# Industry representative support for Australia’s overseas counsellor network

(Duration 3 mins 03 secs)

## Transcript

[Video begins]

**Lee McLean (CEO, Australian Grape & Wine):** For the Australian wine industry, we export about 60% of what we produce and we've always been a trading industry. So, we've been trading for decades and the role of agricultural counsellors has been particularly important over the last few years, particularly in emerging markets where there are complex regulatory settings, but also in multilateral forums as well. So we utilise the network just about every day.

**Charles McElhone (GM, Sustainable Dairy, Dairy Australia):** It's incredibly valuable to have this Ag Counsellor network all around the world. I mean, for an organisation like Dairy Australia and the dairy industry, most of our organisations are based here in Australia, so having those people on the ground to actually manage through issues as and when they arise is incredibly beneficial for us - to be able to have that network, the linkages in with government. We've got someone who can really champion the industry and carry the message and advocate on our behalf.

**Clare McCelland (CEO Australian Fresh Produce Alliance):** Where we'd be without the Counsellor Network is always difficult to say because I think that the richness of the insight that they have, that they can bring back to industry and government about what's happening on the ground, how industry needs to respond, where we can take our technical market access, and how we should engage in market is just really invaluable. I don't think there's another resource out there that provides that level of insight to industry.

**Andrew McCallum (Trade and Market Access Meat and Livestock Australia):** The Ag Counsellors have access to governments in those markets that we as an industry may not have. And so it's vital that we have that ongoing rapport with the councillors in market to glean what's happening, particularly on the political side, but also the regulatory side, and feed that back to industry. So we're sort of warned about potential changes or indeed try to offset them before they come into fruition, if they're not in our advantage. Having the Counsellor Network their relationships that they've built up with their counterparts in market critical to offsetting potential imposts and resolving any hiccups along the way.

**Pat O’Shannassy (CEO, Grain Trade Australia):** Well, international trade for the grains industry, we tend to export about 70 to 75% of what we produce. So even though Australia is our largest single market, the rest of it goes all over the world. So, without that that trade we wouldn't have any industry. Trade at the end of the day is about relationships and understanding and understanding the people and the cultures that you're dealing with. And I've had the good fortune of being in markets, working with some of those Ag Counsellors, and we think that it's an indispensable part of what the agricultural department offers industry.

**Warren Males (Head of Economics, Canegrowers):** The network is a really vital part of Australia's agricultural trade infrastructure, and I think it is a component of that that infrastructure. And I certainly hope that the department and the government recognises its value and its importance and continues that for many years to come.

[Video ends]

**Acknowledgement of Country**

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of Australia and their continuing connection to land and sea, waters, environment and community. We pay our respects to the Traditional Custodians of the lands we live and work on, their culture, and their Elders past and present.

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