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Farmers call for Parliament to heed ChAFTA warning

For immediate release

[Australian Dairy Farmers](#) (ADF) the [United Dairyfarmers of Victoria](#) (UDV) and the [Victorian Farmers Federation](#) (VFF) are calling on Federal Parliament to heed messages from the Chinese Ambassador to Australia, Ma Zhaouxu, and ensure the China-Australia Free Trade Agreement (ChAFTA) does not “slip through our fingers”.

ADF, UDV and the VFF have welcomed Mr Zhaouxu’s comments, which recognised that “the sooner ChAFTA comes into force, the quicker it will benefit producers and consumers in both countries.”

The timely warning came as the peak farm lobby groups wrapped up a regional roadshow in Victoria, which asked farmers and their communities for help in getting the China agreement ratified before the end of the 2015 calendar year.

More than 300 farmers came together over the last week with a resounding call for the China Free Trade Agreement to be ratified by the end of the year. The FTA roadshow started in the state’s west in Warrnambool, touring through Colac, Timboon, Tatura, Cohuna, Leongatha and then finishing on Tuesday in the state’s south in Warragul.

UDV President, Adam Jenkins said the roadshow highlighted the benefits of the ChAFTA to the broader Australian community, as well as breaking down myths created by anti-FTA movements.

“This deal is a generational opportunity to grow our major agricultural supply chains. Dairy, livestock, horticulture, viticulture, grains, and cotton all stand to benefit from the China FTA passing our Federal Parliament,” Mr Jenkins said.

“The union movement is running a misleading and deceptive scare campaign. The facts are that this China FTA will be good for jobs, good for the economy and a boom for our agricultural export market.

ADF President, Noel Campbell called on farmers across all sectors and parts of the country to get ChAFTA over the line.

“Farmers are leading the push to get the deal passed through Parliament. We have been wearing a path to Canberra, lobbying both sides of parliament and the independent senators to highlight why this deal is important,” Mr Campbell said.

“The ChAFTA is under threat. We need farmers, processors, service providers and regional communities to help us get this deal over the line before the end of the year. We need your help to show your neighbours, friends and family why this deal matters for not just for agriculture, but for the entire Australian community.”

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