

Australian CHERRIES

Autumn 2015 - No 19



INCLUDED IN THIS ISSUE:

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- CEO Report
- R&D Articles from TIA
- Nuffield Scholars Conference
- Plant Health Australia
- Export Insights and more



Cover: Photo taken from Austrade Australia Day Event held in Seoul, Korea featuring a cherry promotion.

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This newsletter has been funded by Horticulture Innovation Australia Limited using the cherry levy and funds from the Australian Government.

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Contact CGA office
for advertising & any other matters
relating to

Australian
CHERRIES



Associate Members

CGA is very pleased to acknowledge the support from the following organisations who have taken up Associate membership with CGA.



Insense



Please visit the new CGA Website www.cherrygrowers.org.au for links to our Associate Members websites and for more information on becoming an Associate Member of CGA.

Andrew Smith - President CGA

Hello to all readers of Australian Cherries.

Over the past weeks we have seen some important meetings with the newly formed HIAL:

- Parliament House in Canberra with the horticultural bodies and the Ministers;
- Between the Rows in the Huon Valley with levy payers meeting; and
- CGA's own face to face meeting with CEO John Lloyd and Selwyn Snell HIAL Chairman.

These meetings have given some more understanding of the changes that will be passed on to the PIB's and growers in relation to funding and the mechanisms that sit behind new Research & Development and Marketing projects for 2015/16 and beyond. The new HIAL is really still "work in progress" in a lot of areas and we will need to keep communicating as more information becomes available.

At this stage it looks like we will hold a workshop late in April where key growers and CGA reps can meet and discuss the way forward with projects and HIAL into the future, giving all concerned a better understanding, particularly in light of the Levy Review workshops and vote to take place soon. Details of this will be out after Easter.

This year's export figures are nearly finalised. Preliminary figures to the end of January show an increase of 37%, to nearly 4000 tonnes across a range of 30 countries, apart from the bans into Russia and Vietnam. These figures really do show how much interest there is for cherries abroad and how the demand is driving the increased exports.

With still much work to be done with our BMP and the urgent need for market improvement required for China, Thailand and Taiwan, the future for Aussie Cherries on the world stage looks encouraging. We just need to keep working on these export areas to achieve the gains we need for better market access into the future.

With all these activities taking place and new information becoming available, the CGA will endeavour to keep all members up to date with new information as it comes to hand.

Andrew Smith

President - Cherry Growers Australia

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Welcome to the 19th edition of "Australian Cherries" Newsletter.

Hi and welcome to the Autumn edition of the Australian Cherries newsletter.

Key Activities since the last newsletter include:

The 2014/15 season has come and gone with mixed results across the country, mainly due to climatic events, but overall it has been successful with domestic markets holding steady and an increase in exports of about 37% expected. This figure will be confirmed when the final report is available in April 2015.

The national CGA office has been very busy on a number of fronts, especially working with the new Horticulture Innovation Australia and supporting the ongoing process for market access and market improvement with Department of Agriculture and Department of Foreign Affairs on FTA's such as Korea, Japan and China.

CGA continues to have numerous discussions with the Federal Department of Agriculture (DOA) to address the slow approaches being undertaken by countries we are trying to access in relation to matters concerning China, Taiwan and Thailand. CGA is also working to overcome the current bans with Russia and Vietnam.

It is frustrating for us as I am sure it is with growers and exporters. The national office will continue to drive this process with the help of the industry.

Cherry Industry Biosecurity Management Programme (BMP).

The BMP continues to get good recognition and will be updated and reviewed so we can continue to work on market access, market refinement and market maintenance. This is to ensure that when the Australian Government are in negotiation meetings at all levels, with current or prospective importing

countries, their teams are fully aware of what our industry is requiring.

The BMP team will be travelling around the country and holding workshops in late April and May to seek feedback on the:

- Operational side of the BMP;
- Export registration and plant export operations feedback; and
- Feedback on training and documentation provided to growers and exporters, so we can plan for the 2015/16 season.

At the same time we will be holding meetings with:

- The key state agencies and DOA on monitoring and trapping issues;
- Plant export operations to improve the systems; and
- Market improvement opportunities.

Access updates for key protocol markets:

China, Thailand and Taiwan

Nothing to report.

Korea

Waiting to receive the report on their Import Risk Analysis, so this can be discussed with both governments.

Vietnam

Hoping this will all be resolved with them in May 2015 and the only State that will need treatment to send fruit there will be WA.

CGA Website

The website www.cherrygrowers.org.au is being regularly updated with news, other key documents and stories.

Please give us any feedback and suggestions for the site and for the new Facebook site <http://www.facebook.com/cherrygrowers> and also please have a look at the new marketing Facebook site <http://www.facebook.com/AussieCherries>

Horticulture Innovation Australia Ltd (HIA)

As you would know HIA has now become a grower based organisation as from November 2014 and the national office has sent out a email encouraging all those working and growing cherries to sign up. The website is here if you would like to join <http://www.horticulture.com.au>

In relation to funding of projects, this is from the CEO of HIA, John Lloyd on the 26 February 2015:

Following this transition period, HIA will allocate government matching funds for all industry levy funded projects (Pool 1) up to the relevant industry's GVP cap in accordance with the equitable allocation of the available government funds needed to enable both Pool 1 and Pool 2 to operate effectively.

Consultation Paper on Strategic Investment Priorities for Pool 2

As an integral part of establishing HIA's strategic co-investment fund (Pool 2), the Board has approved a consultation paper seeking wide stakeholder input to determine the priority investment areas for Pool 2

Interim Advisory Arrangements for Levy Investments

As previously indicated, current industry strategic and annual investment plans have been adopted by HIA and will remain in operation during the transition process. This recognises the significant work and industry consultation that has gone into preparing these documents and the industry investment priorities they detail.

In addition to the strategic and annual investment plans, the Board has recently approved arrange-

ments for advice on industry investments that will operate during the transition period.

The inclusion of growers and relevant IRBs will be fundamental features of these interim arrangements, as will the flexibility to tailor them to any particular industry as and when they are needed.

As I indicated before, the CGA Board is encouraging all Cherry Growers and Levy Payers to become members of HIA to have your say.

CGA Board

The CGA Board have had several teleconference hook-ups and face to face meetings in January and February 2015. I have also spoken to State associations when required.

The new structure of HAL now HIAL (Horticulture Innovation Australia Limited) was signed in on 24 November 2014 which turns the RDC into a grower based organisation from a member based organisation.

There is now a full Senate enquiry into Levies across agriculture to report back by 30 June 2015, so the process of reviewing the Cherry Levy is proceeding with our review. This will occur in with a paper released in late March and will be discussed at workshops in all States in June. A vote will take place in July and the final report is to go to the Minister by 31 July 2015.

The National office will let the industry and levy payers know of the workshop dates in early April.

Simon Boughey

CEO - Cherry Growers Australia

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Thank you!
We'd like to thank our
supply partners for their
support during the
2014 Cherry season and
we are looking forward
to the season ahead!



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UNEVEN FLOWERING CAN BE COSTLY TO YOUR BOTTOM LINE.

Even flowering on cherry trees can be quite difficult to achieve from year to year. Climatic conditions play a major role in contributing to chill hours. If there are not enough chill hours flowering can be erratic throughout the tree and maturity will vary as well. Colin Campbell (Chemicals) have developed tools named Armobreak & Amorgan to help encourage a earlier bud break, even flowering and compact the flowering period to lead to a more even maturity of fruit which will lead to less picking costs.

Armobreak is a wetting agent and Armogan is the nitrogen source.

Armobreak/Armogan has been extensively trialled in Australia on a number of crops including grapes, cherries, and low chill stone fruit. It has been used in Europe South Africa, New Zealand and South America for a number of years as well.

One issue with Armobreak in the past is the high water volume needed to get the optimum results. With new surfactant technologies being developed we looked at ways to reduce the overall volume of water and product needed to get the result. Trial work was conducted throughout the 2011 & 2012 cherry season in Tasmania on Lapins using Armobreak & Armogan in conjunction with Du-Wett. The aim of the addition of Du-Wett was to see if a reduced rate of solution could be used to reduce rate/ha of Armobreak application. The trial showed conclusively that this was possible as seen below. The study was again repeated in 2012-2013 and the same results were achieved (Only 2011-2012 graph published)

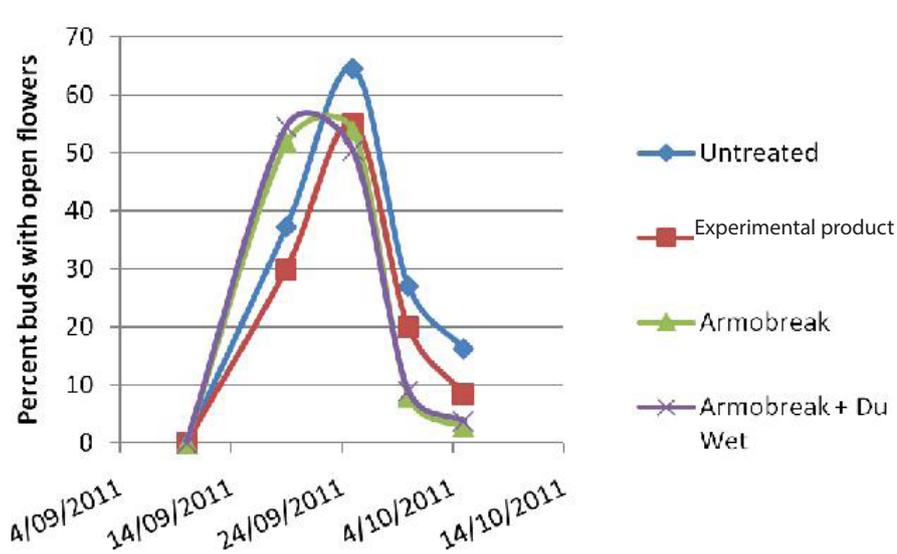
Rates used were as follows:

Armobreak 2.5L/100L water

Armogan 20L/100L water

Du-Wett® 25mL/100L water

Water volume per hectare was 400L



The main results from this trial show:

- There is no significant difference between using Armobreak with high volume water , or Armobreak + Du-Wett in a low volume of water.
- Armobreak did what it was meant to do and advanced flowering by 4 days and also compacted the total flowering period compared to the untreated.

If uneven flowering and maturity is hindering your bottom line Armobreak would be a great tool to use.

This article was provided by Colin Campbell (Chemicals) Pty Ltd)

“Best Harvesting and Post-Harvest Handling Practices”

A summary of a presentation given by Marlene Long (Oregon, USA)

Ensuring fruit reaches optimum quality for the consumer requires both strategic management during production and harvest, and careful management post-harvest. Quality can be reduced post-harvest by several factors and cherry sales are influenced by the ‘attractiveness’ of fruit so it is important to understand how post-harvest fruit damage occurs.

Recently Marlene Long delivered an excellent presentation on best harvesting and post-harvest handling practices. Marlene is a quality control technician in Oregon and has many years of experience in this area. She very kindly shared her experience and knowledge with Australian growers, and provided a timely reminder cherry fruit quality cannot be improved after harvest, and that harvesting and post-harvest handling are crucial for maintaining fruit quality.

Marlene highlighted 4 key factors that affect post-harvest quality of cherry fruit (mechanical injury due to improper handling, moisture loss caused by humidity imbalance, internal changes due to respiration, and decay caused by infection of pathogens) and then explained some techniques to manage fruit post-harvest.

Determining the right time to harvest was the first point. In Oregon this is done by assessing fruit colour, flesh colour and taste. The primary aim is achieving good fruit size but decisions on harvesting time are also based on weather; avoiding rain events and not picking beyond 29°C.



During harvest, having trained picking crews was considered essential. This was especially important in Oregon with regard to dropping fruit which may cause pitting damage later. In Oregon, drop heights are kept small, and lugs are sometimes lined with soft padding. Once picked, fruit is well looked after; kept cool and away from direct sunlight, covered with moist foam, wet burlap or reflective tarp. Bins are also covered with foam or shade cloth.

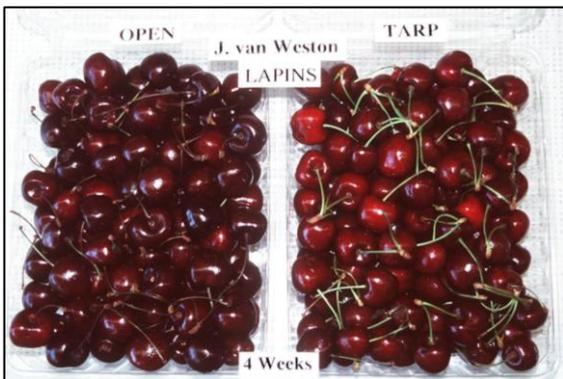
Fruit and flesh colour as measured by the International CTIFL (Centre Technique Interprofessionnel des Fruits et Légumes) colour chart (from Marlene’s presentation)

Keeping harvested fruit in cool and humid conditions prevents water (and weight) loss. Between 10 and 20°C and a 90-95% relative humidity have been recommended as optimum conditions during harvest and handling of cherry fruit. The maximum acceptable weight loss from orchard to consumer is only 5% (or 0.5g from a 10g fruit!) so preventing water loss is critical. It is important for stem quality as well. Green stems are an important factor in fruit quality and a determinant in consumer purchasing decisions.



Covered lugs and bins to prevent temperature increases and moisture loss (from Marlene's presentation)

Studies have been undertaken in Canada that showed the use of reflective tarps at harvest reduced stem browning and improved fruit quality of cherries during subsequent storage. After 4 weeks of storage, fruit that had been uncovered at harvest showed more than 50% stem browning. In fact browning developed within the first 2 days of storage indicating that the damage had occurred early – most likely immediately after harvest. Covered fruit had stems with a higher (10%) water content than uncovered fruit.



Stem condition on fruit which had been uncovered at harvest (left) and covered (right)

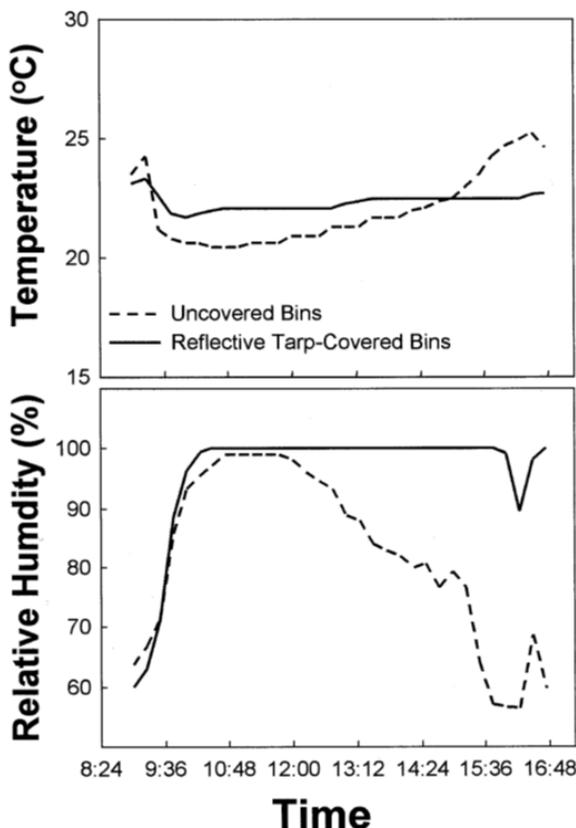


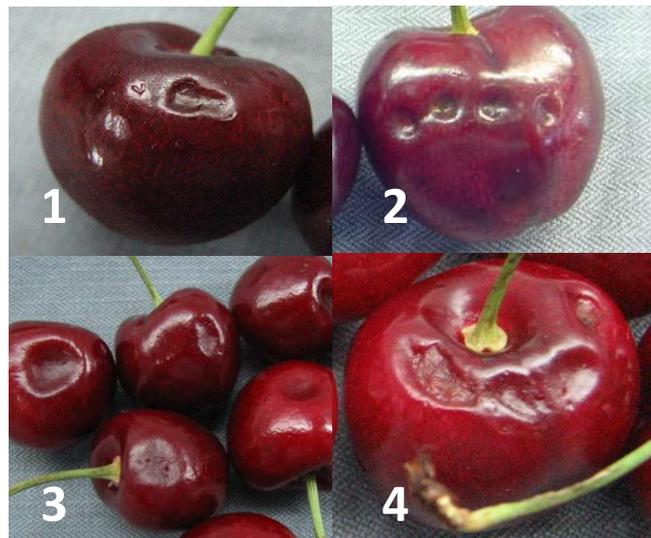
Figure 1. Cherry fruit pulp temperature (above) and relative humidity of the airspace (below) for covered and uncovered fruit (Lapins) during harvest and transport to the packing house (from Schick and Toivonen 2002)

Covering fruit also helps to reduce fruit temperature. Left in the open, fruit temperature can increase as much as 5°C in only 6 minutes. Some orchards have shade structures to hold fruit and tree shade is considered inadequate because it moves! Cooler temperatures slow the rate of respiration in the fruit, and thereby slow the rate of deterioration. Even with these measures in place in the field, it is considered important to move the fruit to sorting and packing facilities as quickly as possible. One day of shelf life is lost with every hour that harvested fruit remains in the field. If situations arise where fruit must stay in the field, or transport times to packing facilities are longer than 1 hour, Oregon orchards use in-field hydro-cooling and refrigerated transport.

Once hydro-cooled (either in-field or on arrival at the packing facility) the fruit temperature should be reduced to about 8-10°C. This has been suggested as the optimum handling temperature on packing lines in Oregon to prevent fruit damage such as pitting.

Pitting damage is generally described as one or more irregular depressions on the fruit (see Figures 1, 2 and 3 from Zoffoli, 2013), being the result of mechanical damage (impact and compression) to the fruit during the harvesting, sorting and packing processes. Pitting damage does not appear until 7-10 days after fruit has been removed from cool storage.

1. Pitting damage
2. Cluster cutter damage
3. Hydraulic cluster cutter damage
4. Picking damage at harvest



Juan-Pablo Zoffoli, Chile, explained at the Australian Cherry Industry Conference in 2013 that there is a varietal difference in sensitivity to pitting, and that this was due to variability in skin elasticity. ‘Bing’, for example, was shown to have a highly elastic skin and low pitting sensitivity, while ‘Van’ and ‘Sweetheart’ had high pitting sensitivity and low skin elasticity. But Frank Kappel, Canada, showed that Lapins, Skeena, Staccato, and Sweetheart had less pitting than Bing in other studies. It could be that the fruit had different elasticity at harvest due to different production systems or regions, or it could be that the temperature of the water in the line is impacting on the elasticity of the fruit skin, and therefore on pitting damage. Fruit cuticle strength and rigidity decreases, and elasticity increases with increasing temperature. The temperatures used in packing lines in Oregon may offer some benefit through increasing the elasticity of fruit skin and cuticles making the fruit more resilient to mechanical damage.

Studies in Chile have shown that fruit sugars and weight are not related to pitting damage, and other studies have shown that firmness is related to pitting damage; fruit must be above 300g/mm (as tested by Firmtech) to increase tolerance to mechanical damage. In Australia and Oregon, high firmness is also deemed important for meeting export quality recommendations (275 g/mm as measured by FirmTech is considered the minimum firmness for export).

Before storage and transport to market, fruit temperature should be reduced from 7-10°C to 0-1°C. This can be achieved through an in-line hydro-cooling process such as an immersion bath. In Oregon fruit is often packed at closer to 10°C and then exposed to forced-air cooling before storage and transport.

Getting fruit temperatures low and keeping them low from this point onwards is critical to reduce the rate of respiration which not only leads to faster deterioration, but additionally adds to the problem by creating heat. Marlene showed that 'warm cherries warm faster' than cool cherries due to the heat of respiration. Studies from Oregon have shown that varieties exhibit different rates of respiration post-harvest and therefore handling should be variety specific, especially when using modified atmosphere packing for cherries.

Modified atmosphere packaging (MAP) modifies the atmosphere (in which cherries are stored) and slows the rate of respiration, thereby slowing the loss of firmness, flavor, color change and the growth of decay organisms'. MAP bags have varying permeability and create low oxygen and high carbon dioxide atmospheres. Respiration uses oxygen, so limiting the availability will slow respiration. Using MAP bags has the potential to extend storage life for up to six weeks. MAP bags are considered effective for longer term storage, or for transport to export destinations as there have been no recorded benefits from using MAP bags for less than a week.

Marlene concluded her presentation by reminding us that fruit quality is determined pre-harvest, and then managed post-harvest, and that the most important factor of all is temperature. Thanks Marlene!



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Marlene Long in NSW



Article by Tom Eastlake

The first part of my Nuffield Australia Farm Scholarship has concluded. As I write this, I have just returned from Reims, France where I was part of the Contemporary Scholars Conference where Nuffield Scholars from around the world converge for a week long conference.

The content was intense and varied with topics covered ranging from establishing a worldwide agricultural policy, BMO biotechnology, Big Data in Agriculture and maintaining effective communication.

The hot topic from the Australian Scholars was the EU's Common Agricultural Policy. A policy managing agricultural subsidies to farms, originally introduced in 1962. While historically, I have found many farmers wishing for some form of general Australian farm subsidy scheme in the past, I think the general consensus from the Australians leaving the conference was that they understood the CAP, however they would not like to work within its boundaries.

A visit to the Salon International de l'Agriculture in Paris provided evidence to the statistic that 91% of French citizens believed that "*French Agriculture is essential for the future of the country*". The Salon was largely like the animal and produce section of the Royal Melbourne or Sydney Agricultural Shows. Except, there was nothing else there. Just livestock and fresh produce. I've never seen so many (actually, I've never seen any) children and young adults queue to take a selfie with a cow. The engagement the French have with their food, where it comes from, who produces it and how it is grown is very evident, and they invest heavily in remaining connected with their consumers. Consumers in the EU show a strong resolve to buy food grown within their country and citizens desire that farm land remain in production and well maintained to provide an idealic setting for their travels into the country.

Being based in the 'Champagne' region of France, we also had the opportunity to visit Moët & Chandon's new winery and G.H. Mumm's champagne house. Something not lost on the champagne drinkers in the group.

I am only in the early days of my involvement with Nuffield Australia, but already I have gained enormous value from the experience. Nuffield Australia offers Farm Scholarships each year to Australian farmers and I would encourage all interested parties to apply. If anyone would like any information on making an application, contact Nuffield Australia or if I can be of any assistance, please feel free to get in touch.



Tom Eastlake, from Young in NSW, has been awarded a Scholarship supported by Horticulture Innovation Australia, as part of the across industry program with matching funds from the Australian Government.



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Minimising biosecurity risks when employing harvesting contractors

At this time of year, many fruit producers will have contractors on their property to help with harvesting activities. If care is not taken, contractors can spread diseases, pests and weed seeds on their clothing, equipment and vehicles as they move from farm-to-farm and region-to-region. If armed with the necessary information your contractors can be an important part of the solution for maintaining good biosecurity on your farm.

Alison Saunders, Manager for Biosecurity Planning and Implementation at Plant Health Australia, says that biosecurity signs are a good way to alert people to your requirements and of the potential risk that their visit poses to your business. From the minute contractors enter your farm they will know you take biosecurity seriously.

Parking restrictions will limit any problems posed by their vehicles. Ask contractors to stay on formed roads or laneways wherever possible to limit the spread of pests and weeds.

“Before the contractor starts work, ask them to sign a visitor register, and record information like where they have come from and where they plan to go when they leave your property.”

“Workers who have recently been overseas may be a particularly high biosecurity threat, especially if they have visited crops, farms, orchards or markets where plant material was sold.”

“All workers will need to be very aware of your biosecurity needs. Once your workers have signed your visitor register, this is an ideal opportunity to take your new staff through a biosecurity checklist,” advises Alison.

The ‘come clean: go clean’ is a key concept for your contractors to keep in mind, whether you are referring to:

- **personal hygiene** (washing hands, keeping clothes, hats, socks and footwear free of weed seeds and soil)
- **cleaning vehicles** (restricting vehicle movement to designated areas or providing washdown bays for harvesting machinery) or
- **keeping equipment clean** (cleaning and disinfecting equipment such as pruning equipment between trees, rows of trees and definitely between orchards).

Going clean is another important biosecurity consideration at harvest time, especially when your produce is leaving the property. Wash and disinfect harvest bins and equipment and ensure there is no leaf litter present when produce leaves the property.

“Finally, take the time to make your workers familiar with the signs of common pests and diseases and know how to report anything unusual. Let them know how important reporting is to be able to respond quickly to a potential problem.”

New tool makes biosecurity second nature

A new planning tool that will help both crop and livestock producers protect their properties against diseases, pests and weeds is now available on the Farm Biosecurity website.

The *Farm Biosecurity Action Planner* helps producers to identify risks based on the six biosecurity ‘essentials’. Plant Health Australia’s Manager for Biosecurity Planning and Implementation, Alison Saunders, said that when devising a biosecurity plan for the farm, the essentials are a good place to start.



“By looking at a property with the essentials in mind, a producer can be confident that they are identifying all the relevant biosecurity risks. They can then address the risks by undertaking simple and practical measures suggested in the planner’s checklist,” Alison said.

Things like quarantining new livestock or plants, signage, pest surveillance, using chemicals appropriately, limiting access to production areas, and cleaning vehicles or equipment are all covered in the planner.

“Working through the planner, you might find that you are already doing some of the recommended practices, or identify other areas where you need to tighten up. The planner will help producers tailor a plan that suits their needs,” added Alison.

“If a producer builds a biosecurity plan around their daily, seasonal or yearly farm routines, after a while biosecurity should simply become habit,” she said.

The *Farm Biosecurity Action Planner* is available from farmbiosecurity.com.au/planner. Producers can print their own copy and fill in the details by hand, or record the actions they will take in the document’s electronic fields with a computer.

Farm Biosecurity is a joint initiative of Animal Health Australia and Plant Health Australia managed on behalf of members.

For more information or to arrange an interview, contact Plant Health Australia’s Communications Officer, Sharon Abrahams, on 02 6215 7711.

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John and the other Regional Managers are available to talk about a range of super related topics such as, becoming a member, making voluntary contributions, finding the right investment option for your situation, searching for lost super, and more. For employers, you can speak with your local Regional Manager about super obligations, upcoming SuperStream changes, becoming a default employer and more.

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Your local Regional Managers are:

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John Garwood
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0475 832 401

* SuperRatings Fundamentals Assessment – Fee Comparison result less than average – 30 November 2014.

SuperRatings Fund Crediting Rate Survey – SR50 Balanced (60-76) Index result above median on rolling 10 year return - MySuper (Balanced) – January 2015.

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Grower Update: December 2014

The National Development Program (NDP) has had a very interactive and successful year. Thank you to everyone who has been involved in some way – for talking to your state co-ordinator or association about what is important to you and your industry; the program is designed to respond to state and national priorities. The priority for 2014 was unanimous - export readiness. In order to deliver on this a national approach was encouraged and taken. Crop monitoring training was attended by growers and orchard managers from 4 states. Many orchard registrations have been approved and export seems increasingly important this season with a near-capacity crop.

Pictured right; Lynn Long talking at Somercotes, Tasmania.



Underlying export of fruit is the expectation that fruit will be of a high quality. Fruit quality was raised earlier in the year when setting priorities for NDP activity. Fortunately the program was able to additionally deliver on this second priority through a more traditional 'Road Show'. The NDP hosted Prof. Lynn Long from Oregon State University, and Marlene Long, a post-harvest quality control technician. The road show visited NSW, Vic and Tas and consisted of formal presentations and orchard walks and demonstrations. Lynn presented 'Optimizing Fruit Quality: Pruning Trees on Productive and Standard Rootstocks including a discussion on variety/rootstock interactions' and Marlene presented 'Best harvest and post-harvest handling practices'. A summary of Marlene's presentation has been provided.

Pictured left; Sam Riggall following Lynn's pruning techniques

Regional co-ordinators should be commended for their excellent work, and for their level of engagement with the program this year; all field days were well attended and we had (mostly!) great weather. Field days were held at commercial orchards and thanks go to those growers involved; Guy Roth, Craig Stubbs, Stuart Walton, Al Turnbull, and Sam Riggall.



Pictured above; Lynn Long discussing tree shape in NSW (Left) and learning about the trellis system in Victoria (Right).

Formal feedback was collected from each of the field days. Along with the many emails and personal discussions with growers, feedback has shown that the days were extremely successful; timely and relevant. Attendees were asked what they considered to be the biggest issue facing the industry at the moment. Results showed that issues around export were of greatest concern (25%), followed by issues relating to yield (inconsistent, difficulty in predicting yield at orchard and/or industry level) and costs of production (15% each). If you have any ideas, suggestions for next year please talk to your state NDP member or your State Association.

State NDP members

Anne Mooney (NSW)

Alison Jones (VIC)

Phil Pyke (TAS)

Darren Graetz (SA)

Penny Measham (co-ordinator)

**Horticulture
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Australia**

This project has been funded by Horticulture Australia Innovation using voluntary contributions and matched funds from the Australian Government.

EXPORT INSIGHTS

By Wayne Prowse – Fresh Intelligence Consulting

CHERRY EXPORTS SMASH EXPORT RECORDS

With the release of the January trade figures that normally covers around 95 per cent of the export season the Australian cherry industry looks set to achieve 40 per cent growth in 2014/15. By the end of January 3,410 tonnes had been exported already smashing the previous record of 2,890 tonnes in 2012/13 season.

At least a further 300 tonnes expected to be recorded by end February according to industry sources which could see the final result come in at up to 3,700 tonnes. Hong Kong and Singapore were the leading markets taking over 55 per cent of the volume, however trade to South Korea increased from 5 to 243 tonnes worth A\$3.4 million in the wake of the Free Trade Agreement being implemented and the immediate elimination of the 24 per cent tariff. China is expected to reach 400 tonnes with further shipments yet to be recorded for February and would see growth of over 150 per cent as the industry develops new market opportunities.

Table 1 : Cherry Exports by Market

July to January			
Market	2014/15	Chg LY	Share
	Tonnes	%	%
Hong Kong	1,504.1	34%	44.1%
Singapore	382.6	49%	11.2%
China	313.3	159%	9.2%
Taiwan	269.3	-37%	7.9%
South Korea	243.8	4738%	7.1%
Malaysia	168.3	14%	4.9%
Vietnam	135.1	4%	4.0%
United Arab Emirates	102.6	142%	3.0%
Thailand	67.9		2.0%
Indonesia	48.7	-35%	1.4%
Kuwait	36.3	228%	1.1%
Russia	-	-100%	0.0%
Japan	16.1	27%	0.5%
<i>all other</i>	138.3	228%	4.1%
Total Tonnes	3,410.4	37%	100.0%

Source: World Trade Atlas; Fresh Intelligence analysis

CHERRIES ARE LEADING EXPORT GROWTH

Cherries are the leading fruit growth product of all major fresh fruit exported from Australia according to the Fresh Intelligence Index. Since the base year 2005 the cherry index is at 297 points followed by mangoes (211) and grapes (175). The overall **Fresh Fruit index** is 117 showing that Australia is exporting 17 per cent more fruit than a decade ago. Oranges, the largest volume fruit exported is tracking more or less the same as a decade ago (99) while apple export volumes are just 21 % of what they were in 2005 (21).

Table 2 : Fresh Intelligence Index

Australian Fruit Exports	Feb 14 to Jan-15	Index Yr 2005 = 100	Change Year
	Tonnes		
Cherries	3,711	297	37%
Mangoes	6,761	211	29%
Grapes	81,055	175	8%
Mandarins	29,826	148	-17%
Avocados	1,285	138	-26%
Peaches & Nectarines	8,317	122	11%
Pears	6,862	106	4%
Oranges	127,074	99	0%
Plums	3,997	68	1%
Blueberries	105	25	-33%
Apples	1,800	21	-40%
Fresh Fruit	290,831	117	2%

Source : ABS data; Fresh Intelligence analysis

FREE TRADE AGREEMENTS

Cherries were the big winners in the recently implemented free trade agreements with Japan and South Korea. The 24 per cent tariff for cherries to South Korea was abolished on implementation in December and we have seen an immediate trade increase. No other fruit industry gained immediate tariff elimination. Others have staging reductions over 5 – 15 years from the implementation date.

The 8.5 per cent tariff for cherries into Japan was eliminated 15th January when the Japan Australia Economic Partnership Agreement (JAPEPA) came into force. However the base tariff was smaller and elimination was later to have had an impact in this last season. The Japan agreement now brings us in line with Chile which has had its tariff reduction staged over 8 years since 2007.

Trade analysis in this report is provided by **Fresh Intelligence Consulting** for Cherry Growers Australia.
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Fruit
Growers
Tasmania Inc

The past cherry season produced very mixed results for our growers. The weather played a big hand in this, with some hail and numerous rain events. The worst of these in mid January saw 80mm of rain falling in 24 hours in some regions.

Some growers were well into their seasons when this major rain event happened, meaning they still managed to pick a good percentage of their crop, however for those who were just commencing, the rain caused significant damage with some growers making the decision not to pick some blocks and in some cases, even whole properties.

On the positive side, despite the losses I am sure that when we have all of the figures in, that across the state there will still have been more cherries picked than last season.

Another great outcome for this season was the signing of the Korea Australia Free Trade Agreement. This resulted in the import tariff of 24% reducing to 0% for cherries, which in turn has resulted in a significant increase in the volumes shipped to this market. The final export figures are not in yet, but Korea is likely to exceed 250 tonnes for this season, up from 5 tonnes last season.

Overall, export volumes will potentially be the highest Tasmania has recorded for a season, despite considerable crop losses due to rain.

FGT will be hosting an end of cherry season debrief in mid-to-late April, with the date to be announced shortly. This is an important forum for all stakeholders such as growers, packers, exporters, transport companies and staff from the Department of Agriculture to review the past season and talk through issues and improvements which can be made going forward into next season.

Unfortunately, due to funding issues, our annual May Conference will not be going ahead this year. We will still be running a major event during the year, however this will more likely be in July/

August. We are currently in discussions with growers and research bodies to develop a format for this event and details will be announced once finalised.

As noted in the last newsletter report, FGT has been successful in receiving funding to subsidise the costs of key skillsets at both Certificate III and IV level for orchard staff. All of the Certificate IV course positions have been filled, however we have 3 spots remaining at the Certificate III level. The skillsets covered are:

From AHC30610 Certificate III in Production Horticulture

- AHCOHS301A: Contribute to OHS process
- AHCWRK206A: Observe enterprise quality assurance procedures
- TAEDL301A: Provide work skill instruction
- AHCPHT203A: Support horticultural crop harvesting
- AHCPHT202A: Carry out canopy maintenance

The cost is only \$231 per participant for all 5 courses, representing a subsidy of 90% of the full cost. Completion of these skillsets equals 1/3 of a full Certificate III in Production Horticulture.

To register, phone our office on 03 6231 1944. Positions will be on a first come, first served basis.

Nick Featherstone
Executive Officer
Fruit Growers Tasmania

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Speaking to growers across the growing regions of NSW, 2014 was a year of mixed results. The consensus is that yield was up, certainly on 2013, however results otherwise varied due to impacts of yield and weather. Some reported smaller size, while others reported size was excellent. Early heat and subsequent recurring rains throughout the growing season brought further challenges, however overall the season was solid.

Growers in NSW had samples sent in for LCV2 testing during and after the growing season with all results received from both NSW DPI and Victoria negative to date. NSW DPI are still accepting samples for testing and as we approach leaf fall, there is still an opportunity to send samples in. The NSW DPI website details information regarding where to send samples and details symptoms of infected trees that present at leaf fall.

After the interest in the Export Registrations, it was pleasing to see all NSW parties that registered for Export were approved. Unfortunately, export channels weren't available to take advantage of these registrations, but with the loss of Russia and Vietnam our focus on market access remains.

To this end, members of NSW CGA were pleased to meet with a member of Barnaby Joyce's staff during harvest and have subsequently remained engaged with our local and federal MPs to work to keep issues for the cherry industry on the agenda.

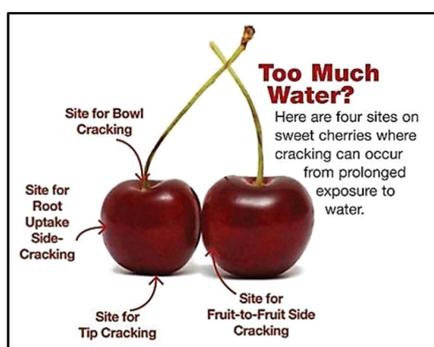
Tom Eastlake
President
New South Wales Cherry Growers Association



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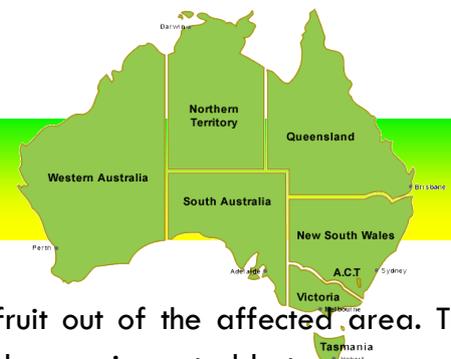
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The CGA-SA held its Post-Harvest meeting on the 20th March. Penny Measham and Peter Morrison represented Lynn Long's presentation, Nutrition and Rootstocks, and

we also visited Grant Wotton's orchard for a pruning/training demonstration. This provoked much discussion and input from all that attended.

The season wrapped up with most growers reporting average crops. South Australia had a very dry spring/summer with no rain throughout the growing season. No splitting helped with pack-outs however there was disappointment with returns for smaller fruit. It was felt that the minimum marketable fruit size had moved from 24mm to 26mm this season.

Reports from those with 'shed door sales' and 'pick your own' orchards were that there was again an increase in interest and demand.

Near the end of the season some of our growers were faced with the threat of bushfire. All but one escaped without damage – however several suffered interruptions to packing and the move-

ment of fruit out of the affected area. The one grower who was impacted lost some young trees and fences and we wish them all the best with their recovery.

CGA-SA's Promotions Committee worked hard once again and got our 2014 Cherry Map published, organised several media advertisement placements and launched the 'Fresh Cherries' cherry map app on both Android and Apple platforms. Well done guys and girls!

Post season South Australia has had a Queensland Fruit Fly outbreak in the eastern suburbs of Adelaide. The outer quarantine zone covers a large chunk of the Adelaide Hills growing zone. If no more flies are caught, the zone will be lifted by our next season so all fingers (and toes!) are crossed. I will keep you up to date with any changes.

By now most of you are into pruning or on holidays – enjoy whichever it may be!

Andrew Flavell
President CGSA

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Western Australia

The season just gone had mixed results for growers across the regions. Western Australia recorded its warmest year on record in 2014, so basically there were not enough chill hours in the growing regions. In most areas, our season was about 10 days early, which meant WA had a good supply of cherries Christmas week.

Production volumes in Donnybrook were well down on last year, with most growers reporting at least 70% fall. Most growers mainly sold their fruit from farm gate.

Manjimup also had reduced volumes in the early varieties, thankfully the later varieties volume was on par with last season, and this reflected in excellent quality fruit, with the bulk of the crop 28+mm-30+mm.

WA fruit was in demand in the market place and maintained a reasonable price.

The annual Cherry Auction was held in the first week of December and an outstanding result was achieved for the Princess Margaret Chil-

dren's Hospital Foundation. A special thanks to our cherry growers - Sweet Cherry Valley Cherries, Cherry Lane Fields, Guadagnino's Orchard for donating their cherries to the auction and the Donnybrook Men's shed for making the special timber box. Manjimup also hosted their Annual Cherry Harmony festival, celebrating all things cherries. It was an outstanding success, over 10,000 cherry lovers visited and had a taste of cherries, which were in good supply due to the season being early.

An update to the representation of the WA Cherry Growers in the now defunct Fruitwest. Late last year the APC appointed an interim sub-committee for stone fruit. They are currently working on a proposal on the structure of governance and a constitution, hopefully to be completed by end of month.

Kathy Grozotis
WA Cherry Growers Association



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