



23 September 2019

Attn: Business and Human Rights Resource Centre

Response to “Open Letter to Coles and Woolworths: Address Risk of Modern Slavery”

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a response to the *Open Letter to Coles and Woolworths: Address Risk of Modern Slavery*.

As outlined in [Woolworths Group's 2019 Sustainability Report](#), released on 29th August 2019, Woolworths has made significant progress towards embedding responsible sourcing in our fresh produce supply chain. In the first year of our targeted Responsible Sourcing Program, we have focused on four main areas of improvement:

- Training and awareness raising among our produce team members and direct suppliers
- Operationalising our framework for managing responsible sourcing risk in horticulture
- Launching our *Requirements for Labour Providers in our Australian Horticultural Supply Chain*
- Multi-stakeholder engagement.

We recognise a key risk for the horticulture industry is the inherent vulnerability of migrant workers that enter the supply chain via third party labour providers. In February 2019, we released an Addendum to our Responsible Sourcing Standards, [Requirements for Labour Providers in our Australian Horticultural Supply Chain](#). The Requirements make clear that any suppliers that engage a third party labour provider must have the right checks and balances in place to ensure they are dealing with a legitimate entity and that workers rights are respected.

We further recognise that strategic industry, government, union and supplier collaborations are critical to addressing shared and pervasive challenges in Australia's fresh produce supply chain. This year we deepened our engagement with the National Union of Workers (NUW), cementing our commitment to ongoing dialogue with the Union through the signing of a Collaboration Protocol in May 2019. We also partnered with Fair Farms, an industry-led initiative to promote workplace compliance in Australian horticulture, and joined the Fair Work Ombudsman's Horticulture Reference Group. Beyond these strategic partnerships, we continue to engage across industry with:

- The Horticulture Committee of the National Farmers Federation
- State-based horticulture and farming associations
- Industry groups such as AusVeg, the Produce Marketing Association. (PMA), Berries Australia and the Australian Fresh Produce Alliance
- Convening multi-stakeholder roundtables to drive industry collaboration on responses to modern slavery and responsible recruitment.

Our engagement framework is captured in our [Statement of Principles](#) to promote fair working conditions and the protection of labour rights in Woolworths' Australian horticultural supply chain.

More information can be found in our 2019 Sustainability Report available online here: https://www.woolworthsgroup.com.au/icms_docs/195583_2019-sustainability-report.pdf