

MEDIA RELEASE



Non-tariff barriers just as important in FTAs

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The Australian Meat Industry Council (AMIC) congratulates the Morrison government on reaching an agreed Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) and signing the Joint Agreement on Sunday 15 November with 15 countries.

"AMIC recognises the achievement of reaching a signed deal after eight years of negotiation," said AMIC CEO Patrick Hutchinson, "and we look forward to it progressing through domestic legal and parliamentary processes in each of the countries, towards ratification and entry into force."

"We hope the RCEP is utilised as an opportunity to improve Australia's relationship on trade with China.

"Access will still be an issue and AMIC continues to work with government on a range of solutions for our industry," said Mr Hutchinson.

"This trade deal allows us to solidify existing relationships and develop new ones, especially within ASEAN, however, this does not mean we can diversify from one market for another under this deal.

"Australia must realise that it is easy to try and diversify markets to achieve volume. It is a lot harder to diversify markets to achieve value."

It is important to state that Free Trade Agreements are only one piece of the trade puzzle, as non-tariff barriers are just as important to solve, in combination with FTAs, to achieve true Free Trade, and we cannot forget it.

"Our industry continues, like others, to remain under pressure from non-tariff barriers. RCEP will provide additional avenues for tackling non-tariff barriers by promoting compliance with WTO rules and further improving cooperation and transparency," said Mr Hutchinson.

Non-tariff barriers can include a range of things not carried by a Free Trade Agreement.

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