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Media release

Greenlife Industry Australia welcomes big box Senate Inquiry

Greenlife Industry Australia (GIA) welcomes the announcement of a new Senate Inquiry into big box retailers, including Bunnings. This Inquiry, initiated by National Party Senator Ross Cadell, was one of the recommendations made by the Senate Supermarket Inquiry earlier this year.

GIA CEO, Joanna Cave said, “The Supermarket Inquiry’s main purpose was to examine the behaviour of major supermarkets such as Woolworths and Coles but it also heard evidence from greenlife growers supplying Bunnings.

The new Big Box Inquiry will focus solely on large format retailers like Bunnings.

GIA was disappointed that, while acknowledging the disadvantages growers face in supplying Bunnings, Dr Craig Emerson declined to admit Bunnings to the Food & Grocery Code of Conduct in his June review. Instead, in his report, Dr Emerson gave Bunnings two years to negotiate an agreement directly with the greenlife industry.

“GIA has engaged with Bunnings, in good faith, to pursue an industry Code of Practice, as Dr Emerson envisaged. So far, Bunnings has given us very little hope of its preparedness to accept the government’s suggested approach.

“As a small, not-for-profit organisation, GIA is at a significant disadvantage in negotiating meaningful change for greenlife growers with the giant retailer.

“However, the Big Box Inquiry has the potential to change that. We are optimistic that today’s announcement will fast-track a fair and equitable trading environment, and result in a robust, legally binding outcome that will ensure growers can make a living from growing plants.

“GIA hopes that Bunnings will continue to engage in negotiations with us about a formal agreement to ensure it treats growers fairly and in line with the law, despite its significant bargaining power and 70% market share.”

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More information

www.greenlifeindustry.com.au/grower-protection

Media Contact

Jennifer McQueen

Email: Jennifer.mcqueen@greenlifeindustry.com.au

Phone: 0447 000 311

Available for interview

Joanna Cave, CEO