Media Release

Willem Westra van Holthe, Member for Katherine
Deputy Chief Minister of the Northern Territory, Minister for Primary Industry and Fisheries

Industry first as Australian mangoes are exported to America

3 March 2015

Australian mangoes have broken into the United States market for the first time, with six tonnes of the tropical fruit exported to Texas earlier this month.

Minister for Primary Industry and Fisheries Willem Westra van Holthe said the move follows 15 years of export protocol negotiations.

“We have been working towards this day for a long time. It’s a remarkable achievement that will open the door to a large and exciting new market,” Minister Westra van Holthe said.

“As NT mangoes are currently out of season, the fruit was sourced from Queensland, however, in November ripe NT mangoes will be able to be sent off to American supermarket shelves”

“The NT did have some involvement in the initial shipment, with our DPIF Market Development Officer Michael Daysh escorting Australia’s first-ever shipment of the tropical fruit to America to assess the distribution pathway and the process of putting them on supermarket shelves,” he said

President of the NT Mango Industry Association, Ross Maxwell said the domestic market was somewhat saturated, so to stay viable in the next 10 to 15 years, the Territory would have to look beyond our shores.

“The US market is wonderful—the most promising of all the markets we’ve looked at,” he said.

“It’s very stable, with clear and consistent rules and regulations, as well as offering the opportunity to gain access to 318 million potential mango lovers, boosting our NT industry.”

Leading up to the historic shipment, the US Department of Agriculture audited Australian growers, packing sheds and treatment facilities to ensure regulatory compliance.

After arriving in Los Angeles by air and passing inspection, the 1200 pieces of fruit were loaded on a truck for Texas. Six days later they appeared on shelves in nine stores across five cities.

Mr Daysh observed a sales display as shoppers enjoyed a free taste at a Dallas supermarket.
“Most people had never seen an Australian mango - they were accustomed to $1.99 mangoes from Peru which are not as colourful and not as well flavoured,” Mr Daysh said.

“At $3.99 each, Aussie mangoes are a premium product, but they sold out quickly.”

Australian growers produced 45,000 tonnes of mangoes in 2012–13 with exports valued at $16 million. The federal Mango Export Plan aims to increase mango exports by 100% during the next three years.

Photo caption:
Australian mangoes sold quickly at a Dallas supermarket

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