Senate Select Committee on Australia's Food Processing Sector

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Treasury Portfolio

Public Hearing

13 December 2011

Question 1

Topic: Modelling of the Food Processing Sector

Hansard Page: 32 (13/12/2011)

Ms Embery: On page 1 of our submission we have a chart showing Australia's position as a net exporter of processed food products over time. Although there has been a slight narrowing of the gap between imports and exports, it is still a significant net exporter of food. What that points to is that while there are concerns about food security we could not see that emerging as the key issue in Australia, at least for processed food, for some time.

Mr Paine: The graph there is dealing with substantially and elaborate transformed food products. If you looked at the calorific figures, the gap would be even larger.

Senator EDWARDS: Just to take that point a little further, does any of your modelling going forward allow for any of the recent and accelerating uptake by sovereign owned, state funds buying up our food processors?

Ms Embery: I do not think it answered that. None of us are from the modelling area but we could take on notice to see if any modelling has been done on that issue. I am not sure that it has been.

Answer:

The graph on page one of Treasury's submission reflects the latest information available from the Australian Bureau of Statistics *Year Book Australia*[1] series. The graph provides a historical perspective on the monetary value of Australia's food imports and food exports.

Treasury has not conducted any formal modelling on the impacts of foreign investment on the food processing sector.

[1] Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2010, *Year Book Australia, 2009-10.* *http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/1301.0*