



RESOLVING YOUR PRODUCE DISPUTE

Do you have a problem or disagreement about the supply of any of the following produce?

- fruit,
- vegetables,
- cattle meat, sheep meat, chicken and turkey meat,
- grains,
- fish,
- cane,
- dairy,
- cotton,
- eggs,
- rice,
- flowers,

Or do you have a problem about the supply of processed food such as

- breakfast cereals,
- biscuits,
- breads,
- jams,
- confectionery,
- tinned foods,
- tinned fruits,
- frozen foods,
- bottled drinks
- soups?

Then you can ask the Produce and Grocery Industry Ombudsman (PGIO) to assist you.

The PGIO has been set up by the industry to resolve disputes over supply of produce to markets and retailers. The PGIO is funded by the Australian Government.

What do you do first?

You can call the PGIO at any time on **1800 206 385 (toll-free)**. *Your enquiry will be kept confidential.*

The PGIO will guide you through the steps you need to take to resolve the problem, which are as follows,

1. You are required to contact the other person and try to resolve the problem through the procedures they have put in place. Everyone in the industry is required to have internal procedures to resolve problems. The PGIO will guide you how to raise the problem with the other person.



2. If the problem cannot be resolved through those procedures then the PGIO can assist the parties to communicate with one another. The PGIO can discuss with you the ways in which this can be done.
3. If the problem remains unresolved the PGIO will appoint an Ombudsman's Representative (acting as a mediator) to meet with you and the other person to assist you to reach agreement. Sometimes it might be necessary for there to be a telephone conference where everyone is too far away from each other to meet.

What does an Ombudsman's Representative do?

The Ombudsman's Representative is not like a judge who can force anyone to accept a decision but is a mediator who helps everyone to reach their own solution. Everyone is free to solve the problem as they wish. Very imaginative solutions can be reached that way.

What is the Cost?

There is a \$50 application fee, which must be paid to the PGIO before the PGIO appoints an Ombudsman's Representative. That fee can be waived by the PGIO in very exceptional cases.

The PGIO pays for the Ombudsman's Representative's time.

You need to pay your own costs to attend the meeting.

What Happens after an Ombudsman's Representative is Appointed?

The Ombudsman's Representative will ask for you to sign an appointment agreement which makes your meeting confidential between everyone there.

The Ombudsman's Representative will then discuss with everyone what is an appropriate time and place to meet.

It is helpful if you are able to prepare a brief summary of the issues for the PGIO to provide the mediator.

Who are the Ombudsman's Representatives?

The PGIO has created a panel of independent and neutral people located around Australia. They are trained and experienced mediators who understand the main problems about produce supply disputes. To be on the PGIO panel they must show that they have an understanding of your industry. They have all agreed to follow the procedures set up by the PGIO.

What Happens at the Meeting?

The meeting with the Ombudsman's Representative is relaxed and informal. On average it might only take 2-3 hours although sometimes it will take longer.



The Ombudsman's Representative will ask each person to explain the problem as they see it.

Then there will be further discussion until everyone agrees upon a solution. That will be written down and be binding.

Who Can Come to the Meeting?

You must make sure that you have authority to make a final agreement without checking with anyone else. If someone else has the final word then that person must attend too.

Lawyers are not allowed to attend but you can bring a support person. That person is not an advocate, just someone there to support you.

What Chance is There of Solving the Problem?

The majority of issues mediated have reached a resolution that both parties can work with.

How Can I Get Further Information?

The PGIO has been set up under a voluntary industry code called the Produce and Grocery Industry Code of Conduct. Further information is available on www.produceandgrocerycode.com.au

You can also visit the PGIO website www.produceandgroceryombudsman.com.au

If you have any questions at any time please call the PGIO on **1800 206 385**.

PGIO
Suite 205, Level 2
370 Pitt Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Tel 1800 206 385
Fax 02 9264 8268



CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEY

Our office would be very grateful if you could complete this form as we wish to provide the highest standard of service.

Please return to:

PGIO

Suite 205, Level 2, 370 Pitt Street, Sydney NSW 2000

Facsimile: 02 9264 8268

On what date did you contact our office?

How did you contact our office (telephone/online enquiry form)?

Are you a grower/wholesaler/agent/retailer/other?

Were you able to get the necessary information/assistance to proceed (with negotiation or mediation)?

Are you satisfied with the service you were provided?

How would you rate the helpfulness of the person you dealt with in our office?	Low	Average	High		
	1	2	3	4	5

IF our office assisted by contacting the other party, please give a rating for our ability to help parties communicate better?	Low	Average	High		
	1	2	3	4	5

How would you rate our understanding of industry issues?	Low	Average	High		
	1	2	3	4	5

Please rate the independence and non-judgmental neutrality of our office	Low	Average	High		
	1	2	3	4	5

Please rate your overall satisfaction with the service provided	Low	Average	High		
	1	2	3	4	5

Please give us your general comments about the service provided by our office:

What improvement would you suggest?



Other comments:

Name (optional):

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey.

PRIVACY STATEMENT

We draw your attention to the fact that this form is used by us for the purpose of monitoring the quality of our service. We may generally discuss the contents of this form with PGIO/HMA staff or with the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry for the purpose of improving future assistance but otherwise we will not pass the information on to any person except if required by law. You are able to gain access to any information you send us after giving us reasonable notice in writing.

A copy of our Privacy Policy is available by contacting us at any time.