

# Central Highlands Agribusiness Precinct

The Central Highlands, Queensland can respond to the current economic challenges that are impacting various industry sectors by developing innovative, value-adding opportunities within the rapidly expanding agriculture food and fibre market.



Central Highlands Development Corporation (CHDC), in partnership with Central Highlands Regional Council (CHRC), is progressing a whole-of-region approach to facilitating opportunities for growth and diversity within the agricultural sector to profile the region's ability to deliver a diverse range of premium product in a global market.

## BACKGROUND

In collaboration with the project proponents, CHRC has committed to providing extensive support to boost productivity, value and profitability and to deliver long-term, economic growth and benefit, while creating a sustainable agricultural sector delivering quality product from producer to consumer.

The objective of the Central Highlands (CH) Agribusiness Precinct is to facilitate a collaborative project that is to deliver premium product from the farm gate - enabling farmers to be profitable while providing a quality product that connects people to the source of their food. The Agribusiness Precinct will fulfil the Council's vision of promoting the co-location of intensive industrial land uses with a focus on novel rural industries.

Following meetings with private enterprise and Federal and State Government representatives, the CH Agribusiness Precinct has been identified as the blueprint for development. The Precinct will complement the opportunity for potential co-location of the future developments for the Emerald Sale Yards, with the abattoir, feedlot, and oilseed crushing and stockfeed processing plant.

Further to this, the incorporation of an Agriculture Business Incubator or Innovation Hub would foster future business opportunities and developments that could provide independent, food-safe, export-accredited, accessible facilities with new product development and testing capabilities, reducing the barriers of getting new product to market for the region's producers.



### Current Projects

Identified projects of interest include:

- Central Highlands Meat Processing Plant
- CQ Inland Port (Intermodal Freight Facility)
- Central Highlands Oilseed and Grain Processing Facility
- Central Highlands Agriculture Business Incubator and Innovation Hub
- Emerald Sale Yards

Further information is available for each of these projects.

## REGIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

The Central Highlands is the intersection for major road and rail freight routes east-west and north-south, providing convenient links to other major regional centres, including Rockhampton, Mackay and Townsville. The highway between Charters Towers and northern New South Wales has been identified as an inland alternative link between Cairns and Melbourne. There is good access to road and rail infrastructure for the region.

Queensland has a very large freight task with a total freight volume in 2010-11 of 871 million tonnes. This task is expected to double by 2026 to between 1,643-1,741 million tonnes. Intermodal facilities, such as the proposed CQ Inland Industrial Hub, are forecast to play a major role in this expansion. The CQ Inland Industrial Hub will provide an efficient rail connection to facilitate enhanced transfer of freight from road to rail – and vice versa – providing maximum benefit for agriculture, livestock, resources and construction sectors, and is consistent with government policy.

The Central Highlands (CH) Meat Processing Plant is strategically located to attract and access large volumes of beef supply.

The CH region already produces a diverse range of food and fibre products but the industry has the potential to expand and value add to existing markets. These products include citrus, pulses and grains, beef, grapes, cotton, melons, and macadamia nuts to name a few.

The Oilseed and Grain Processing Facility aims to provide a solution to a number of gaps identified while targeting existing underutilised resources within the Central Highlands.

The CHRC Town Planning has had the foresight to include areas in the planning scheme that can further facilitate development areas, providing future opportunities that can be incorporated into the scope of the region's Agribusiness Precinct.

## THE WAY FORWARD

Emerald has been identified as having exceptional potential as an 'inland city' and industry hub due to its central geographic location and rich, abundant natural resources.

This is further supported by State Government vision which aims to have 50% of Queensland's population living outside the South East by 2043.

The four key growth industries areas for the region have been identified as:

- Agriculture
- Construction
- Resources
- Tourism

The Central Highlands Agribusiness Precinct is the platform to further facilitate further growth and development across the region's agricultural and rural sectors.

## INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITY

With its prosperous economy, convenient location and strong future, there's no better place to invest than the Central Highlands.

The region is proactively working to attract and foster investment opportunities in a range of industries and sectors to meet strong global market demand and to facilitate continued growth and economic opportunity for the region.

The Central Highlands Agribusiness Precinct offers a cross industry, whole-of-region solution to improve the longevity of the agricultural industry and foster innovative developments that deliver positive outcomes for the region's economy.

**For further information on the CH Agribusiness Precinct development or the identified projects contact CHDC.**

## For further information

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