

18 October 2024

The Hon. Dr Jim Chalmers, MP
Federal Treasurer

The Hon. Julie Collins, MP
Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

The Hon. Dr Andrew Leigh
Assistant Minister for Competition, Charities and Treasury

Dear Treasurer, Minister and Assistant Minister

Re: Independent Review of the Food and Grocery Code

I write to you as CEO of Freshmark, the industry body dedicated to improving the central market system by helping wholesalers, growers, independent retailers, and the wider fresh produce sector achieve and maintain profitability. Freshmark is based in the heart of Sydney Markets, the largest central market in Australia, transacting approximately \$3 billion in produce per annum.

On behalf of our members and the broader independent fresh produce sector, I applaud the Government for initiating the review of the Food and Grocery Code and for committing to the implementation of all of the review's recommendations.

Freshmark was very pleased to see that the voice of the independent fresh produce sector was clearly heard through this review process. We acknowledge the deep and thorough nature of the review process. The recommendations will help ensure that those businesses operating in the independent fresh produce supply chain are sustainable and able to offer choice and competition for Australian consumers.

As you would be aware, the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission is currently partway through a separate inquiry into the supermarkets. This inquiry is due to hand down its final report early next year. There is potential for this inquiry to make recommendations that could lead to the need for further changes to the Food and Grocery Code. We recognise that the code will not be due for further review for five years following the introduction of changes resulting from the Emerson review but would ask that the door be kept open to make additional updates sooner than this, depending on the outcome of the ACCC inquiry.

Thank you again for your commitment to a sustainable fresh produce sector, including the vital independent supply chain that creates competition and choice for all Australians.

Should you be interested in seeing Australia's biggest central market in action, it would be my pleasure to arrange a tour of Sydney Markets.

Yours faithfully

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CEO, Freshmark



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