

Item 1.0 State Food Strategy

Purpose

The purpose of this paper is;

- a. to brief the ADC on the State Food Strategy; and
- b. to seek their support by way of a recommendation by the ADC to the Minister for Fisheries for formation of the Food Council, with seat for the aquaculture industry.

Background

- The WA food industry already represents a significant part of the State's economic activity. The direct annual turnover of the WA food manufacturing industry is estimated at \$5.5 billion.
- To bring specific focus on the WA food industry, the Premier allocated the responsibility for food industry development to the Minister for Agriculture and Food in February 2006.
- The Department of Agriculture and Food and is the lead Department in food related matters, driving a supply chain approach to developing the industry. It relies on the combined expertise and commitment of many other WA Government Departments responsible for various aspects of food industry regulation and industry development.
- On 7 November 2007, the Premier and the Minister for Agriculture and Food launched several DAFWA initiatives and announced that Food Strategy WA was being developed and there would be opportunity for industry to provide further input.
- The Food strategy will address issues and impediments to growth throughout the supply chain – from production and first stage packing through to processed product for retail, hospitality and export markets.
- On 19 July 2007, an initial Food Strategy Discussion Paper was issued, calling for submissions into a potential Food Strategy for Western Australia,
- The Department of Agriculture has held a range of stakeholder forums which Dept. of Fisheries, WAFIC and ACWA members have participated.
- Submissions on the Food Strategy closed on the 10 April 2008.

Current Status

- The WA food Strategy provides an opportunity for the government to take an initiative that, over time, has the potential for significant benefits to the community.
- From the early days of the settlement of this State successive governments have assisted, in many ways, the development of the agricultural and horticultural industries of Western Australia, initially in recognition of creating an ability of the settlement to feed itself.

- Food security, along with energy security is a significant global issue.
- With WA wild caught fish stocks are already insufficient to meet the needs and demands of the community the government has a responsibility to take steps to encourage the supply of fish products, as part of the food production industry of the State, through aquaculture. However, aquaculture has been seen, to date, as an industry that is an extension of the commercial fishing industry.
- Government has, right now, a significant opportunity to create its vision of the aquaculture industry as the *new food producing industry*, as part of the Food strategy.
- This would enable government place a much higher priority on the development of this industry.

Proposal

Aquaculture is no longer an offshoot of fishing – it is a food producing industry in its own right and one of the very few opportunities to boost production of a high nutrient value food source.

ACWA considers that to achieve this end requires the implementation of appropriate governance structures.

It is on this basis, ACWA sees merit in the formation of a Food Council which provides strategic advice to government on the development of the Food industry. To ensure whole of government support the Food Council would gain much if it was chaired by the Premier, and would indicate the government commitment to the expansion of the food sectors growth.

Recommendation

That the ADC advise the Minister for Fisheries that he seeks;

1. the formation of the Food Council, with a seat for the aquaculture industry.
2. the involvement of the Premier in the chairing of the Food Council.

Item 2.0 WAFIC CRC strategy Document

ACWA will table the WAFIC CRC for Seafood strategy document.