



Submission: National Food Security Strategy

Building a Secure Future for Food, Fuel and Feed

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GrainCorp

Partnering for a sustainable future

GrainCorp is a leading Australian agribusiness with over 100 years of history servicing farmers, rural communities and global markets. With a vision to lead sustainable and innovative agriculture into the next century, GrainCorp plays a vital role in strengthening national food security, export competitiveness and regional development.

We operate the largest grain storage and handling network on the east coast of Australia, with more than 180 receival sites and seven bulk export terminals, connecting over 10,000 growers to domestic and international customers. GrainCorp exports wheat, barley, canola and other broadacre crops to more than 50 countries, playing a central role in ensuring Australian grain moves efficiently through the supply chain.

We are also the country's largest canola processor, producing high-quality edible oils and renewable fuel feedstocks, with canola meal as a vital co-product. Canola meal is a protein-rich feed source for livestock, essential to Australia's beef, dairy, pork and poultry industries.

This demonstrates our integrated Food, Fuel and Feed system: oil supports food and renewable fuel, while meal underpins feed security. Renewable fuel production strengthens, rather than competes with, the food system by generating co-products that are critical in their own right.

Beyond grain and oilseeds, GrainCorp supports livestock producers through animal nutrition services, produces trusted food ingredients, and is Australia's largest exporter of used cooking oil and tallow. We are also partnering with Ampol and IFM Investors to explore the development of an integrated renewable fuel supply chain in Australia. These investments reinforce our role at the intersection of food security, energy transition and regional economic development.

This breadth of operations across storage, trading, processing, human nutrition, animal nutrition and agri-energy gives GrainCorp a unique perspective on the opportunities and risks across the food system. We see food security as part of an interconnected Food, Fuel and Feed framework that can deliver resilience, affordability and sustainability for Australian consumers and producers alike.

Executive summary

Australia's food system is resilient but faces increasing pressures. Climate variability, global trade disruptions, biosecurity threats, freight bottlenecks, and concentrated input markets all impact national food security.

A forward-looking Strategy is essential to protect consumers, support farmers and maintain Australia's reputation as a reliable exporter. Importantly, food security must be understood as an outcome of the entire integrated supply chain.

GrainCorp recommends that the Strategy be anchored in a three-horizon framework:

- **Short term (1–2 years):** Deliver immediate relief through targeted supply chain upgrades, nationally harmonised freight and harvest rules, streamlined approvals and enhanced biosecurity.
- **Medium term (5–10 years):** Invest in intermodal and port infrastructure, scale digital traceability systems, strengthen sovereign processing capacity in renewable fuel feedstocks, and implement drought and soil health programs.
- **Long term (10+ years):** Embed climate resilient energy strategies, transition to a circular economy, and position Australian agriculture as a global leader in low emissions, and sustainable food, feed, and fuel.

A unifying concept for the Strategy should be **Food, Fuel and Feed**. Supporting these domains together will strengthen national resilience, lower freight costs, create new regional industries, and improve food access for regional and remote communities.

To achieve this, the Strategy should:

- Recognise energy, fertiliser, labour and transport as critical inputs.
- Prioritise investment in freight and port infrastructure.
- Embed nationally consistent, streamlined approvals processes and regulation.
- Ensure the creation of a domestic renewable fuels industry complements food and feed supply through Australian-focused policy.
- Expand sovereign processing in renewable fuels feedstock to capture more value onshore and increase supply of critical feed co-products.

These priorities align with broader national reform directions, linking food security policy with economic and energy strategies will deliver benefits across the entire supply chain.

Response to consultation questions

1. What other principles should government, industry and community prioritise to support the development of the strategy and why are these important?

Food security requires resilience across the supply chain. This includes safeguarding critical inputs such as energy, fertiliser, labour and transport. Sovereign processing capacity should be expanded to reduce reliance on imports and manage geopolitical risks. Climate resilience must be embedded through stewardship, drought preparedness and low emissions technologies. Freight regulation and approvals need to be nationally consistent and efficient. Markets must be competitive and transparent, while ensuring equitable access for regional and remote communities. Accountability should be reinforced through clear reporting and continuous consultation.

It is also important that government builds upon existing national strategies and integrates effectively with state-based strategies to ensure coherence and avoid duplication of effort. This integration should extend to areas such as freight planning and maintenance, workforce development and biosecurity preparedness, where states already play a central role.

By aligning national and state efforts, the Strategy can deliver more consistent outcomes across regions and avoid fragmentation in critical policy areas.

Government should explore further:

- How to secure access to critical inputs such as fertiliser and energy during global disruptions.
- Incentives to support sovereign processing of oilseeds and protein products.
- Market mechanisms to measure and reward stewardship at the farm and processor level.

2. What timeframe should the strategy work towards – short (1 to 2 years), medium (5 to 10 years) or long (10-plus years) term, and why?

The Strategy must operate across all three horizons, with each horizon building on the last to create a coherent pathway.

In the short term, targeted infrastructure upgrades, nationally harmonised freight and harvest rules, streamlined approvals processes and immediate biosecurity strengthening will help ease costs and stabilise supply chains.

Over the medium term, the focus should shift towards expanding intermodal capacity, modernising ports, scaling up digital traceability platforms and establishing sovereign renewable fuel manufacturing projects to strengthen both energy and food security.

In the long term, reforms should embed climate resilient energy systems, deliver sustainable port planning and support the transition to a circular, low emissions economy across agriculture and food processing.

- **Short term (1–2 years):** Practical infrastructure upgrades, consistent freight rules, faster approvals and enhanced biosecurity.
- **Medium term (5–10 years):** Intermodal expansion, port modernisation, traceability platforms and sovereign renewable fuel projects.
- **Long term (10+ years):** Climate resilient energy frameworks, sustainable port planning and a fully integrated circular economy.

3. Are there examples of current or planned initiatives by you or your organisation to improve food security in your sector?

GrainCorp is actively investing in initiatives that strengthen Australia's food security through sustainable production, supply chain resilience and innovation in agri-food systems.

We are working with industry leaders Ampol and IFM Investors to explore the establishment of a domestic renewable fuels industry using Australian-grown feedstocks. This supports fuel security and lowers emissions, while generating canola meal as a co-product. Canola meal is an essential component of livestock and dairy feed, which underpins secure protein supply chains. In 2024-25, nearly 80% of Australia's canola was exported as a raw commodity, much of it used to manufacture renewable fuels overseas.

Through our *GrainCorp Next* program, we are trialling decarbonising our oilseed supply chain and supporting sustainable production credentials that enable continued access to global markets. This includes optimising emissions reduction across the canola value chain, from paddock to port, with the view to expand to other commodities over time.

In animal nutrition, GrainCorp continues to expand secure feed supply for the livestock and dairy industries, both of which are key pillars of food production in Australia. Our recent acquisitions have increased capacity and expertise to service year-round demand for high-quality nutritional inputs.

We are also co-investing with state governments in rail siding extensions across our east coast Australia network, to reduce freight costs and improve access to domestic and international markets. These enhancements support both growers and food manufacturers by improving supply chain efficiency.

Our *GrainCorp Community Foundation* contributes to rural and regional resilience, including to local education and health programs, which is a critical element of community-based food security.

Through *GrainCorp Ventures*, our corporate venture capital arm, we are supporting the next generation of technologies that aim to transform food and agriculture systems. GrainCorp Ventures invests in start-ups aligned to four focus areas: supply chain efficiency, crop protection and nutrition, ag-biotech, and sustainable inputs and materials. Backed by Artesian Venture Partners, we have committed \$30 million to accelerating solutions that benefit Australian agriculture and food production.

Case Study: Levur

Levur is a synthetic biology start-up that is reimagining how edible oils can be produced. Backed by GrainCorp Ventures, Levur is developing yeast-based fermentation technology to produce high-performance oil alternatives that can be used in food, feed and industrial applications.

Today, Australia relies heavily on imported palm oil, which is widely used across the food manufacturing sector. However, palm oil production is associated with deforestation, biodiversity loss and ethical supply chain risks. It is also increasingly exposed to global market disruptions, climate volatility and tightening regulatory requirements on sustainability and traceability.

By producing oil in controlled fermentation environments, Levur's technology reduces land use pressure, avoids deforestation, and allows for domestic production of oils that are functionally equivalent to palm oil. This has several food security benefits:

- Reduces Australia's reliance on imports of key food manufacturing inputs, increasing national self-sufficiency.
- Diversifies the domestic supply of edible oils, making the sector more resilient to global shocks.
- Supports traceability and clean-label ingredient trends, helping Australian food manufacturers meet rising consumer and regulatory expectations.

For GrainCorp, the investment in Levur aligns with our strategy to support emerging solutions that strengthen agricultural sustainability and food systems resilience. It also reflects our commitment to helping Australian growers and manufacturers remain competitive and future fit as global markets evolve.

Levur demonstrates the potential for biotechnology to play a transformational role in food security by localising critical inputs, improving sustainability outcomes and enhancing supply chain resilience in Australia's food system.

4. Do the proposed key priority areas and whole-of-system considerations adequately represent the actions needed for an effective food security strategy? If not, what is missing?

The framework proposed in the consultation paper provides a strong foundation, but several important gaps must be addressed if the Strategy is to be comprehensive.

Energy, alongside fertiliser, must be explicitly recognised as a critical input into the food system, given its role in powering storage, processing and transport. Without reliable access to affordable energy, the resilience of the entire food chain is at risk.

Likewise, renewable fuel policy needs to be deliberately integrated with food and feed strategies to ensure that expansion of bioenergy strengthens, rather than competes with, food security objectives. This integration is particularly important for oilseeds, where fuel and feed co-products are produced together.

Regulatory processes and interoperability across rail and road networks also require greater attention. Inconsistent regulations act as a brake on investment and innovation. A nationally consistent and streamlined approach would reduce costs, improve efficiency and provide industry with the certainty needed to invest in infrastructure and processing capacity.

Beyond this, accountability must be embedded not only through measurable outcomes but also through formal, consistent industry consultation and transparent reporting. This would ensure that government and industry remain aligned in responding to new risks as they emerge.

In addition, the Strategy should better highlight the role of sovereign processing capacity in capturing more value onshore and insulating Australia from global supply chain shocks. Investment in regional processing can help create skilled jobs, reduce dependence on imports and underpin national resilience.

5. What actions could the strategy take to address challenges under each key priority area?

Resilient supply chains and productivity, innovation and economic growth are rightly identified in the consultation paper as central priorities.

Australian grain freight costs are more than triple those in countries like Canada and Ukraine, placing pressure on farm gate prices and export competitiveness. Building resilience across the national supply chain requires coordinated, long-term investment to ensure rail, road and port networks are efficient, reliable and capable of withstanding pressures. Strategic upgrades to priority corridors, stronger intermodal connections and consistent national regulation for freight and harvest management will reduce costs, improve throughput and lift efficiency.

Long term planning for port capacity, underpinned by transparent infrastructure pipelines, will provide certainty for industry and encourage investment. Contingency arrangements for critical inputs such as fuel, fertiliser and energy will also be essential to maintaining continuity of supply during global or domestic shocks.

At the same time, productivity, innovation and economic growth must be strengthened through collaboration in research and development, improved extension services and greater support for value adding industries.

Research outcomes need to move quickly from laboratory to farm and factory, supported by streamlined approval pathways. Widespread adoption of low emissions and climate resilient practices will strengthen domestic production and enhance export competitiveness.

Expanding regional processing capacity will capture more value onshore, create skilled regional jobs and reinforce feed security. Renewable fuel production from Australian oilseeds demonstrates this opportunity: the oil provides low carbon energy while the canola meal co-product is critical for livestock.

Encouraging circular economy approaches that convert agricultural waste into feed, fertiliser or fuel will further lower costs and emissions. Regulatory reform will be essential to accelerate investment in processing facilities, supply-chain infrastructure and renewable energy projects, unlocking productivity gains and supporting regional economic growth.

6. What actions could the strategy take to address challenges under these whole-of-system considerations?

To address climate change and sustainability, the strategy should prioritise rewarding land stewardship practices that improve soil health, biodiversity and carbon outcomes. This includes expanding investment in renewable energy infrastructure, as well as incentivising circular economy initiatives that reduce waste and create additional value from agricultural by-products such as canola meal and used cooking oil.

In the area of health and nutrition, the strategy should support stronger traceability and food safety systems. These are essential for protecting consumers and maintaining trust in Australia's food exports, particularly in high-value and regulated international markets.

For trade and market access, it is critical that Australia maintains its reputation as a reliable exporter. This can be supported by diversifying export markets, reducing reliance on single trading partners, and aligning Australian standards with international regulatory frameworks.

In terms of national and regional security, the strategy should promote the development of renewable fuel capacity to support resilient supply chains and transport logistics. Coordinated emergency planning and a strong national biosecurity system are also essential to protect the integrity of Australia's food, feed and fuel systems.

Governance, measurement, and next steps

The establishment of a permanent National Food Council is essential to provide cross sector leadership. The Council should maintain a 10-year infrastructure pipeline, oversee regulatory reform, and coordinate renewable fuels integration with food and feed strategies.

Key governance measures include:

- Establishing the Council with industry, government, and community representation.
- Maintaining a 10-year rolling infrastructure pipeline.
- Delivering a national regulatory reform program.
- Creating a Renewable Fuels / Bioenergy Integration Group including industry representation to safeguard food and feed outcomes.

Government should consider how independent evaluation, and transparent reporting could strengthen trust in the Strategy's delivery.

Conclusion

Australia's future food security depends on bold action today. The Strategy is a unique opportunity to align agriculture, energy and community objectives into a coherent national framework that strengthens resilience and competitiveness.

To be effective, it must set ambitious long-term horizons, identify practical near-term reforms and maintain transparent monitoring.

Government should prioritise:

- Investment in integrated supply chain efficiency, particularly freight and port infrastructure.
- Policy settings that incentivise sovereign processing and deliver critical feed co-products from renewable fuels.
- Measures that safeguard critical inputs including energy and fertiliser.

By embedding these priorities and ensuring that renewable fuels, feed and food policies are integrated, Australia can lead globally in delivering a secure, sustainable and competitive food system.

GrainCorp is committed to working with the Department, other government agencies, industry partners and communities to ensure the Strategy is robust, inclusive and capable of adapting to future challenges and opportunities.

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