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India target of almond trade delegation

Australia's three biggest almond exporters will head a trade visit to India later this week in a bid to further increase sales to the sub-continent.

Almond Board of Australia (ABA) chief executive officer Julie Haslett will lead the delegation to New Delhi for India's largest annual food, drink and hospitality exhibition – IFE-India.

Ms Haslett said the trip would include hosting a function for more than 100 almond distributors in India and was designed to strengthen ties and promote the premium quality of Australian almonds.

ABA marketing manager Joseph Ebbage along with representatives from the industry's three major marketing companies in Almondco Australia, Select Harvests Ltd and Nut Producers Australia will accompany Ms Haslett.

She said a willingness of major stakeholders in the industry to work together on such marketing initiatives was a credit to them all and would assist the ABA in maximizing the potential of the trip.

India is Australia's biggest almond export market, worth more than \$20 million a year.

"With Australian production levels set to double in the next four years, it is important for ongoing trade relations to formally acknowledge the contribution these distributors make to our industry," Ms Haslett said. "We know that almonds already have a special place in the Indian culture.

"Indian families have long regarded almonds as brain food and it is common practice for them to feed their children a small portion of almonds daily to assist with their development. Ultimately, we aim to encourage families all over the world to do the same thing."

"An enormous amount of resources have been invested into educating consumers around the world about the health benefits of eating almonds."

Ms Haslett said the reputation of the almond in India was possibly the strongest in the world.

"They already appreciate what almonds can do for them and the fact that they are used as traditional gifts during the various festive seasons also tells us that they are considered a high value commodity. We are preaching to the converted in many ways, so there should be some exciting opportunities to come out of this trip."

- **For further information contact Julie Haslett on 0418 958 187**

Background:

Almond Board of Australia (ABA) is a non profit, membership based organisation representing the interests of Australian almond growers, processors and marketers.

As the Australian almond industry's peak industry body, the ABA facilitates further growth of the industry, seeks to maximise its profitability and ensure its sustainability, by providing a platform for industry members to collectively respond to industry-wide issues, invest in research and marketing, share knowledge and interact with government and other stakeholders.

The Australian Almond Industry currently produces 25,000 tonnes of almonds on an annual basis, with a related farm gate value of \$150 million dollars. Production is expected to triple by 2015 as new plantings reach full maturity, with a related value of \$500 million dollars.

Key almond growing areas are located in Sunraysia (Victoria), the Riverland and Adelaide (South Australia) and the Riverina region (New South Wales).

For more information visit www.australianalmonds.com.au or email: admin@australianalmonds.com.au