

12 September 2016

Dear Sir/Madam,

It is extremely important to the fabric of rural communities and continuation of horticultural and agricultural production in regional and remote Australia that the backpacker tax free threshold remains. Most of horticultural crops are seasonal and require people who are motivated financially to work in less than optimal conditions (dust, heat, flies etc). Many 'Australian's' are unwilling and unable to meet the work needs of the horticulture industry. To ensure vibrant rural communities we need to encourage horticulture and high value crops in more remote regions. Backpackers typically love the experience in outback experiences in remote regions. The money they earn is then the money they spend in Australia to continue travelling. Reducing the money they spend by taxing it is extremely short sighted given this will reduce the income spent on food, fuel and travel experiences.

Why do I know about this – I was an Australian who after I finished year 12 picked and packed fruit in Stanthorpe with hundreds of other backpackers and then picked and packed vegetables in the Lockyer Valley with thousands of Australians and travellers as I put myself through university at University of Queensland Gatton Campus studying agricultural science. I have worked in the horticultural industry and as a former CEO of Subtropical Dairy the dairy R,D, E organisation for Northern Australia I have spent time working with regional and rural Australian communities.

Yours sincerely,

Ms Janine Basha

PhD Candidate