

**NEW ZEALAND TRADE LIBERALISATION NETWORK**  
([www.tln.co.nz](http://www.tln.co.nz))

**Media release – 15 December 2006**

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New Zealand needs to devote even greater attention to the economic relationship with Japan, says the Trade Liberalisation Network (TLN).

TLN Chairman Stephen Jacobi was reacting today to the announcement of free trade negotiations between Japan and Australia.

“The Australian and Japanese Governments deserve congratulations for agreeing to negotiate a comprehensive free trade agreement including in agriculture. But the negotiation has implications for New Zealand, particularly for our meat and dairy sectors. To ensure we are not disadvantaged in the Japanese market in the future, we need to prepare the ground for a similar agreement between New Zealand and Japan”.

Mr Jacobi said the New Zealand Government had already taken up this challenge in establishing last month a working group with Japan to review the bilateral relationship. The working group is scheduled to report before the end of 2007.

“The government effort needs greater support from business if it is to be successful. Japan is not only the world’s second largest economy; it is our third largest trading partner. We need to be paying the same attention to Japan as we do to our other major trading partners Australia and the United States”.

For further information

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About the Trade Liberalisation Network

The TLN has for the last five years worked to build public support and understanding for trade. Funded and supported by New Zealand’s leading export interests, the TLN brings together like-minded individuals and organisations to promote policies which will accelerate economic growth and social development. Visit our website – [www.tln.co.nz](http://www.tln.co.nz)

About NZ-Japan trade

Japan is New Zealand’s third most important export market after Australia and the USA and our third largest source of imports. New Zealand’s total exports tapered off slightly from NZ\$3.44 billion in the year to December 2004 to NZ\$3.24 billion in the year to December 2005. Despite the overall decrease, growth was recorded in exports of meat (particularly beef, edible offal and lamb), cheese and other dairy products

(Source: MFAT <http://www.mfat.govt.nz/Countries/Asia-North/Japan.php#bilateral>)