator Anne McEwen and Senator Helen Polley from the Labor Party; Sophie Mirrabella, Russell Broadbent, Jamie Briggs and Andrew Negline from the Liberal Party; John Cobb from the Nationals; Bob Brown, Diane Atkinson and Christine Milne from the Greens, and a joint response on behalf of all the Greens candidates.

Federal Liberal campaign director, Brian Loughnane, responded on behalf of all Coalition candidates.

For more information, contact:

Media contact:

Tony Russell
General Manager, APAL
03 9329 3511 or 0419 890 669