



22 JULY 2025

FOOD, FIBRE AND FUEL MANUFACTURING NEEDS TO BE AT THE HEART OF THE ECONOMIC REFORM ROUNDTABLE AGENDA

Today the Australian Sugar Manufacturers (ASM) urged the Federal Government to prioritise food, fibre and fuel manufacturing in its economic reform agenda, highlighting the sector's role in adding value to agricultural production and driving jobs and investment in regional Australia.

"Food and fibre manufacturing is by far the largest component of Australia's manufacturing sector, and it's overwhelmingly based in regional Australia," said Mr Ash Salardini, CEO of ASM. "If we're serious about having a manufacturing base in this country, we must supercharge these industries and seize emerging opportunities in low-carbon liquid fuels and bioenergy."

Like other trade-exposed manufacturers, Australia's sugar producers are facing mounting global pressures, particularly depressed prices driven by heavy subsidies and protectionist policies in competing sugar-producing nations.

"Our competitors aren't playing by the rules of free trade - they're propping up their sugar industries with heavy subsidies and domestic protections. And the reality is, it's only getting worse."

"We can turn a blind eye and watch our competitiveness, and the 20,000 jobs supported by the sugar industry, slowly disappear. Or we can act now, with government co-investment to diversify and strengthen sugar manufacturing for the decades ahead."

"Diversification into things like low carbon liquid fuels, biogas and the cogeneration of renewable electricity provides significant opportunities not only for the sugar industry, but in securing sovereign capabilities and economies of scope for the Australian economy."

"These diversification opportunities will not occur without significant government policy reforms and investments. The markets for biofuels and bioenergy are completely contingent on government policy."



“Brazil, and to a lesser extent, India, are leading the world in sugar-based biofuels. This hasn’t happened through the invisible hand of the market, but through the very visible hand of government leadership and investment.”

ASM believes the Federal Government’s Economic Reform Roundtable is the ideal moment to deliver an ambitious industry policy for food, fibre and fuel manufacturing. A policy that leverages Australia’s strengths in primary production and responds to the shifting realities of global trade.

ASM Media Contact

Dr Christopher Wren

c.wren@sugarmanufacturers.org

0493 592 577

***Australian Sugar Manufacturers (ASM)** is the peak industry body representing the nation’s sugar manufacturing sector, contributing \$4.4 billion annually to the Australian economy and supporting more than 20,000 jobs in regional communities. ASM works closely with its members, industry stakeholders, and government to develop and advocate for policies that enhance the sustainability, competitiveness, and long-term economic contribution of the sugar manufacturing sector. From the production of raw sugar, bio-based manufacturing and generation of renewable energy, the sugar manufacturing sector continues to support communities, create jobs, and foster a sustainable future for the industry, and the broader economy.*