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Report of Agricultural Delegation to the Middle East

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**REPORT
OF
AGRICULTURAL DELEGATION
TO
THE MIDDLE EAST**

(United Arab Emirates, Egypt, Jordan, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia)

7 - 22 February 2000

**Rob Delane, Executive Director, Agriculture Protection
Henry Steingiesser, Program Manager, AGWEST Trade and Development,
Besko Trhulj, Manager AGWEST Trade and Development
Agriculture Western Australia**

**Accompanying the
Minister for Primary Industry
Hon Monty House, MLA**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY (ACTION)

DUBAI

Gulf Import & Export Company

- AGWEST Trade and Development to forward SQF 2000 information to Mr Al Ghurair.
- AGWEST Trade and Development to examine opportunities to invite to Western Australia Mr Mohammed Al Ghurair (son), who is studying at RMIT, Melbourne and other future Middle East business leaders.

Reception for Business and Government Representatives

- AGWEST Protection (Delane) to follow up contact with Dr Hisham Ahmed Fahmi, Head of Veterinary Services Section, Dubai Municipality.

Emirates Livestock & Meat Trading Co.

- The company owns impressive feedlot and infrastructure capacity. AGWEST Protection/MLA to promote best practice in livestock management at all points of the WA-Middle East supply chain.

International Foodstuff Company Emirates Grain Products Company

- AGWEST Trade and Development, investment attractions project to follow and organise next round of negotiation.

EGYPT

Fares Group/First Trading & Import

- AGWEST Protection to continue to work closely with cattle exporters to ensure cattle meet Egypt's specifications.
- AGWEST Trade and Development to facilitate strategic alliance development for medium-long term supply of premium cattle ex Western Australia and beef into Sainsbury's stores.

HE Dr. Youssef Wali, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Agriculture

- AGWEST Protection/MLA/Australian Embassy to continue monitoring of concerns regarding entire bull imports and HGP and implement/negotiate appropriate responses.

Sainsbury's Egypt

- AGWEST Trade and Development (Steingiesser)/MLA (Buchanan, Jones) to facilitate discussions between Jelal Abu-Gazaleh (Daintree Foods Egypt) and Dean Thompson (Sainsbury's) regarding short-medium term supply of high quality beef.
- AGWEST Trade and Development to facilitate strategic alliance development for medium-long term supply of premium cattle ex Western Australia and beef into Sainsbury's stores.

- AGWEST Trade and Development to liaise regarding other opportunities for supply of Western Australian products to Sainsbury's Egypt.

General Organisation for Veterinary Services

- As a part of MOU follow up AGWEST Protection/MLA to liaise to arrange earliest possible visit of Professor Aidaros to Western Australia. Dr John Edwards or Dr Richard Norris to accompany Professor Aidaros and Dr Buchanan on visits to other States and Canberra.
- AGWEST Protection/MLA/AQIS to liaise to examine possible options for HGP certification which would meet Egyptian needs.

HE Dr Hassan Khedr, Minister of Supply and Home Trade

- Dr Khedr offered the AWB to become major wheat supplier to the government procurements.
- Dr Khedr indicated interest in the purchase of 1000 MT of frozen beef. MLA to follow up.

JORDAN

H.E. Eng. Hashem Al-Shboul, Minister for Agriculture

- AGWEST Trade and Development /MLA to continue development of the MOU relationship, and identify key opportunities for bi-lateral exchange which will facilitate trade development.
- AGWEST Protection to invite Dr Assad Abu Ragheb (or delegate) to visit Western Australia during 2000.

H.E. Dr Mohammed A Halaigah, Minister of Industry and Trade

- AWB(Greg Harvey) is following up possible opportunities to negotiate supply of Australian wheat to Jordan.

Major-General Shaher Al-Ná imi, Chief of Royal Land Forces Staff

- AGWEST Trade and Development /MLA/Austrade to follow-up contacts with Royal Land Forces officers regarding trade and investment opportunities.

Mayor of Aqaba, Aqaba Region Authority

- Aileen Murrell to send information about WA aquaculture and marine management.

Hijazi and Ghosheh Group

- AGWEST Protection/LEA/AQB/MLA to discuss issues regarding cheesy gland and examine options for achieving industry-wide vaccination against cheesy gland.
- AGWEST Protection to examine benefits and practicality of a 'vendor declaration' approach to producer supply of sheep for live export.

KUWAIT

Kuwaiti Saudi Co for Livestock Meat and Fodder

- AGWEST Protection to liaise with AQIS/AFFA regarding importer concerns and strategies needed to ensure both sustainability of market access and competitiveness of Australian exports.

Livestock Transport & Trading Co (KLTT)

- AGWEST Protection to liaise with MLA/Live Corp regarding benefits and strategies for a general Middle East promotion of the premium health status and quality of Australian sheep.

SAUDI ARABIA

Riyadh Livestock Market and Slaughterhouse

- AGWEST Trade and Development to promote success of Merino trial shipment and need for producers to continue to meet Saudi Arabian livestock specifications.

Saudi Joint Stock Co (Al Mawashi Al-Mukairish United Co), Jeddah

- AGWEST Trade and Development to work with exporters and MLA/AQIS to ensure that Saudi Arabian market specifications and trends are clearly communicated to sheep producers.

Food 2000 Saudi Arabia, Jeddah

- AGWEST Trade Development to follow up individual inquiries made by Saudi Arabian businessmen.
- AGWEST International will liaise with Abdulatif Allnafa Trading Est to clarify the inquiry regarding to the stock feed and meat processing plant in Saudi Arabia.
- AGWEST Trade and Development and Austrade to follow up the inquiry from AL-Khaluf Meat Processing Factory (Mr Abdulalah Al-Wabhy) regarding to investment in live sheep farming in Western Australia (existing sheep farms in Saudi Arabia running out of water).

AGRICULTURAL DELEGATION TO THE MIDDLE EAST

Introduction

During 7-22 February 2000, the Minister for Primary Industry, Hon. Monty House, MLA led an agricultural trade mission to the United Arab Emirates, Egypt, Jordan, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia.

The mission had the following objectives:

- To gain a better understanding of the opportunities in the Middle East for Western Australian primary products and agribusiness.
- To meet with government and industry leaders to support existing and new market opportunities.
- To meet with existing and potential customers.
- To represent Western Australian primary producers, agribusiness and exporters, and act as an ambassador for the State.
- To impart the knowledge gained from the trade mission to companies and associated industry groups in Western Australia.

The trade mission was coordinated by Agriculture Western Australia's AGWEST Trade and Market Development Unit. The work of Mr Besko Trhulj is acknowledged.

Participants in the delegation are shown at Appendix A.

The program for the delegation is shown at Appendix B.

Business cards of contacts are shown at Appendix C.

AGRICULTURAL TRADE MISSION TO THE MIDDLE EAST

Introduction

During 7-22 February 2000, the Minister for Primary Industry, Hon. Monty House, MLA led an agricultural trade mission to the United Arab Emirates, Egypt, Jordan, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia.

The mission had the following objectives:

- To gain a better understanding of the opportunities in the Middle East for Western Australian primary products and agribusiness.
- To meet with government and industry leaders to support existing and new market opportunities.
- To meet with existing and potential customers.
- To represent Western Australian primary producers, agribusiness and exporters, and act as an ambassador for the State.
- To impart the knowledge gained from the trade mission to companies and associated industry groups in Western Australia.

The trade mission was coordinated by Agriculture Western Australia's AGWEST Trade and Market Development Unit. The work of Mr Besko Trhulj is acknowledged.

Participants in the trade mission are shown at Appendix A.

The itinerary for the trade delegation is shown at Appendix B.

Business cards of contacts are shown at Appendix C.

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES (DUBAI)

Austrade

John Yeudall, Senior Trade Commissioner
Pankaj Savara, Trade Commissioner

Action

- AGWEST Trade and Development (Henry Steingiesser) to continue negotiations with Austrade additional contracted trade and market development support for WA agricultural products.
- AGWEST Trade and Development to examine ways of providing better Austrade access to information about WA agricultural products and businesses.

Gulf Import & Export Company

Essa Al Ghurair, General Manager
Mohammed Al Ghurair
Fakruddin R. Hardwarewala, Financial Controller

- The company has UAE's largest flour mill and pulse processing plants, located in the Jebel Ali Free Zone, and is a regular customer for WA products.
- Mr Al Ghurair emphasised the need for both price and quality differentiation in the marketplace.
- The Al Ghurair company has embarked on a process of continuous business improvement, and is both ISO 9000 and ISO and environmental code accredited. Mr Al Ghurair expressed interest in the SQF 2000 QA system.
- The benefits of international tourism and study program in building cultural and trade linkages were discussed.

Action

- AGWEST Trade and Development to forward SQF 2000 information to Mr Al Ghurair.
- AGWEST Trade and Development to examine opportunities to invite to Western Australia Mr Mohammed Al Ghurair (son), who is studying at RMIT, Melbourne and other future Middle East business leaders.

Jebel Ali Free Zone

Sultan Ahmad Bin Sulayem, Chairman and Managing Director
Ahmed Butti Ahmed, Assistant Managing Director
Khalid K. Almutawa, Sales & Marketing Manager

Jebel Ali Free Zone is the Arabian Gulf's largest industrial free zone (100 km², 67 berths totalling 15 kms). A wide range of ownership, tax, labour, facility and service benefits are available to the 1700 companies now operating within the free zone. A fully self-contained labour village is part of the zone. The zone's land is now 45% utilised, and the organisation sees major expansion opportunities, despite strong competition from other free zones (e.g. nearby Sharjah). The delegation inspected parts of the port area, including a 40,000 m³ cool store.

Action

- AGWEST Trade and Development to communicate to WA agri-industry the scale and competition which exists in international shipping and associated trade.

Dubai Fruit & Vegetable Market

Mr Jayaram (J.R.), General Manager, Barakat Vegetable & Fruits International

- The wholesale market operates 6 days/week with approximately 120 pantech trucks offering produce from across the Middle East during 4.30 p.m.-midnight.
- Competition is intense (e.g. apples ex China, USA, France) although there is regular shortages of a number of products - strawberry, broccoli, rockmelon. Interest was also expressed in peeled onions and different potato varieties.
- There is usually a supply limitation ex Australia, either due to product availability or air freight limitations. Shipping (12-15 days) is good for suitable products.

Action

- AGWEST Trade and Development to further examine opportunities for exports of strawberry, broccoli and rockmelon.
- AGWEST Trade and Development to establish contact between Mr Jayaram and Homestyle, Perth regarding peeled onions.

Reception for Business and Government Representatives

The delegation hosted a function for approximately 50 businessmen from the United Arab Emirates at the Jumeirah Beach Hotel for local agri-food business and government representatives. Brief presentations were made by the Minister for Primary Industry and Executive Director, Agriculture Protection.

The reception provided excellent opportunity for contacts, discussion and development of relationship. The video Banquet to the World was presented and all guests received the Western Australian publication kit.

Action

- AGWEST Protection (Delane) to follow up contact with Dr Hisham Ahmed Fahmi, Head of Veterinary Services Section, Dubai Municipality.
- AGWEST Trade and Development to examine the opportunity to deliver live sheep according to inquiry from Oman.

Emirates Livestock & Meat Trading Co.

Mr Salah A.R. Al Bassam, Executive Manager

- EL&MT Co. is part of the Kuwait Livestock Transport & Trading Company (see Kuwait report).
- KLTT operates the most modern sheep feedlot facility in the Middle East, with a capacity of 120,000 sheep under 13 ha of shaded pens. The site includes feed preparation, veterinary and accommodation facilities, and a water cooling plant has recently been installed to improve livestock management. Sheep are normally held for 1-6 weeks.
- Mr Doug Cullen, an Australian, is the feedlot manager. It was evident that Australian expertise in sheep management had made a significant contribution, and that significant gains could still be achieved in some other feedlots.

Action

- AGWEST Protection/MLA to promote best practice in livestock management at all points of the WA-Middle East supply chain.

International Foodstuff Company Emirates Grain Products Company

Mr Firoz Allana
Mr Shiraz Allana
Mr Muhamed Catic, Director, Business Development
Mr Arumas Patialis,

- The company is very interested for cooperation with Western Australian partners particularly for the investment in flourmills, SQF2000 and in near future in canola processing. The priority is flourmills project which still under preliminary study.

Action

- AGWEST Trade and Development, investment attractions project to follow and organise next round of negotiation.

Dubai Air Cargo Village

Mr Ali K. Al Jallaf, Director
Mr Ram C. Meyen, Emirates Airlines
Mr Prakash K. Nair, Emirates Airlines

- Emirates Airlines are keen to operate a direct Perth-Dubai service but are currently constrained by existing agreements, aircraft payloads and expected passenger demand. The advent of a high capacity, long-range Airbus aircraft in 2002 probably provides the best opportunity.
- The operation of the UAE as a trade hub was demonstrated by the ability to achieve 36 hour soil-to-soil transplant of strawberry seedlings from Montreal, Canada to the UAE.

Action

- AGWEST Trade and Development to inform Western Australian Department of Transport and Air Freight Council

Dubai Chamber of Commerce and Industry

Hassan Mohammed bin Al-Shaikh, President, Dubai Chamber
Abdul Rahman G Al Mutauee, Director General
Dr Yazid Mallat, Al Abbas Group
Mumir Kaloti, President, K & H Trading Co.
Sharique Ahmad, Mohammed Omar bin Haider Group
Om T. Mehta, Al Sayegh Group of Companies

- Dubai holds over 40 business exhibitions annually, and Western Australia was encouraged to participate.
- The Dubai Chamber is very active, and a number of businesses were represented at the meeting. Shipping and air links were highlighted as an issue.

Action

- AGWEST Trade and Development to follow-up individual contacts made at the meeting.

Spinneys Supermarket

- The supermarket is very modern and caters largely to the large, middle-class expatriate population in Dubai. There was a strong emphasis on product presentation and customer service (bread is baked 3 times each day and a florist operates within the store).
- The store was operating a promotion of Western Australian products. The diversity of products and supply options emphasised the competitiveness of the Middle East market.
- Another supermarket of the large French chain Continent was briefly visited. This very large store (50 checkouts) catered for a wider range of customers. The intense competition was again evident (e.g. sheep meats from 5 countries).

EGYPT

Australian Embassy/Austrade

Mrs Victoria Owen, Australian Ambassador
Mr Chris Heysen, Senior Trade Commissioner
Mr George Mina
Mr Nagui Said

The Egyptian market is growing at 5% pa on the back of >2% pa population growth from its current level of 65 million. Government initiatives to open up the economy are working and the private sector is now a driving force in the economy. There is a high level of awareness of Australian agricultural produce, including its 'clean/green' status; this is valuable given the government's obligation to 'protect the health of the Egyptian people'.

Although Australian exports to Egypt have grown from \$230M to \$580M, exports to Australia remain very low (\$10M); this is a matter of sensitivity. There has been rapid expansion of live cattle, dairy and pulse exports.

While much of the Egyptian population is relatively poor, there is an expanding middle class, with a preference for imported products, even if it is 2-3 times the price of local produce.

Two large irrigation developments in southern Egypt should not restrict Australian exports to Egypt. The Toshka scheme (150,000 ha) will rely on 25 million Ml/day canal supply from the Aswan High Dam, with the East Oweinet scheme near the Sudanese border (100,000 ha) has begun irrigation from large underground aquifers.

Fares Group/First Trading & Import

Mr Danny Fakhre, President, Fares Group Holdings
Mr Hassan El-Gayar, Chairman, First Trading & Import
Mr Moustafa Sherine El-Gayar
Mr Moustafa Roushdi, Chairman, Medi Trade Company
Mr Eng. M. Abdel Rahman, General Manager, International Establishment for Food Security

Egypt is a major market for Australian live cattle exports, with 214,000 out of 750,000 cattle exported in 1999 received in Egypt (75% sourced in WA).

The Fares Group (including Fares Rural and Rashid Fares Enterprises) is a major Australian livestock exporter, with a focus on Libya, Egypt and Mexico (200,000 cattle exported in 1999).

Hassan El-Gayar is the largest cattle importer in Egypt. Initial resistance to *Bos Indicus* breeds has subsided and demand is now mainly for these types; historical annual cycles in cattle demand were reduced in 1999, with demand remaining strong throughout the year.

The company's modern feedlot at Ismailia was visited. With current capacity for 15,000 head, the facility will be doubled in capacity, utilising desalinated bore water and locally processed feed.

Issues raised included:

- Concern about prices, which at \$1.44/kg at Fremantle are at the top end of the possible range. It was argued that strong demand (15-25,000 head/month) could be sustained at more moderate prices.
- Concern was expressed regarding imports of entire bulls ex Rumania (often with other origins), which were gaining an unfair (and illegal) advantage on local markets because they were sold as local stock.
- Australian expertise had been used to convert an 11 % weight loss in feedlots into a 4% live weight gain.

Action

- Minister raised with HE Dr. Youssef Wali, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Agriculture the Australian industry concerns regarding possible illegal imports of entire bulls. AGWEST have also raised these concerns with Dr Hassan Abdel Aziz Aïdaros, Head of General Organisation for Veterinary Services.
- AGWEST Protection to continue to work closely with cattle exporters to ensure cattle meet Egypt's specifications.
- MLA/AGWEST to support Fares Group and other exporters to Egypt to maintain competitive edge against East/West European suppliers.
- AGWEST Protection to work with MLA/LEA/AQIS to examine strategy options for Australia to take an international lead in 'best practice' live animal transport.

Reception for Business and Government Representatives

The delegation hosted a function at the Conrad Hotel for local agri-food 60 business and government representatives. Brief presentations were made by the Minister for Primary Industry and Executive Director, Agriculture Protection.

The reception provided excellent opportunity for contacts, discussion and development of relationship. The video Banquet to the World was presented and all guests received the Western Australian publication kit.

Action

- AGWEST to follow up individual enquiries made by attendees at reception.

HE Dr. Youssef Wali, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Agriculture

- Dr Youssef Wali gave permission for the newly appointed Chairman, General Organisation for Veterinary Services to visit Australia in the near future, under the Egypt-Western Australian MOU.
- Dr Youssef Wali spoke enthusiastically about the large Toshka (ex Aswan Dam) and East Oweinet (ex bores) irrigation projects in southern Egypt, totally 250,000 ha potential irrigated area. The Toshka project may provide a further opportunity for imports of Australian cattle, via the port of Safaga.
- A free-trade port has been established at Ion Suchna near Adabiyya and another was being considered for Safaga. This may provide an opportunity for feedlot finishing and re-export of Australian cattle, although impediments exist to achieving suitable quarantine protocols.

- The importance of bi-lateral trade was emphasised and Australia/Western Australia was encouraged to examine opportunities to expand the very low level of Egypt-Australia trade.
- The Deputy Prime Minister recognised that competitor countries had been 'throwing words at Australia' regarding HGP implant residues in cattle. He indicated that Egypt was very happy with Australian cattle imports.

Action

- AGWEST Protection/MLA/Australian Embassy to continue monitoring of concerns regarding entire bull imports and HGP and implement/negotiate appropriate responses.
- Through Austrade, AGWEST International to monitor major irrigation developments, and opportunities for Western Australian products and services.

Sainsbury's Egypt

Mark Venables, Director-Strategy

Jerry Callanan, Director – Supply Chain and IT

- Cairo is the starting point for a major expansion of Sainsbury's into the Middle East. Three new stores have been constructed and 90 stores purchased.
- The recently opened Hareem store (30,000 sq.ft) is the largest food store in Egypt, and possibly the largest store, though only medium size by EU standards. The Sainsbury's store format (Food, Family, Home) will be applied.
- Wall-Mart and the large French supermarket chains are known to have examined opportunities in Cairo (14 million inhabitants).
- The majority of goods are sourced locally, including major international product lines (e.g. Kelloggs, Heinz) which are produced locally. Difficulties with import of perishable goods will probably mean continued sourcing of these goods within Egypt.
- Sainsbury's indicated considerable interest in strategic alliance supply chain arrangements, including supply of beef ex Australian cattle. Concern was expressed regarding potential for flow-on effects to EU stores of animal rights concerns in Australia.

Action

- AGWEST Trade and Development (Steingiesser)/MLA (Buchanan, Jones) to facilitate discussions between Jelal Abu-Gazaleh (Daintree Foods Egypt) and Dean Thompson (Sainsbury's) regarding short-medium term supply of high quality beef.
- AGWEST Trade and Development /MLA to facilitate strategic alliance development for medium-long term supply of premium cattle ex Western Australia and beef into Sainsbury's stores.
- AGWEST Trade and Development to liaise regarding other opportunities for supply of Western Australian products to Sainsbury's Egypt.

General Organisation for Veterinary Services

Professor Dr Hassan Abdel Aziz Aidaros, Head of GOVS

Dr Sherein Galal, Head of Epidemiology Unit

Dr Abdul Hakim Fouda, Director of Quarantine

- An invitation was extended to Professor Aidaros to visit Australia as soon as possible, accompanied by Dr Buchanan, MLA.

- Issues of HGP ampule residues, anthrax infection reports in Australia, and ability to assure BSE freedom were raised. Professor Aidaros and Dr Fouda indicated a preference for HGP certification of Australian livestock –e.g. that HGP levels do not exceed those normally present in cattle.
- Opportunities for bi-lateral information exchange under the Western Australia-Egypt MOU were discussed including: improved land-border quarantine, preventative animal health strategies, ostrich diseases, fish health and QA (SQF 2000).
- Dr Tony Martin, AGWEST would deliver a 3-day risk assessment workshop in Cairo (19-21 February) for 20-30 of the 2200 GOVS veterinary staff. This type of assistance was welcomed.

Action

- AGWEST Protection/MLA to liaise to arrange earliest possible visit of Professor Aidaros to Western Australia. Dr John Edwards or Dr Richard Norris to accompany Professor Aidaros and Dr Buchanan on visits to other States and Canberra.
- AGWEST Protection/MLA to liaise with NRA regarding possible change to HGP delivery methods to remove residual pellet.
- AGWEST Protection/MLA/AQIS to liaise to examine possible options for HGP certification which would meet Egyptian needs.
- AGWEST Trade and Development (through MOU) to strengthen liaison with the GOVS regarding high priorities for bi-lateral information and skills exchange.

HE Dr Hassan Khedr, Minister of Supply and Home Trade

Action

- Dr Khedr offered the AWB to become major wheat supplier to the government procurements.
- Dr Khedr indicated interest in the purchase of 1000 MT of frozen beef. MLA to follow up.

JORDAN

Embassy/Austrade

Ian Russell, Ambassador

Ayman Ayyash, Trade Commissioner, Austrade

Ambassador and Trade Commissioner provided general briefing about Jordan strategy and market opportunities.

H.E. Eng. Hashem Al-Shboul, Minister for Agriculture

Eng. Mazen Khasawueh, Secretary General, Ministry of Agriculture

Ibrahim Abu Atileh, Assistant Director General, Ministry of Agriculture

Dr Assad Abu Ragheb, Director, Animal Health and Production *

Dr Mohamed Keilani, Director, Animal Health Department

Dr Fuad Aldomy, Director, Veterinary Department

Maher Z Abu Jafar, Director, International Cooperation and Public Relations

Talat Zandalsi, Economist (WTO Accession)

* Replaces Dr Mukhles Anwarin (dec.)

- Minister House and HE Minister Al-Shboul signed the MOU covering veterinary and technical cooperation between Western Australia and Jordan. HE Minister Shboul welcomed the assistance in development of agriculture in Jordan, during a period of significant change under WTO accession.
- The Jordanian market for live cattle and sheep is very price sensitive, necessitating ongoing attention to efficiency gains in all parts of the supply chain.
- Minister House opened the 3-day risk assessment workshop being delivered by Dr Tony Martin, AGWEST. There was wide interest from agriculture, health, supply and standards sections of the Jordanian government in adopting WTO-compatible risk management in agricultural and good trade.

Action

- AGWEST Trade and Development /MLA to continue development of the MOU relationship, and identify key opportunities for bi-lateral exchange which will facilitate trade development.
- AGWEST Protection to invite Dr Assad Abu Ragheb (or delegate) to visit Western Australia during 2000.

H.E. Dr Mohammed A Halaiqah, Minister of Industry and Trade

- The new Law of Agriculture which would support significant changes to government management of agricultural trade under WTO was expected to be promulgated within 6 weeks. Previous regulations of supply and price of many food products in the local market was being progressively wound back.
- H.E. Dr Halaiqah indicated that US-Jordan loan arrangements only covered 33% of Jordanian wheat imports and encouraged Australia to examine possibilities for supplying part of the other 400,000 tonnes required.
- HE Dr Halaiqah indicated that a single agency was expected to be established to cover food, food safety and pharmaceuticals. This was regarded as an important step forward for Australia trade as it would reduce the agency conflicts and bureaucracy with sometimes impeded imports into Jordan.

Action

- AWB (Greg Harvey) is following up possible opportunities to negotiate supply of Australian wheat to Jordan.

Major-General Shaher Al-Ná imi, Chief of Royal Land Forces Staff

- The Major-General was responsible for overseeing food supplies to the Jordanian Armed Forces, including livestock/meat supplies, an important national security consideration.
- Jordan was concerned with apparent collusion between Australia and New Zealand suppliers during recent tendering for a meat supply contract. Assurances were delivered to the Major-General of transparent Australian participation in any trade negotiations.
- Indications were obtained of strong political/Arab region pressure to open up the Jordanian market to Sudanese frozen meat and live animal trade. Apparently, the Director, Animal Health and Production has visited Sudan six times as part of this market development.

Action

- AGWEST Trade and Development /MLA/Austrade to follow-up contacts with Royal Land Forces officers regarding trade and investment opportunities.

City of Amman

H.E. Eng Midal al-Hadid, Lord Mayor of Amman

- The Lord Mayor indicated his keenness to build on previous Australian support for livestock and meat processing/marketing in Amman (e.g. 94/95 AMLC donation of 2,500 carcass chiller)
- Australian assistance had been provided for slaughter-house design, and the project was expected to soon go to tender. The project would have 50-100% private sector investment (approximately \$20 M), and Australian investment was being sought – possibly involving a 'soft' loan.

Action

- MLA (Buchanan) to monitor situation and advise relevant Australian interests.

Reception for Business and Government Representatives

The delegation hosted a function at the Grand Hyatt Hotel for 40 local agri-food business and government representatives. Brief presentations were made by the Minister for Primary Industry and Executive Director, Agriculture Protection.

The reception provided excellent opportunity for contacts, discussion and development of relationship. The Video Banquet to the World was presented and all guests received the Western Australian publication kit.

Henry Steingiesser established contact with Jordanian Army Brigadier, Yacoub N. Haddad, Assistant Chief of Staff for Administration. Next day Brigadier came up with the ideas for the Jordanian Army investment in meat industry in Western Australia.

Action

- AGWEST Trade Development to follow up individual enquiries made by attendees at reception.
- AGWEST Trade and Development to provide proposals for investments.

Aqaba Ports Corporation

Abdul-Jaleel Máaytah, General Manager, Aqaba Ports Corporation
Suleiman Máaytah, Director of Agriculture, Aqaba

- The Aqaba Ports Corporation is examining options for movement of many existing Main Port facilities to sites at the more recently developed Container Port and Industrial Port. This will facilitate greater tourist and commercial development of the centre of Aqaba.
- The port has capacity to handle 20 million tonnes of cargo annually, with container traffic increasing at 11 % p.a.
- A number of current deficiencies with the livestock wharf (a 150 M floating berth) are being addressed through negotiations with shipping agents and importers.

Mayor of Aqaba, Aqaba Region Authority

Yousef Dalabeeh, President & Chairman of the Board

- Mr Yousef, personal friend of the governor of WA, requested information on aquaculture and marine management

Action

- Aileen to send information to Mr Yousef

Hijazi and Ghosheh Group

Mr Issam Hijazi, President
Dr Han Hijazi, General Manager
Labib Hijazi, Owners Representative
Zakaria I. Qasem, General Manager, Jordanian Almarai

- The company operates a large sheep and cattle feedlot and abattoir complex in Qweirah Free Zone, approximately 50 km from Aqaba. The facility with capacity for 60,000 (?) sheep and 10,000 (?) cattle.
- The Merino sheep in the feedlot were of good overall but variable condition. Cattle were in excellent condition. Twenty fallow deer were imported as a trial shipment and 100 more will be imported from Australia as a gift for King Abdullah bin Al Hussein.
- There is emerging concern among Middle East sheep importers regarding the level of cheesy gland infection in Australian sheep. Concern was also expressed that some accredited stockmen on livestock vessels require further training.

Action

- AGWEST Protection/LEA/AQB/MLA to discuss issues regarding cheesy gland and examine options for achieving industry-wide vaccination against cheesy gland.
- AGWEST Protection to examine benefits and practicality of a 'vendor declaration' approach to producer supply of sheep for live export.

Trans-Jordan Livestock Company (MAWASHI)

Mohammed S. Momani, Deputy General Manager

- The company's feedlot is currently vacant, as a result of a sheep pox infection.

Dr Neil Buchanan, MLA (based at Bahrain)

- Dr Buchanan accompanied the delegation on key site visits and meetings throughout Dubai, Egypt and Jordan. He is highly regarded throughout the Middle East, and has had a clear impact on live animal imports, post-arrival stock management and market development.
- Some confusion can exist among Middle East importers as a result of the diverse range of Australian organisations involved with live animal exports - MLA, Live Corp, ALEC, AQIS, AFFA, Sheep Meats Council, Cattle Council, State Government agencies.
- Some concern was expressed regarding recent restructuring of MLA which could, apparently, reduce the priority given to live animal exports. This could be of concern to Western Australian agriculture, which is now heavily reliant on live sheep and cattle exports.
- Some concern was also expressed that both MLA and Live Corp (which funds 60% of Dr Buchanan's position) needed to review their market development focus in relation to the Middle East. Apparently, Live Corp revenue from live animal exports is currently well in excess of project expenditure.
- Dr Buchanan indicated that he had observed a range of pasture species in the Nejd Desert region of Saudi Arabia/Jordan which remained productive under extremely low rainfall.

Action

- AGWEST Trade and Development to advise MLA Management (Richard Brooks, CEO) of the excellent reputation developed by Dr Buchanan, and the high priority which needed to be placed on continued support for the position.
- AGWEST (T&MD, Meat, APP) to meet with WA-based exporters to ensure all key issues/risks for the State's live animal exports are being addressed through existing channels.
- Dr Mike Ewing (AGWEST) to contact Dr Buchanan to review any previous pasture collections from the Nejd Desert, and consider options for future collections.

KUWAIT

Y.Y. Al Homaizi and Sons Co.

Mr Yacoub Al Homaizi, Chairman

- Mr Homaizi first imported live sheep from WA 40 years ago. He has made a major investment in development of the Awassi fat tail sheep in WA. He owns large grazing properties at Esperance and Badgingarra (total 50,000 ha) and runs approximately 250,000 Awassi sheep.
- Mr Homaizi appreciated the long-term support of AGWEST for the Awassi project and was optimistic about achieving significant premiums (up to 100% or \$100/head) for Awassi sheep landed in Middle East markets; this was largely based on the local market tradition of eating low-fat sheep (i.e. fat concentrated in the fat tail rather than meat).

Action

- AGWEST to closely monitor market premiums for Awassi, Damara and other sheep types and examine options for improving return to WA producers.

Kuwaiti Saudi Co for Livestock Meat and Fodder

Engr. Nayef Abdul Aziz Al-Enezi, Chairman
Ms Rima S. Dabbous, International Sales Manager

- It was evident that the Kuwaiti Saudi Co. was under considerable pressure as a result of the intense competition with KLTT.
- Mr Al-Enezi expressed concern that a local price war involving Australian sheep could generate market concerns that the cheap sheep were of inferior health/quality.
- The company is importing Damara sheep ex. Australia, although other information indicates that it does not have market exclusivity for this breed.

Action

- AGWEST Protection to liaise with AQIS/AFFA regarding importer concerns and strategies needed to ensure both sustainability of market access and competitiveness of Australian exports.

Livestock Transport & Trading Co (KLTT)

Mr Faisal A. Al-Khazam, Chairman and Managing Director

- KLTT is the largest livestock importer into Kuwait and one of the Middle East's largest livestock importers. WA company, Emanuel Exports Pty Ltd (Graham Daws) is a major supplier of live sheep to KLTT.
- There is very strong commercial competition between KLTT and both the Kuwaiti Saudi Company and Saudi Arabian company Al Muwashhi Al Mukairish United Co. Mr Al-Khazam indicated that KLTT was making a takeover bid for the Kuwaiti Saudi Company, and expected to soon make a public announcement.
- Mr Al-Khazam expressed concern that the specifications for the resumption of sheep trade with Saudi Arabia may quickly flow on to all Middle East markets, significantly reducing the competitiveness of Australian sheep.

Action

- AGWEST Protection to liaise with MLA/Live Corp regarding benefits and strategies for a general Middle East promotion of the premium health status and quality of Australian sheep.

SAUDI ARABIA

Australian Embassy/Austrade

George Atkins, Ambassador
Damian Fisher, Senior Trade Commissioner, Austrade
Hassan Miski, Marketing Officer, Austrade
Riyadh Dahiyat, Marketing Officer, Austrade

Coordination of the trade mission's visit to Riyadh, Al-Kharj City and Jeddah was provided by the Australian Embassy and Austrade office in Riyadh.

- With GDP of US\$186M and relatively high per capita GDP (US\$9,000), the Saudi Arabian market of 21.5 million people is regarded as providing a wide range of opportunities for Australian exports, including agricultural commodities and food products.

- Australia currently accounts for only \$210 M of the \$6,418 M of Saudi Arabia's agricultural trade, with WA only securing 7% of the Australian total.

Al Mazraa Farm, Al-Kharj City

Hamad M. AL Soghayyer, Deputy Director General, Al Bandariah Group

Very comprehensive development, which includes stock feed production, dairy farm and dairy processing plant with modern technology. The greatest impediment for the further development of farm has been lack and costs of water.

Riyadh Livestock Market and Slaughterhouse

Ahmed S. Al-ali Allehlaf

- Merino sheep from the first trial shipment of Australian sheep to Saudi Arabia for 10 years were being sold in the market. The sheep were in excellent condition and the return of Australian sheep had been widely welcomed. The Merinos were bringing \$90-100 in the market, about 20% less than local sheep.
- The market included a wide range of Saudi Arabian and Sudanese sheep and goats. Large goats from the Nejd Desert region were expected to realise up to \$600 retail.
- Frozen mutton and lamb (including Australian products) had made some in-roads into Saudi Arabian markets in the absence of live Merino sheep, however, this was expected to decrease rapidly with full availability of competitively priced live sheep.

Action

- AGWEST Trade and Development to promote success of Merino trial shipment and need for producers to continue to meet Saudi Arabian livestock specifications.

Council of Saudi Chambers of Commerce and Industry, Riyadh

Mohammed Al Motowa, Assistant Secretary General, Foreign Affairs
Adrian A. Al-Dhuwaibi, Saudi Fisheries Company

- The Council represents 19 regional chambers, and conducts a wide range of research, representation, promotion and other services to promote trade and investment.

Action

- AGWEST Trade and Development to provide information for individual inquiries resulting from the meeting.

Al Azizia Panda Supermarket

Steve Doyle, Head of Purchasing

- Al Azizia Panda United Inc. is the #1 supermarket chain in Saudi Arabia, despite having only 3% market share. The company owns 32 stores in Saudi Arabia, has strong expansionist plans, and expects other international supermarket chains to soon enter the local market.
- The store has 25,000 active lines, matching the product range of the largest Australian supermarkets. Significant changes are expected throughout the Saudi Arabian food distribution and marketing system as the trend to larger supermarket chains takes hold (shift to continuous product supply rather than merchant/trader approach; consolidation of

agents and reduced number of suppliers delivering direct to store; more transparent supplier practices).

- The food business is very competitive with margins 2% lower than Australia. The majority of food is imported from around the globe (e.g. fresh lettuce from Saudi Arabia, Holland, China, USA).

Action

- AGWEST Trade and development to promote continuity of supply as a critical success factor for food exporters targeting Saudi Arabia.

Reception - Australian Ambassador's Residence

George Atkins, Ambassador

Jeremy Bruer, First Secretary

Sunny A. Angeles, Mediterranean Nutrition Ltd

Abdi A. Hussain, National Company for Manufacturing Foodstuffs and Marketing Ltd

Isaak A. Digo, Badan

Abdullah M. Al-Rayes, Rana Investment Company

Action

- AGWEST to provide follow-up to individual enquiries.

Saudi Joint Stock Co (Al Mawashi Al-Mukairish United Co), Jeddah

Dr Salem Ahmed Al-Melibary, General Manager

John Nicholson, Shipping Manager

- The company operates a 120,000 capacity sheep feedlot at Jeddah. At the time of the visit it held 65,000 sheep and goats, principally Australian Merino and Sudanese fat-tail sheep. The company has a contract to supply 300,000 sheep for the Al Hajj (The Pilgrimage) festive period.
- The Merino sheep ex the first trial shipment were in excellent condition. The initial market has been slow due to the completion of existing supply contracts for other types of sheep, however, the company is confident that demand will steadily improve.

Action

- AGWEST to work with exporters and MLA/AQIS to ensure that Saudi Arabian market specifications and trends are clearly communicated to sheep producers.

Food 2000 Saudi Arabia, Jeddah

- AGWEST Trade and Development and Austrade operated a stand at this food technology exhibition, at which 24 countries and 250 major exhibitors were participated.
- Contact was made with Dr Abdullah ibn Abdullah AL-Obaid, Deputy Minister for Agricultural Research and Development Affairs, who opened the exhibition.
- The Exhibition was well covered by local media during the show.
- The Minister Monty House hosted Saudi Arabian Deputy Minister for Agriculture who briefly visited our booth. This event was covered by TV.
- Approximately 80 businessmen from Saudi Arabia visited booth and with about 30 expression of interest for various form of trade cooperation and investment.

- Approximately 150 Western Australian publication kits including the lists of exporters were distributed.

Action

- AGWEST Trade Development to follow up individual inquiries made by Saudi Arabian businessmen.
- AGWEST International will liaise with Abdulatif Alnafra Trading Est to clarify the inquiry regarding to the stock feed and meat processing plant in Saudi Arabia.
- AGWEST Trade and Development and Austrade to follow up the inquiry from AL-Khaluf Meat Processing Factory (Mr Abdulalah Al-Wabhy) regarding to investment in live sheep farming in Western Australia (existing sheep farms in Saudi Arabia running out of water).

Jeddah Chamber of Commerce & Industry

Mr Ismail Abou Dawood, Chairman

Mohammed A. Al Sharif, Assistant Secretary General for Commercial and Industry Affairs

Anas Ben Ali Al Abdulwhed, Manger Port and Transportation Dept.

- Jeddah Chamber of Commerce and Industry is very strong government's agency, which can provide business information, contacts, exhibition facilities and organise trade missions.

Action

- AGWEST Trade and Development to provide information for individual inquiries resulting from the meeting.

DELEGATION PARTICIPANTS

Listed below are the participants going to the Middle East.

The Hon Monty House
Minister for Primary Industry, Fisheries

Ms Ailcen Murrell
Principal Policy Officer
Minister for Primary Industry, Fisheries

Mr Rob Delane
Executive Director
AGWEST Agriculture Protection
Agriculture Western Australia

Mr Henry Steingiesser
Manager, AGWEST Trade and Development
Agriculture Western Australia

Mr Besko Trhulj
Manager, Market Intelligence
AGWEST Trade and Development
Agriculture Western Australia

Mr Tony York
Primary producer/Chairman of the Trade and Market Development Partnership Group

Mr Chris Gilmour
Primary producer/Chairman of the South Coast Regional Partnership Group

Mr Donald Hammarquist
Primary producer

Mr Richard Metcalf
Primary producer

Mr Greg Harvey
Regional Manager, WA
Australian Wheat Board Limited

Mr Peter Lang
Managing Director
Fares Rural Co. Pty Ltd

Mr Graham Daws
Export Manager
Emmanuel Exports

PROGRAM OF THE DELEGATION

MONDAY, 7 FEBRUARY 2000

PERTH - DUBAI

Depart Perth

Depart Singapore to Dubai

TUESDAY, 8 FEBRUARY 2000

DUBAI

Arrive Dubai (United Arab Emirates)

Briefing by Mr John Yeudall, Australian Senior Trade Commissioner

Lunch meeting hosted by Mr Essa Al Ghurair of Gulf Import and Export Co. (Company has UAE's largest flour mill and pulse processing facility).

Visit to Jebel Ali Free Zone Authority.

Dinner hosted by IFFCO, Emirates Grain Products Co.

WEDNESDAY, 9 FEBRUARY 2000

DUBAI

Visiting feedlot of Emirates Livestock Meat Trading Company.- KLTT (Mr Salah Al Bassam)

Meeting with Khalid M Sharif, Head of Food Control Section (Dubai Municipality)

Meeting with Food and Veterinary expert from Dubai (Dr Neil Buchanan of MLA to join)

Visiting Al Muwashi & Al Mukairish Al Khaleeja Co (Second largest importer of livesheep)

This visit will include following:

- Meeting with General Manager Mr Turki Al Rashoud
- Visit Dubai Butchery (abattoir)

Visit feedlot in Dhaid (Sharjah)

Lunch hosted by Mr Salah Al Bassam (KLTT Dubai)

WA Agriculture and Fisheries Industry Presentation and Cocktail Reception

THURSDAY, 10 FEBRUARY 2000

DUBAI-CAIRO

DUBAI

Meeting with B.C. George, General Manager Farm Fresh Meat LLC

Visit Spinneys Supermarket

Depart Dubai

CAIRO

Arrive Cairo

Dinner hosted by Australian Senior Trade Commissioner

FRIDAY, 11 FEBRUARY 2000

CAIRO

Visiting Egyptian Museum, Pyramids and Sphinx

SATURDAY, 12 FEBRUARY 2000

CAIRO

Briefing by Ambassador and Senior Trade Commissioner

Visit of Five Star Flour Mills (Joint venture AWB with Egyptians)

Meeting with Mr Danny Fakhry, Chairman of fares Group and Hassan El Gayar and visit to Hassan's feedlot in Ismailia. Hassan's company is the largest live cattle importer from Western Australia (Fares Rural).

Lunch hosted by Hassan El Ghayar

WA Agriculture and Fisheries Industry Presentation and Cocktail Reception

SUNDAY, 13 FEBRUARY 2000

CAIRO - AMMAN

CAIRO

Meeting with HE Dr Youssef Wali, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Agriculture

Meeting with Sainsbury's (Mark Venables, Dir. Strategy, IT and Mr Jerry Callanan, Dir. Supply Chain Management)

Meeting with Prof Dr Hassan Abdel Aziz Aidaros, Head of general Organisation for Veterinary Services)

Meeting with HE Hassan Khedr, minister of Supply and Home Trade

Visit of Grand Cairo Bakery with Dominic Hogan

Visit and tour of Basatin slaughterhouse

Visit Alfa Supermarket

Press Conference

Depart Cairo (Egyptair MS 814)

AMMAN

Arrive Amman (Queen Alia International Airport)

MONDAY, 14 FEBRUARY 2000

AMMAN

Briefing by Australian Ambassador and Austrade

Meeting and signing MOU with HE Eng. Hashem Al-Shboul (includes press conference)

Meeting HE Dr Mohammad Halaiqah, Minister of Industry and Trade

Meeting with Major-general Shaher Al-Na'imi

Meeting HE Eng Nidal Al-Hadid, Mayor of Amman

Dr Hijazi & Gosheh (livestock importer from Western Australia, visit processing facilities, feedlot)

Visit Amman Slaughterhouse (accompanied by Austrade representative)

WA Agriculture and Fisheries Industry Presentation and Cocktail Reception

TUESDAY, 15 FEBRUARY 2000**AMMAN - AQABA - AMMAN**

Depart Amman for Aqaba.

AQABA

Arrive Aqaba, accompanied by Austrade and Embassy Officials.

Visits included Port facilities, Qweira-Hijazi and Gosheh facilities, Trans Jordan feedlot

Meeting with Mayor of Aqaba

Depart Aqaba

Arrive Amman

WEDNESDAY, 16 FEBRUARY 2000**AMMAN - KUWAIT**

Depart Amman (Kuwait Airways KU 562)

KUWAIT

Arrive Kuwait

Visit supermarket

Dinner hosted by Al Homaizi

THURSDAY, 17 FEBRUARY 2000**KUWAIT- RIYADH**

Meeting with Kuwaiti Saudi Co for Livestock (Chairman Al Enezi)

Meeting with KLTT (Chairman Faisal Al Khazam)

Visit KLTT meat processing plant and meat market

Lunch hosted by Ministry of Industry

RIYADH (JORDAN)

Arrive Riyadh

FRIDAY, 18 FEBRUARY 2000**RIYADH**

Visit to Al-Mazra Dairy Farm in Al- Kharj area

SATURDAY, 19 FEBRUARY 2000**RIYADH**

Visit to Riyadh's livestock market and slaughterhouse

Meeting at Riyadh Council of Saudi Chamber of Commerce and Industry

Visit Azizia Panda Supermarket Branches

WA Agriculture and Fisheries Industry Presentation and Cocktail Reception (Ambassador's residence).

SUNDAY, 20 FEBRUARY 2000**RIYADH - JEDDAH**

Depart Riyadh

JEDDAH

Arrive Jeddah

Meeting with Al Muwashi Al-Mukairish United Co and visit to Feedlots
Tour of "Saudi Food & Hotel 2000" Exhibition (opening ceremony)
Dinner hosted by Al-Mukairish Group

MONDAY, 21 FEBRUARY 2000

JEDDAH

Visit to Jeddah Islamic Port
Meeting with group of businessman in Jeddah Chamber of Commerce and Industry

Lunch hosted by Jeddah chamber of Commerce and Industry

TUESDAY, 22 FEBRUARY 2000

JEDDAH - SINGAPORE

Depart Jeddah to Singapore

WEDNESDAY, 23 FEBRUARY 2000

SINGAPORE - PERTH

Arrive Singapore
Depart Singapore
Arrive Perth International Airport

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THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES
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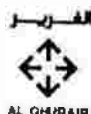
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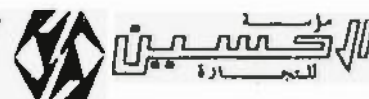
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