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Australia releases report for inquiry into food security

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The Australian Parliamentâ??s Agriculture Committee has released its report for its inquiry into food security in Australia. The inquiry examined ways to strengthen and safeguard Australiaâ??s food security, focussing on production, supply chains and key inputs, as well as climate change, biosecurity and food insecurity.

Meryl Swanson MP, Committee Chair, said, â??Despite Australia being one of the most food secure countries in the world, recent developments both at home and abroad have shown that food security presents real and growing challenges to the nation.â??

â??Food security is not something that any of us can take for granted. COVID-19, floods, the effects of the war in Ukraine, and outbreaks of Foot and Mouth Disease and Lumpy Skin Disease in Indonesia have highlighted risks to our food system. Systemic change is required so that all Australians, and those who depend on Australian food production, will be food secure. Consultation, cooperation, coordination and innovation are the keys to food security.â?? Swanson said.

The Committee has made 35 recommendations to address food security in Australia, including:

Creating a comprehensive National Food Plan;

Appointing a Minister for Food;

Establishing a National Food Council;

Developing a National Food Supply Chain Map;

Measures to facilitate innovation in the production of food; and

Measures to eliminate food waste.

The report also proposes measures to improve sustainability and resilience in the food supply chain, improve access to labour, and reduce food insecurity.

Throughout the inquiry, the Committee held 24 public hearings, visited numerous sites around Australia, and received 188 written submissions from individuals, industry and community groups and government bodies.