



Northern Territory Chamber of Commerce

Singleton Horticulture Project

Comment on FortuneAgri's Referral to EPA

I write on behalf of NT Chamber of Commerce in relation to the Singleton Horticulture Project.

We represent a large proportion of businesses in the NT, including in the Barkly region and Alice Springs. Over the past two weeks we have facilitated information sessions by Fortune Agri (FA) to our members in Darwin, Tennant Creek and Alice Springs. All three sessions were well attended and generated considerable interest in the Singleton farm project. We have also accessed the detailed documentation that FA submitted to the EPA when applying for environmental approval for the project.

Based on the information provided, and the feedback from our members, we make the following points for the EPA's consideration:

- The proposed farm is sited in one of the most disadvantaged regions of the NT, and is one of very few prospects on the horizon that can make a real difference to the livelihoods of the local people.
- This extends to Tennant Creek where businesses face uncertain futures and, in some cases, must contend with a boom/bust cycle of opportunity. This project is planned to ramp up progressively over nine years and then continue steadily for 30 Years plus.
- According to the economic analysis of FA's plans, the project will deliver an average of 70 FTE jobs during the nine year construction period and around 420 FTE positions when fully operational. This is a huge opportunity for Central Australia where sustainable jobs are crucial for economic growth and social stability.
- \$200m revenue when developed will increase the gross regional product of Barkly LGA by around 45%. It will add significantly to the NTG's economic growth goals.
- Much of the \$90m annual expenditure will be spent locally.
- Not only will the Singleton farm itself boost the economy and livelihoods of the region, the capital investment of \$250m will deliver infrastructure that can be accessed by others and lead to a genuine new economic precinct in the Barkly region, based largely on the volume of accessible water for agriculture under the Western Davenport Water Allocation Plan.

The consultant reports that accompany FA's submission to the EPA clearly describe the potential environmental risks and explain the measures that will be taken to remove or minimize these risks. There are no residual high risks as a result of the Singleton farm.

In the view of the Chamber, the Singleton farm is a unique opportunity to make a step change in the well being of the local community and a catalyst for long term economic growth which will benefit the Barkly region as well as the NT overall, with minimal impacts to the environment.

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