

**The Australian Government has announced they will be pursuing appropriate action via World Trade Organization (WTO) in relation India's domestic subsidies on sugar exports.**

## **Media Release**

### **Indian sugar subsidies**

Minister for Trade, Tourism and Investment, Simon Birmingham  
Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources, David Littleproud  
Assistant Minister for Trade, Tourism and Investment, Mark Coulton

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The Liberal-National Government is standing up for the right of Australia's sugar industry to a competitive environment by taking action in the World Trade Organization (WTO) regarding India's use of sugar subsidies.

Minister for Trade, Tourism and Investment Simon Birmingham said the use of domestic subsidies by India had contributed to a significant downturn in world sugar prices that was impacting our local sugar industry.

"We will support the right of our sugar industry to compete on equal terms and will utilise well established global trading rules to defend the interests of our farmers," Minister Birmingham said.

"Whilst we support efforts by countries to develop their agricultural industries, these efforts need to be consistent with their WTO obligations and applied in a manner that doesn't distort global trade.

"We have raised our industry's deeply held concerns on numerous occasions with senior levels of the Indian Government. We are disappointed our concerns haven't been addressed and now see little choice other than to ramp up our efforts to stand up for the rights of our cane farmers and sugar millers.

"We will now engage in formal discussions with India and other WTO members regarding this issue at the upcoming WTO Committee of Agriculture meeting later this month. We continue to be willing to engage in any and all discussions that may resolve this issue.

"Despite our concerns on sugar subsidies, our relationship with India is far stronger than this one particular issue and I'm confident Australia and India will build on their already vibrant economic and strategic relationship well into the future."

Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources David Littleproud said distortions to the global sugar market had impacted Australia's 4,000 cane farms and 24 sugar mills.

"I want our farmers to be fairly rewarded for their effort," Minister Littleproud said.

"We're in there fighting for our sugar farmers. They deserve someone in their corner who isn't afraid to use the options available to them.

"We'll continue to support our farmers and producers, and make sure their interests are protected."

Assistant Minister for Trade, Tourism and Investment Mark Coulton said this action was about standing up for our regional producers and the \$2 billion sugar industry.

"This is about protecting 40,000 direct and indirect jobs and the health of regional communities," Assistant Minister Coulton said.

Les Elphinstone

***Manager KCGO***