

Japan forges as Australia's third-largest trading partner in horticulture, aims \$175.6 M trade value in 2025

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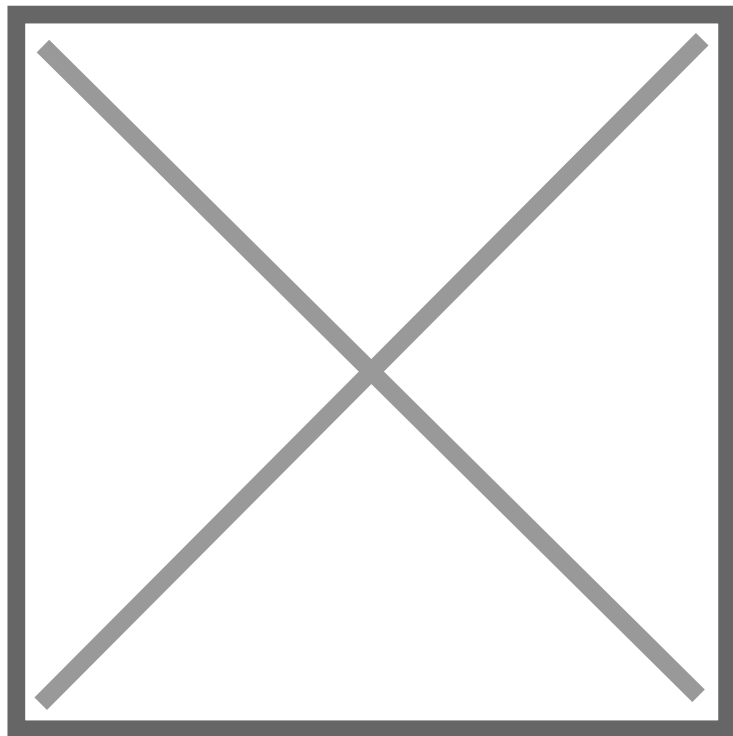
Australia is the number one citrus import partner for Japan, holding a 27% market share. The market momentum has continued to grow steadily since 2021 (20%), demonstrating a strong performance in a competitive and mature market.

The partnership between Australia and Japan is highly complementary and counter-seasonal, allowing both countries to support each other's markets effectively. Japan is Australia's third-largest trading partner in horticulture, with exports valued at \$175.6 million in 2025.

Leading exports are oranges, which account for 42% of exports and this figure continues to grow for the whole citrus industry. In fact, Australian citrus export value and volume to Japan grew by 24% and 15% respectively compared to the previous year, suggesting improved pricing and stronger returns per unit, or a shift toward higher-value products in market.

There has also been particularly strong growth in the grapefruit, lemon and lime categories with grapefruit recording an average of 17% year-on-year growth over five years and lemons and limes showing even stronger performance with 54% average year-on-year growth over the same period. This growth reflects Japan's confidence in Australian citrus, driven by our reliability, quality, and strong trade relationships, yet there is always more we can do to expand this further.

Through a variety of strategic initiatives, in-market events, and collaborative partnerships, Hort Innovation is actively working to deepen industry networks in Japan to showcase the best of Australian horticulture and solidify the reputation of our growers in the Japanese market.



Earlier on March 11th, as part of the Australia-Japan Horticulture Showcase initiative titled "*The Taste of the Land Down Under in the Land of the Rising Sun*" event, and the "*Taste the Wonders of Australia*" event, hosted on April 9 by the Australian Food and Wine Collaboration Group, have been pivotal moments in strengthening relationships with Japan. These events featured:

- **Export market roundtable discussions:** Engaging with industry and government contacts to discuss market opportunities and challenges.
- **Food and wine workshops:** Showcasing the best of Australian food and wine to local food industry representatives.
- **Gala dinners:** Highlighting premium Australian produce to over 100 Japanese food and trade representatives.

The Australia-Japan Showcase was hosted by Hort Innovation, Austrade and the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF), with support from Global Victoria, and the Tasmanian Government. The ongoing program is funded by Hort Innovation Frontiers and DAFF's Showcasing Australian Horticulture Grant. The investment by the Australian Food and Wine Collaboration Group is also funded by Hort Innovation Frontiers supported by Agriculture Trade and Market Access Cooperation (ATMAC) grants.

The events saw strong representation from both the Australian horticulture industry and government, showcasing collaborative efforts to strengthen trade ties with Japan. Japanese industry leaders, who visited Australia during October last year as part of a study tour, returned for the events to once again experience the delicious fruits, vegetables and nuts on offer and shared a number of key insights.

Key insights from Japan:

1. **Price sensitivity and quality preference:** Fresh produce prices in Japan have increased by 19%, making Japanese consumers more price conscious, however, with a high preference for quality and premium produce remaining strong, Australian fruit, vegetables and nuts – which are seen as clean, green, and safe – continue to enhance Australia's reputation in the market.
2. **Strategic partnership:** Given the high level of uncertainty that is happening at a global level, the Japanese Government is looking to work with a strong and consistent partner. Given Australia's counter-seasonal offering and mutual interest in joint production for third-country markets and value chain collaboration, we are seen to be a critical partner.

3. **Sustainability creates opportunity:** Sustainability is becoming increasingly important in Japan this provides an opportunity for Australia to showcase its sustainability efforts and future-focused initiatives in the horticulture space.
4. **Brand Australia:** Growers are encouraged to support the "brand Australia" image to increase brand awareness of produce exported to the market. This will also help with increasing awareness of the quality of our products.
5. **Alignment on significance of agriculture:** Agriculture is an integral part of both Australia and Japan's cultural fabric; a sentiment strongly reflected across both trips. Through continuing to build relationships, we hope to see this cultural tie bring our countries even closer together.

These collaborative efforts and strategic engagements are set to pave the way for a thriving and mutually beneficial trade relationship between Australia and Japan. As Hort Innovation and its partners continue to build on these initiatives, we hope the Australian horticulture industry will continue to see benefits within the Japanese market.