



PRIME MINISTER

FOR MEDIA

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A bipartisan delegation is to leave for Europe to press Australia's case for an early end to the trans-Atlantic farm subsidy war.

The mission will be led by the Minister for Trade and Overseas Development, Dr Neal Blewett.

This follows a similar visit by a bipartisan delegation to the United States in March which conveyed Australia's concern at the damage being done to our farmers by the Export Enhancement Program.

It is important for us now to put that message to those who have been principally responsible for corrupting international agricultural markets.

The mission will meet with European Ministers, European Community Commissioners and officials.

Reform of Europe's agricultural support and protection policies is essential to a successful conclusion of the Uruguay Round and that in turn is central to the survival of an open international trading system.

It is vital that Australia take this opportunity to convey to the European Community the crippling burden being suffered by Australia's efficient farm producers as a direct result of European export subsidies which are double those of the US.

Australia, through its leadership of the Cairns Group, has been at the forefront of international efforts to bring about meaningful reform of world agricultural trade. It remains our belief that the best prospects for trade reform will come about through successful negotiations in the Uruguay Round.

The mission, which will leave Australia in the first week of October, will comprise Dr Blewett, Mr Brian Courtice MP, Chairman of the Country Task Force, Senator Robert Hill, Shadow Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr Bruce Lloyd MP, Shadow Minister for Primary Industry and Mr Graham Blight, President of the National Farmers Federation.