



MEDIA RELEASE

DR CRAIG EMERSON

Minister for Trade

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Nationals at odds with farmers over Pacific trade pact

The National Party is betraying farmers in questioning the benefits of the Trans-Pacific Partnership, Trade Minister Craig Emerson said today.

He said comments from National Party Leader Warren Truss, backed up by Senator Barnaby Joyce, that the TPP framework announcement from the weekend APEC meetings was a “thought bubble that will go nowhere” exposed the Nationals’ lack of understanding of the regional pact, as well as their protectionist sentiments.

“Yet again the Nationals are putting themselves at odds with the National Farmers’ Federation and Australia’s farmers with their anti-trade policies,” Dr Emerson said.

“Barnaby Joyce’s economic Hansonism is influencing Tony Abbott’s policy positions much more than pro-market Liberals such as his Deputy, Julie Bishop, and pro-market Liberal backbenchers.”

Dr Emerson said Australia would be pressing for better access to agricultural export markets in negotiations for the TPP.

He noted that that National Farmers’ Federation had thrown its support behind the completion of a regional trade accord.

“In contrast, the Nationals are embracing a Fortress Australia mentality as they deride the great strides taken in securing commitment to the TPP from Asia-Pacific nations,” Dr Emerson said.

“About 60 per cent of Australia’s agricultural produce is exported, so to be anti-trade is to be anti-farmer,” he added.

“The National Party obviously believes that there’s too much trade going on in Australia; that we export too much.

“Well, if that’s what they think, let them say so,” Dr Emerson said.

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