

India and Australia sign Mutual Recognition Arrangement(MRA) for Organic Products India-Australia partnership strengthens with Organic MRA

Mutual Recognition Arrangement will boost Organic Trade and will open new opportunities for the Organic stakeholders

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The Mutual Recognition Arrangement (MRA) for organic products between India and Australia has been signed on 24th September 2025 at Vanijya Bhavan, New Delhi. This Arrangement demonstrates the shared commitment of the India–Australia Economic Cooperation and Trade Arrangement (ECTA) and strengthens the strategic partnership between India and Australia.

The Arrangement was signed in the august presence of Secretary Commerce, Sh. Sunil Barthwal, Chairman, Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) Sh. Abhishek Dev, and First Assistant Secretary, Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF), Australian Government, Mr. Tom Black. Joint Secretary Department of Commerce, Ms. Petal Dhillon, Advisor Standards FSSAI, Dr. Alka Rao and Australia's Deputy High Commissioner to India, Mr. Nick McCaffrey witnessed the signing of the MRA along with other senior officers of the Department of Commerce and prominent organic exporters of India.

The implementing Agencies for the MRA are the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA), Ministry of Commerce & Industry, India and the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF), Government of Australia.

The Mutual Recognition Arrangement covers organic products that are grown and processed in the jurisdictions of the Participants, including:

- a. Unprocessed plant products, excluding seaweed, aquatic plants, and greenhouse crops;
- b. Processed foods composed of one or more ingredients of plant origin. This includes certified organic ingredients sourced from third countries meeting domestic regulatory requirements, provided they are processed in either Australia or India and then exported to the other country; and
- c. Wine.

This MRA is a significant milestone in the bilateral relationship between India and Australia. The Arrangement reflects the trust and confidence our two countries place in each other's organic standards and certification systems. The MRA will simplify the compliance requirements and create new opportunities for the farmers and exporters.

In his address, Secretary Commerce, Shri Sunil Barthwal, emphasized the role of the National Programme for Organic Production (NPOP) in setting rigorous standards for India's organic ecosystem and keeping India's organic sector transparent and credible. He also highlighted that organic products should not be viewed as a mere certification but as a reflection of a comprehensive system that preserves integrity, maintains strict standards and ensures farmers' incomes. With organic produce commanding 30 - 40% higher prices, farmers

benefit from improved livelihoods.

He further stressed the need for labelling, penalties and regulatory measures to ensure strict separation of organic from non-organic produce, while also calling for greater capacity building, training and advisory support for farmers. “Organic products must not be so-called organic but certified organic, with every stakeholder in the chain taking pride in maintaining that integrity,” he said.

First Assistant Secretary, Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, Government of Australia, Mr. Tom Black appreciated India’s fast-growing organic sector and the role of the Indian diaspora in increasing the organic trade between India & Australia. He noted that Australia leads with 53 million hectares of organic farmland and highlighted trade opportunities in cereals, tea, spices, beverages and wines.

India’s organic exports to Australia reached USD 8.96 million in FY 2024-25 with a total export volume of 2,781.58 metric tonnes, led by psyllium husk, coconut milk and rice. Government of India is committed to make India as the Organic Food Basket of the World and the MRA is a major step in that direction, as it is expected to boost India’s Organic exports further by reducing barriers, ensuring certification equivalence, and supporting more organic products and producers.

Abhishek Dayal/ Abhijith Narayanan/ Ishita Biswas

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