



USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

# GAIN Report

Global Agriculture Information Network

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## Australia

### Agricultural Situation

### Corish Report: Government Response

### 2006

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**Report Highlights:**

On October 3, 2006, Agriculture Minister Peter McGauran released the Australian Government's response to the Corish Report, a February 2006 report on future directions for Australian agriculture that proposed progressive actions on trade, biotechnology and quarantine. The Government has accepted 35 recommendations outright and will consider a further 17 in the lead up to the 2007 budget. The Government's response will also include an agriculture and food policy statement to be released early in 2007.

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Includes PSD Changes: No  
Includes Trade Matrix: No  
Unscheduled Report  
Canberra [AS1]  
[AS]

On October 3, 2006 the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, Peter McGauran, released the Australian Government's response to the Corish Report, which was released in February 2006 (see GAIN Report AS6013). A full copy of the response can be found at: [http://www.daffa.gov.au/about/publications/corish\\_report\\_response](http://www.daffa.gov.au/about/publications/corish_report_response).

Announcing the Government response to the report, "Creating our Future: Agriculture and Food Policy for the Next Generation" (the Corish Report), Australian Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, Peter McGauran, said that the report was a comprehensive assessment of the Government's priorities for Australia's rural and food industries.

As part of the response to the Corish Report, Mr. McGauran made several announcements, and signaled that the Government response would form the basis of a landmark agriculture and food policy statement ('the 2007 Agriculture Statement') to be released early next year.

"The 2007 Agriculture Statement will cover themes including self-reliance, productivity and industry growth; competitiveness through trade, quarantine, biotechnology and reducing business costs; and sustainability and natural resource management," Mr. McGauran said.

"We must have a genuine partnership between governments and industry. I will continue to consult with industry leaders on the direction of the policy statement. Our farmers and their families need to be in a position to benefit from the opportunities that lie ahead."

"The Government has accepted the overwhelming majority of the Corish Report recommendations. The Government has also noted a number of recommendations which primarily deal with major funding programs currently under review."

Mr McGauran also highlighted the Government's commitment to:

- Evaluate the portfolio's flagship package, Agriculture Advancing Australia;
- Build on the success of the Natural Heritage Trust and National Action Plan for Salinity and Water Quality through continuing support of natural resource management beyond 2008 [<http://www.maff.gov.au/releases/06/06137pmj.html>]; and
- Conduct a review into aspects of food regulation, with a view to reducing red tape for agriculture and food businesses.

The Corish Report outlined a number of foundations for success for agricultural and food industries.

- A stronger emphasis on innovation in production and marketing, underpinned by leading edge research and development is fundamental to longer-term business success.
- Sound macroeconomic and microeconomic policies, supported by substantial ongoing investment in infrastructure, will be vital to a low cost, globally competitive sector.
- A whole of chain, paddock to plate approach is needed to service consumer requirements efficiently and effectively.
- Policies must focus on achieving greater self-reliance of business operators.
- The regulatory burden facing businesses must be reduced.
- Relevant information must be communicated in a clearer, more timely, accessible and accurate manner.
- A partnership approach between businesses and governments will bring the best longer-term improvements in the sector's viability and sustainability.
- A genuinely cooperative and consistent approach by governments — Australian, state and territory — is essential for policies and programs affecting the sector.

The Government agrees that these are fundamental to the future prosperity of the agriculture and food sector. In response, the Government will:

- Continue to provide sound macroeconomic and microeconomic policies and be fiscally responsible;
- Value the role of the agriculture, fisheries, forestry and food sector in the economy, and in particular its strong contribution to the economic, social and environmental health of rural and regional communities;
- Seek to promote the profitability and competitiveness of the farming, fishing, forestry and food sector by reducing unnecessary regulatory impediments along the supply chain and enabling the sector to capture opportunities for growth;
- Aim to facilitate self reliance by helping to equip the agriculture, fisheries and forestry sector with knowledge, skills and opportunities;
- Continue working to reduce international trade distortions and improve market access for Australian exporters;
- Work in partnership with industries to continue to encourage innovation, research and development and ongoing productivity improvements that underpin success;
- With industries and the community, work cooperatively to maintain the sustainable natural resource base that is critical to the future of all Australians;
- Continue to work with other governments and industries to maintain Australia's favorable pest and disease status; and
- Provide help for primary producers and industries, in partnership, to manage change, and, consistent with broader community obligations, in times of genuine crisis, provide a welfare safety net.

Source: DAFF press release dated 10/3/2006 & Australian Government Response to the Corish Report.

## Background

On February 16, 2006, The Agriculture and Food Policy Reference Group released its report, "Creating Our Future: Agriculture and Food Policy for the Next Generation". Agriculture Minister McGauran commissioned the report in March 2005 to help guide the development of future directions in Australian agricultural policies. The reference group was chaired by National Farmers' Federation President Peter Corish, and the report is referred to as 'The Corish Report.'

The Corish Report findings affect governments at all levels, as well as industry, and cover matters as diverse as trade, biotechnology, natural resources, transport, quarantine and biosecurity. It also examines the sector's capacity to adapt to change and remain competitive. Generally, the Corish Report is optimistic about the sector's future, but warns that there are major challenges ahead.

## Recent Reports from FAS/Canberra

The reports listed below can all be downloaded from the FAS website at:  
<http://www.fas.usda.gov/scripts/AttacheRep/default.asp>.

Report Number	Title of Report	Date
6013	The Corish Report: "Creating Our Future: Ag & Food Policy for the Next Generation"	03/08/06
6016	Cyclone Larry Affects Sugar Industry	03/21/06
6017	Grain Annual	03/21/06
6020	Stone Fruit Annual	04/03/06
6022	Grains Week Features 'Discussion Paper' Proposing Radical Changes to Single Desk	04/12/06
6023	Sugar Annual	04/13/06
6027	Cotton & Products Annual	05/15/06
6032	Dairy Semi Annual	05/30/06
6033	Wheat Australia sells 350,000 MT to Iraq	05/31/06
6035	Australia Actively Pursuing FTAs	06/07/06
6036	Wine Annual	06/08/06
6037	Sugar Smut Outbreak in Queensland	06/20/06
6039	Agricultural Biotechnology Annual	06/28/06
6040	Worst Frost in 20 Years Affects Australian Citrus Production	06/27/06
6042	Australian FTA with Gulf States	06/30/06
6045	Citrus Update	07/17/06
6054	Drought Update	09/05/06
6057	Livestock Annual	09/13/06
6061	Sugar Semi-Annual	09/29/2006