Around the Orchard

Newsletter of the Apple and Pear Growers Association of South Australia Inc.
in conjunction with the Cherry Growers Association of South Australia Inc
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Key Dates

16th January, 2019 - APAL Postharvest Seminar, Melbourne

March 2019 - next round of Future Orchards walks

24 - 26 June, 2019 - Hort Connections, Melbourne

Rainfall

(*Rainfall for the month - 30 Sept 2018, source BOM*)
Ashton - 40.4 mm (*avg 112.0 mm*)
Cudlee Creek, Milbrook Reservoir - 52.0 mm (*avg 97.1 mm*)
Kalangadoo - 30.8 mm (avg 78.1 mm)
Lenswood - 32.8 mm (*APFIP station*)
Loxton - 1.4 mm (*avg 27.3 mm*)
Prospect Hill - 35.4 mm (*avg 88.3 mm*)
Uraidla - 38.8 mm (*avg 115.3 mm*)
Woodside - 21.4 mm (*avg 90.9 mm*)

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Publication of any information contained in this Newsletter either wholly or in part is not permitted without approval.

2018 Hailstorm Response

Susie Green, 5th Dec 2018

At the time of writing, it is now just on two weeks since the latest hailstorms swept across the Adelaide Hills. This newsletter was due to be distributed last month, but has been delayed due to efforts around the hailstorm.

Apple & Pear Growers Association with assistance from EE Muir & Sons staff, Lenswood Coop staff and Christian Ceravolo have undertaken damage assessments on apple and pear blocks across the region to quantify the impacts.

Key findings are as follows:

- all apple growers in the Adelaide Hills have had crops damaged
- level of damage varies, with some pockets being hit harder than others, but overall the average damage levels are at least as bad as 2017 and in some areas, worse than 2017
- at least 60-70% of fruit outside of netted blocks on average is damaged
- netting was effective at significantly reducing damage, but some netting types did not exclude hail as well as other types
- pears received some light damage in some areas

Reports on hail damage to cherries is mixed, with some pockets receiving heavy hail and other areas not recording damage. The cherry benchmarking project will attempt to monitor a hail affected block to track the impacts through to harvest. Of more major concern for cherries will be any future rain events and the very significant pressures from birds and grey headed flying foxes. We will attempt to quantify all of these impacts by survey after harvest is completed.

As an association, we are now working through identifying what are the needs of industry and have been in discussions with government agencies, Ministers as well as APAL and Hort Innovation to seek the appropriate support and assistance.

An apple and pear industry meeting was held on Tuesday 27th November to bring together those impacted.

- F model: (narrow orchard) ideal for work in small-sized, narrow-lane orchards.

- GE model: (low orchard) ideal for work under low orchards and overhead trellis systems.

- GT model: (large orchard) for use in standard-size orchards and in open-field cultivation.

Summertown Ph: 08 8390 3017
Gepps Cross Ph: 08 8139 7200
Email: admin@landinicentral.com.au
www.landinicentral.com.au

For those growers who were unable to attend the meeting and would like to know more information, please give me a call on 0417 451 999.

One of the key areas of immediate support that is available to affected growers is through Rural Business Support. They provide free rural financial counselling services to affected growers and can assist with support applications for the Farm Household Allowance, preparing cash flows, negotiations with the bank and other agencies. If you are facing any difficulties I would encourage you to make contact with Chris Turner through c.turner@ruralbusinesssupport.org.au or 1800 836 211.

It is a very difficult time for all in the industry and we will do our best to bring people together. Difficult times can also impact on peoples' personal health and wellbeing. Help and support can come from a range of sources such as friends, neighbours, service clubs and volunteers as well as the more formal agencies, authorities and services.

If you are wanting to chat to someone or if you are concerned about someone near you, you can call the Regional Access Program on 1300 032 186 or go to https://saregionalaccess.org.au/ for free professional telephone and online counselling services for people living and working in regional South Australia. Alternatively, there are a range of services available, with more information at http://pir.sa.gov.au/grants_and_assistance/drought_support/health_and_wellbeing

For those on social media, Apple & Pear Growers Association has a closed facebook group which is open to anyone within the industry to join. This is another area where you can share information with other growers and industry members and keep in touch with each other. If you would like to join up and I haven't yet found you to connect, please let me know.

If you have any feedback or input into areas of need, please do not hesitate to be in touch.

South Australian Minister for Primary Industries and Regions Tim Whetstone visiting hail affected orchards.

Labour Updates

Changes to the Horticulture Award are Coming

Source: MADEC

The lengthy process to review the conditions of the Horticulture Award is getting closer to completion, with draft determinations recently released by the Fair Work Commission. The main areas likely to impact horticulture producers are the inclusion of overtime provisions for casuals and introduction of a minimum two hour engagement for casual workers.

At this stage it is still unclear whether overtime provisions will apply to piece rate workers or when the new award conditions will be enacted.

Examples of altered pay rates if the new award provisions are implemented:

For hours worked outside of ordinary span of hours (5.00am-8.30pm)
Base rate + 25% casual loading + 15% overtime loading
= 18.93 + 4.73 + 2.84 = $26.50 OR 140% 18.93 = $26.50

Hours worked in excess of 12 hours per day or 304 hours over an 8 week period
Base rate + 25% casual loading + 50% overtime loading
= 18.93 + 4.73 + 9.47 = $33.13 OR 175% 18.93 = $33.13

Public holiday
Base rate + base rate+ 25% casual loading
= 18.93 + 18.93 + 4.73 = $42.59 OR 225% 18.93 = $42.59

Labour Hire Licensing

The South Australian Attorney-General has announced that the South Australian government intends to repeal the Labour Hire Licensing Act 2017 that was introduced last year. Legislation to repeal the Act is expected to be introduced into Parliament before the end of the year.

Changes to the Working Holiay Maker Visa Program

The Australian Government has announced changes to the Working Holiday Maker visa program to support regional and rural communities.

Key changes include:

- Expanding the regional areas where subclass 462-visa holders can work in agriculture to qualify for a second year of stay in Australia. This now includes all of South Australia.
- Increasing the period in which subclass 417 and 462 visa holders can stay with the same agricultural employer, from 6 to 12 months
- The option of a third-year for subclass 417 and 462 visa holders who, after 1 July 2019, undertake 6-months of specified work in a specified regional area during their second year
- Offering an increase in the annual caps to a number of countries that participate in the subclass 462 visa program
- Increase the eligible age for subclass 417 visa applications from Canada and Ireland to 35.

For more details go to https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/

Apple & Pear States Meeting

Susie Green attended a meeting of all the state apple and pear representative organisations at APAL in November, where there was an opportunity to discuss common issues and challenges and identify areas of mutual opportunity. This was the first time that the state organisations had formally come together for a number of years and provide a good platform for ongoing communication and collaboration.

Key topics of discussion included APAL's new industry strategy, crisis management planning, with a particular focus on the recent strawberry tampering incidents, labour issues, including the Ag Visa and Growcom's Fair Farms Initiative, fruit maturity testing, fruit fly, grey headed flying foxes and biosecurity. This was followed by a day's media training to help support the delivery of aligned industry messaging in a professional way. Apple & Pear Growers Association of SA look forward to continued dialogue between the state associations and APAL.

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Australian Government Regional Investment Corporation Farm Investment Loans

Is your business in the financial need of a loan and do you solely or mainly sell products into supply chains that are interstate or outside Australia, or plan to in the future? If so, you may be eligible for a federal government Farm Investment Loan. This loan can be used for refinancing debt, paying for operating expenses or capital or enhancing productivity.

Quick facts:

Amount	Up to $2 million
Early settlement	No fee
Apply	Any time
Extra repayments	No fee
Term	10 years
Interest rate	3.58% variable rate
Application fee	No fee
Redraw	Not available

At least 50% of your total debt must stay with a commercial lender. Repayments: interest only for first 5 years, principal and interest for the remainder of the 10 year term. After 10 years, you can refinance any remaining balance with a commercial lender.

For more information see http://www.ric.gov.au/farmers/farm-investment. If you have any questions regarding the loan or would like assistance in lodging an application, please contact Chris Turner at Rural Business Support on 1800 836 211.

SafeWork SA to Kick Off Campaign targeting Fruit and Tree Nut Growing

SafeWork SA is about to commence a compliance campaign targeting fruit and tree nut growing. South Australian work injury claims have risen in the agriculture sector over the past 4 years, with fruit orchard workers being identified as among those being injured.

SafeWork SA will be contacting a number of Fruit and Tree Nut businesses in the period of November 2018 to February 2018 to make a time to conduct audits. Alternatively, you can choose to pro-actively invite SafeWork SA onto your property.

What will they be looking for?
Assessments will be particularly focused on the following high-risk areas:

General Workplace Management (Regulation 39)
- Information, training, instruction
- Backpackers / non-English speaking workers
- Emergency plan
- Notification of incidents
- PPE

Powered Mobile Plant (Regulation 215)
- Hydralada's (Orchard lift platform)
- Operator controls
- Avoidance of collision with pedestrians
- Warning device
- Forklift operations

Plant maintenance program (Regulation 213)
- Plant maintenance conducted by competent person

ROPS & FOPS on Tractors (Regulations 214 & 216)
- ROPS & FOPS fitted and maintained

Quad & Motorbikes (Regulation 34)
- Has the PCBU assess the risks and hazards of operating 2 & 4 wheeled motorbikes

Manual Handling (Regulation 60)
- Hazardous manual tasks identified
- Controls implemented
- Workers trained
- Musculoskeletal risks

Prevention of Falls (Regulations 78 & 79)
- To minimise the risk of falls from height
- Safe use of bow ladders
- Adequate fall protection measures

Weather (Regulation 40)
- Working in extreme heat or cold

Facilities
- Toilets, drinking water, washing & eating

First Aid
- Provision of equipment
- Trained first aiders
- Regards to hazards in the workplace eg snakes, spiders, cuts

SafeWork SA have a number of resources available to help you in managing the risks associated with agriculture, including the Farmer's Guidebook to Work Health & Safety. There are some hard copies of these are available from the Apple & Pear Growers Association of SA office. They can also be downloaded from https://www.safework.sa.gov.au/business-industry/agriculture-horticulture, along with a number of other tools and resources.

For any queries regarding the campaign, contact team leader Harry Gelzinis at harry.gelzinis@sa.gov.au

Cherry Growers Update

Cherry growers attended a pre-harvest meeting at the Forest Range Hall on Thursday 8th November, with a good attendance as usual.

The evening started with two guest presentations on the topic of Food Safety. Vanessa McEvoy from SA Health ran through some of the key risks in horticulture for food safety, which include:
- Water (pre and post harvest)
- Inputs (fertilizer, chemical)
- Environmental factors
- Adjacent and previous land use
- Wild and domestic animals
- Equipment
- Food Handling

There have been 7 incidents relating to horticulture since 2015, including 2 in frozen berries, 2 in rockmelons, 1 in bean sprouts, 1 in salad pre-packs and 1 in frozen pomegranate. The most recent rockmelon incident which was caused by *Listeria monocytogenes* led to a number of deaths.

This was a helpful reminder that all growers should assess the risks on their own properties and packing sheds. Any incident can not only impact on the grower, but can have a major impact on the industry as a whole.

Lee Duffy from EE Muir & Sons then focused on the postharvest treatment components of food safety, which include ensuring the appropriate use and treatment of water, as well as cleaning and hygeine of cool rooms, packing lines and equipment, produce bins and buckets.

Sanitising or disinfecting is important to kill disease spores, viruses etc and limit the spread of disease spores for food safety, improved shelf life and good general hygeine.

Effective disinfection and sanitation requires a surface free of soiling, therefore cleaning prior to treatment is important, a surface free of chemical contamination and correct use rates, solution pH, application and contact times. Different products have different requirements so it is important to consider the product that is going to work best for your conditions.

After the guest presentations and a break for tea, a pre-season summary was undertaken. Overall growers are reporting a good crop load, with timing either on average or slightly later than average.

This season's cherry maps are now available for distribution. If you were unable to attend the pre-harvest meeting and would like some maps to hand out, please contact Susie Green or Helen Lindon. The Fresh Cherries App is now live and all map participants should have received their login details from Susie Green on how to update their own details as well as when they are open and closed. Please contact Susie if you have any questions or issues with the App. Note, the responsibilty lies with each business to ensure that you show when you are open and closed on the App. The default position is for it to be set to show your orchard as being closed.

Other promotions this year will focus on getting positive stories to the media and also through social media, with a push in early December and also post-Christmas.

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"Frankly, I don't have time to muck around with inferior products and erratic supply. Particularly when it comes to the bins we need to rely on at harvest time."

"That's why I'm standing here looking happy. I've been buying my bins from Barossa Enterprises for over a decade now. Consistent quality, sturdy construction and reliable supply equals value for money in anyone's language. And peace of mind for me!"

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Michael Stafford | Director, Stafford Orchards

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Apple & Pear Growers Update

The Apple & Pear Growers Association of SA held their Annual General Meeting and dinner on the 8th November at The Manor, Basket Range. There was an excellent turn-out of growers and industry representatives.

President Ashley Green and CEO Susie Green reported on Association activities over the past 12 months, which has been a very challenging period for industry, with ongoing low market prices, hailstorms and hungry birds.

Key activities included leading and supporting industry after the 2017 hailstorm, with a significant amount of time and effort put into understanding the damage levels, liaising with government, managing the media, supporting growers and pack houses and coordinating the Hailstorm Heroes marketing program. The association also continued with other state based promotions, including the Royal Adelaide Show and Pick a Pink Lady Weekend and continued to promote the industry through various social media channels.

In addition to this, the association also successfully advocated for simplication of planning regulations for the installation of orchard netting, with the new regulations coming into effect in early 2018.

They also continued to advocate for industry on a number of other areas including fruit fly management, recognition of Pest Freedom, Grey-Headed Flying Foxes and Lorikeets, road infrastructure, planning and regulations. This included formal submissions as well as meeting with state and federal Ministers and members of parliament and various other levels of government.

Despite the extra efforts that went into supporting industry over this difficult period, the association was able to maintain stable finances and continued to work towards being able to continually improve its position to better support industry in the future. Please contact Susie Green if you would like a copy of the full Annual Report presented at the meeting.

Joe Ceravolo as South Australian director of APAL, then provided an update on national activities, including a summary of the APAL AGM and stakeholder meeting which was held earlier that week.

At the meeting, Joyce Ceravolo, Michael Stafford and Matthew Flavell were all reappointed onto the management committee, joining Ashley Green, Tony Ceravolo, Jody Schultz and Tim Vickers .

After the formal proceedings of the AGM, the evening progressed with dinner and socialising. Thanks to Ashton Valley Fresh/ Ceravolo Orchards for sponsoring the dinner and to MADEC for sponsoring a drink on arrival, making the evening accessible to more members and growers.

Lenswood Forest Range Ag Bureau Re-launches

Around 80 people attended the successful relaunch of the Lenswood Forest Range Ag Bureau at the Lobethal Bierhaus on Monday 19th November. The Lenswood Forest Range branch of the bureau was first formed in 1897 and enjoyed a long history of providing supporting services to agriculturists in the region. In the Ag Bureau's early days, topics of discussion were broad ranging, from raspberry production to horse collic, with many active debates and discussions, but over time as as the crops grown in the district changed, the focus shifted towards more predominantly apple (and to some degree cherry) production. When other technical support programs came into place, such as Future Orchards, and technical information became more accessible through other formats, the level of interest in the Bureau began to dwindle and it was placed into recess 4 years ago.

However, in recent times, a number of people in the district have recognised that there is a role for the Ag Bureau to play more broadly across horticulture and viticulture in the region, bringing together growers and those working within the industry to learn from each other and providing the opportunity to learn from others and other industries, as well as providing a platform for social interaction and building strength within the community.

An initial meeting was held in August 2018 which determined that there was sufficient interest to form a new committee and bring the Bureau out of recess. At the AGM held on 11th September, a new committee was elected, with Justin Tiller as President, Tim Vickers as Vice President, Cheree Reichl as Secretary, Luke Simpson as Treasurer, Graham Mason as Minute Secretary and Paul James, Susie Green, Kym Green, Andrew Flavell, Jonathon Leonard and Casey Bellman as general members.

This committee organised the relaunch event, which was held over dinner with guest speaker Glenn Cooper, from Cooper's Brewery.

Glenn gave a thoroughly entertaining insight into how Cooper's Brewery have managed to maintain and grow a successful family business and compete with international brewing giants and bigger corporations. There were many key lessons that could be readily translatable to the large number of family businesses that were present on the night.

Justin Tiller also outlined some of the aims of the reformed Lenswood Forest Range Ag Bureau, which include encompassing all horticulture crops in the hills region and providing a mixture of learning opportunities and social elements.

Planned events for the coming 12 months include a social function pre-Christmas, a slide night looking at key learnings from travel, an end of season get together after apple harvest and a tour to the Adelaide Plains to look at high-tech glasshouses.

For more information on the Ag Bureau in South Australia go to http://www.agbureau.com.au/. If you are interested in joining or would like to know more about what is planned, you can speak with any of the committee members, or email LenswoodAB@gmail.com.

APAL Post-harvest Seminar

APAL will be holding this year's post-harvest seminar in Melbourne on Wednesday 16th January. Presenters at the 2019 post-harvest seminar will share information and examples of how the progressive operators, both locally and internationally, are implementing effective practices backed by an understanding of science and skills.

Topics include: post-harvest physiology, storage technology, management, insights and analysis of the future retailer landscape in the apple and pear industry. Individuals with an interest in apple and pear cool store management, orchard owners and managers, advisers and marketers looking to update their post-harvest knowledge are encouraged to attend.

A tour of Southern Victoria will be held on the following day. For more information or to register go to: https://apal.org.au/event/post-harvest-seminar-2019/

Wildlife Destruction Permits

With extremely high numbers of birds putting pressure onto crops, growers are reminded to make sure that you have up to date wildlife destruction permits in place if you intend to shoot birds.

With increasing numbers of kangaroos growers are also encouraged to apply for permits to cull kangaroos on their property.

Permits can be downloaded from the Department of Environment and Water website at https://www.environment.sa.gov.au/topics/plants-and-animals/permits-and-licences/Native_animals_in_the_wild/Permits_to_Destroy_Wildlife

New National Apple & Pear Industry Strategic Plan

Apple & Pear Australia Limited has just released a new Apple and Pear Industry Strategy 2018-2023 on behalf of industry, with a core message that .. *"Over the next five years, the apple and pear industry has the potential to positively shift its commercial and sustainability prospects."*

APAL CEO, Phil Turnbull, is bullish about the industry's prospects – but strongly cautions long-term success will take a fundamental shift to the current operating model and an end to obstructive supply chain fragmentation.

"If we're serious about our commitment to positively impacting the future for growers, we need a concerted whole of industry effort to engineer growth opportunities and dismantle structures hampering continuous improvement," he said.

"The new Apple and Pear Industry Strategy 2018-2023 lays out a clear, actionable agenda for aligned, long-term transformation at every stage of the supply chain." Developed as a living, actions-oriented strategy, APAL anchors the Strategy to four key pillars for industry viability beyond 2030 and the corresponding actions required for it to be delivered.

The four interdependent pillars for industry transformation laid out by the new Strategy are:

1. Market growth: Targeting domestic and export opportunities through well-managed brands.
2. Supply chain management: Building, capturing and disseminating industry intelligence to accelerate value.
3. Industry sustainability: Bolstering industry viability, integrity and brand reputation.
4. Capability and capacity building: Enhancing the skills and culture of industry players to deliver and lead transformation.

By simultaneously addressing these pillars through a wide range of planned activities, growers can expect a lift in unit value through:

- Improving consumers' experience in the domestic category.
- Greater export opportunities by playing to Australia's competitive advantage.
- Growth of premium market segments.
- Clear governance and direct accountability for strategy delivery.
- Improved supply chain intelligence and risk management systems to accelerate learnings and facilitate decision-making.
- Strong focus on factors driving industry sustainability, e.g. improved workplace practices, technology uptake, application of Future Orchards® and biosecurity.
- Equipping industry players with skills, market intelligence and access to resources, to lead industry change.
- Advocacy for growers' commercial interests as inevitable broader supply chain changes occur, both domestically and globally.

Coordinated by APAL, the new Strategy draws heavily on growers' insights from recent consultation conducted for the industry's Strategic Investment Plan, the latest consumer research and the many strategies and industry plans that have previously been developed for the industry, including the Apple & Pear Industry Export Development Strategy which set export goals of 10 per cent of production by 2027.

Redressing an imbalance of investment and focus also sits firmly at the core of the new Strategy.

"Productivity initiatives, such as Future Orchards, have proved enormously impactful," Phil said. "But without a corresponding effort to stimulate market demand, especially in light of diminishing consumption, the ability to optimise those productivity efforts is lost."

Significantly, the new Strategy also calls for a review of the current industry governance and funding model to ensure delivery partners are directly accountable to growers and programs are not compromised by funding restrictions.

"If the current funding model is unable to support this Industry Strategy, then we need to reconsider how we go about funding the plan," Phil said. "Rather than jeopardising growers' futures by compromising on what needs to be done."

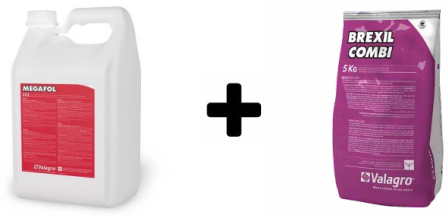
For more information and to download a copy of the strategy go to https://apal.org.au/industry-strategy/

ORCHARD UPDATE

SEPTEMBER 2018

Go with the winning combination this Spring

Megafol plus Brexil is the safest and most effective way to give your crop a boost this spring. Brexil's extremely low risk of phytotoxicity/russet, wide compatibility and fast uptake combined with the plant health effect of Megafol, particularly against abiotic stress make them a perfect combination.



For a tailored program to suit your individual crop please contact:

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