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PRIME MINISTER

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CHINESE AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

The Prime Minister has written to the State Premiers and to the Chief Minister for the Northern Territory asking for their cooperation in developing a coordinated Australian approach to the Chinese Government in areas of Chinese economic development in which Australia has special expertise.

During the recent visit to China by the Deputy Prime Minister, Mr Anthony, the Chinese Government made it clear that it felt Australia could make a particularly useful contribution in their agricultural modernisation programme.

China intends, through increased mechanisation and scientific farming practices, to substantially increase food production over the next few years.

The particular Australian expertise on which Chinese Ministers focussed was in dryland farming, sugar production and animal husbandry.

Accordingly, the Government intends sending specialist missions to China as soon as possible to investigate prospects in these fields in more detail.

The prospects for increased sales of Australian agricultural machinery and technology to China as a result of recent Ministerial visits were attractive.

The Prime Minister said he would welcome interest by the States in joining with the Commonwealth in a coordinated early endeavour to expand our already close trading links with China.
