

Media Release

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National timber shortage highlights critical importance of *National Forestry Planting Day 2021*

Australia's current timber shortage and the challenges it's creating for homeowners, renovators and the building industry highlights the critical importance of *National Forestry Planting Day 2021* to increase Australia's understanding of where our timber comes from as well as the climate benefits of production trees.

Chief Executive Officer of the Australian Forest Products Association (AFPA), Ross Hampton said *National Forestry Planting Day* today August 2, which was first initiated by AFPA, is more important in 2021 than ever before, "Australia is experiencing a national timber shortage where builders, homeowners and renovators cannot source the timber they need for construction. It's being caused by the COVID building boom, slowed imports and a shortage of production trees in the ground for harvest. It's causing consumers to sit up and take notice of what they had previously taken for granted.

"Australia's forest industries have been sending the message for years that that we don't have enough timber growing in the ground to support future demand. Now Australia is going through a situation that will only become more common if we don't act to plant more trees imminently. There's a saying in forestry – the best time to plant a tree was 30 years ago, the second-best time is today," Mr Hampton said.

National Forestry Planting Day recognises the 70 million trees Australia's forest industries plant each year. As they grow, these trees collectively store hundreds of millions of tonnes of carbon, helping fight climate change while growing the essential products like structural timber that shelter the nation and store carbon for the life of the product. But we need more.

Australia's forest industries are critical to many regions across the country, directly employing 80,000 and indirectly employing 180,000 people nationally. They contribute \$24 billion to the national economy every year.

"The message from forest industries this *National Forestry Planting Day*, is – recognise the great work our industries do planting trees and the positive impacts they have for the climate, the economy and communities nationwide.

Happy National Forestry Planting Day!" Mr Hampton concluded.

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