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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Latest Industry News

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Key Dates

10th October 2019 - Apple & Pear Growers Association of SA AGM, 6.30 pm Lot 100, Nairne

1 November 2019 - All labour hire providers to be licensed.

Early November 2019 - Cherry Pre Harvest Meeting (date tbc)

13th November 2019 - APAL Grower R&D Update, MCG, Melbourne

20 November 2019 - Spring Future Orchards® Walk

Rainfall

(*Rainfall for the month - 30 Sept 2019, source BOM*)
Ashton - 68.6 mm (*avg 111.5 mm*)
Birdwood - 60.2 mm (avg 81.3 mm)
Cudlee Creek, Milbrook Reservoir - 75.8 mm (*avg 96.9 mm*)
Lenswood - 64.0 mm (avg 114.0 mm)
Loxton - 16.6 mm (*avg 27.0 mm*)
Nangwarry - 83.4 mm (*avg 72.0 mm*)
Prospect Hill - 60.2 mm (*avg 87.7 mm*)
Uraidla - 60.0 mm (*avg 114.8 mm*)
Woodside, Inverbrackie - 43.2 mm

Around the Orchard is published by the Apple & Pear Growers Association of South Australia and the Cherry Growers Association of South Australia

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

From the Office

Leadership Development Scholarships Now Available: Women in Horticulture

Funding grants of up to $10,941 per person are currently available to women who work in the horticulture sector to support their participation in a leadership development program.

The grants have been allocated as part of a joint funding arrangement between Women & Leadership Australia and Hort Innovation, and provide access to one of three part-time practical courses.

Participants will network with women peers from a variety of industries, and cover such topics as reinforcing resilience and wellbeing, rewiring your networks, evolving strategic change, team dynamics and supporting leadership performance.

Expressions of Interest
Find out more and register your interest by completing the Expression of Interest form here prior to 15th November: www.wla.edu.au/horticulture

Wildlife Desctruction Permits

With the season approaching, growers are encouraged to ensure that they have wildlife destruction permits in place early to ensure that there are no delays in processing when the permit is needed. As well as pest bird species, destruction permits also cover the shooting of kangaroos, which are in high numbers at present.

It is the responsibility of the permit holder to make sure that they, and any other persons listed on the permit to destroy wildlife, adhere to the relevant codes of practice for the species listed on the permit, which can be found at https://www.environment.sa.gov.au/topics/plants-and-animals/animal-welfare/Codes_of_practice/codes-of-practice-humane-destruction-wildlife

The Wildlife Desctruction Permit is in an updated format this year and can be downloade at https://www.environment.sa.gov.au/licences-and-permits/wildlife-permits/permit-types/manage-control-destroy-native-animals.

New Horticulture Resource from the Fair Work Ombudsman

The Fair Work Ombudsman has developed a Horticulture Showcase which includes resources and information to help growers and workers find information about pay and entitlements.

It is a useful go-to resource, which can be found at https://www.fairwork.gov.au/horticulture-showcase

Voting is now open for the 2019 South Australian Regional Showcase. The top stories across regional South Australia have been selected based on reach and impact and are now available online for public voting. The story with the most votes will be the 2019 People's Choice Award winner, and will be celebrated in October.

Vote for your favourite story to win the People's Choice Award, and go in the draw to win 1 of 5 SALIFE yearly subscriptions (valued at $89 each).
*Full T&C's apply.

To see the top 30 Regional Showcase stories and vote for your favourite, go to https://bit.ly/2kFSyhM

Hills and Coast Grant Finder

Grant funding is a way to help build thriving communities. Regional Development Australia Adelaide Hills, Fleurieu and Kangaroo Island along with participating councils across the region, are excited to provide the Hills & Coast Grant Finder to individuals, businesses, community groups, sports clubs and other not-for-profits. Their aim is to empower them to easily find and successfully apply for grants to turn ideas into reality… without wasting time and effort.

This site provides a comprehensive list of available grant and funding opportunities. It is a free service and means you will never miss a grant opportunity again. Register to receive email alerts for new grants, save your favourites and access tips to help you apply for grants.

To access the grant finder go to https://rdahc.grantguru.com.au/

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Hailstorm Recovery Working Group Update

The Hailstorm Recovery Working Group has been continuing to work on initiatives to help support industry following on from last year's hailstorms. The Working Group, a subcommittee of the Apple & Pear Growers Association of SA has now met 6 times since the group first formed in April 2019, focusing on three core areas of Crop Protection (Netting), Agri-Tourism and Engaging with the Community through Story Telling and Business Management for Adaption and Resilience.

The Working Group met with Minister Tim Whetstone along with local elected members John Gardner (member for Morialta), Dan Cregan (member for Kavel) and Dr John Harvey (member for Newland) in Parliament House on 25th September to provide an update on how the industry is travelling, along with activities of the working group and to seek government input and support.

The group communicated to the government representatives that industry is still very much in a recovery and rebuilding period, however there is some more optimism than there was at the start of the year. While some orchard blocks have been sold, we have not lost any more growers to the industry in the past 12 months, however the next 8-10 months will be very challenging, with limited cash flow to grow this season's crop on 2 consecutive years of poor returns. We are also facing potential dry conditions with a number of dams not filling as well as a number of other external pressures on industry. So while there is some light at the end of the tunnel, this coming season will be crucial for many.

The group also communicated that their hopes are that by the end of this season, growers will be in a stronger position to start rebuilding their reserves, there have been no further exits from industry, growers are planning new plantings, there is an increased level of confidence and optimism and that the industry is included in the state's agenda for growth.

The Working Group is focusing on the following areas and shared a summary with the Minister.

Netting

Netting is a crucial element of building industry resilience to climate variables and environmental pressures. An industry survey was sent out to help inform the development of a business case for government support for netting, with feedback from 26 different apple, pear and cherry businesses covering ~80% of production. Data from respondents showed that there are at least 270 ha of apples, pears and cherries under permanent net in the Adelaide Hills, with an additional 225 ha budgeted for by inudstry in the next 5-10 years based on a level of capital investment that industry can sustain. Some 4 times this figure would be installed without budgetary constraints.

There are a number of barriers to further investment, such as limited number of contractors available to install, however access to capital is the major barrier. A netting subsidy was identified to be of major importance to enable them to undertake netting sooner than otherwise planned or to net more orchard than otherwise planned for 87.5% of businesses surveyed.

The major benefits of netting were identified to be security of income and reliable fruit supply, reduced bird/bad damage, improved packouts and fruit quality, water savings and risk mitigation.

The working group is also collating information on netting options to help growers make informed decisions on what type of net to install.

Agritourism

The Working Group is looking at opportunities to partner with Adelaide Hills Council and Adelaide Hills Tourism to build skills and knowledge in agritourism as a potential avenue for value adding and new revenue streams for some growers. This includes exploring options for learning from other industries, information sessions, workshops and one-on-one support.

Another related activity includes looking at ways to build community awareness of, and support for, the industry, utilising story telling showing the full orchard to plate story, involving growers and packing sheds, and broadening to involvement with schools.

The group has also considered the impact of restrictive Council regulations on agritourism activities. There has been ongoing advocacy to the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure from Apple & Pear Growers Association of SA, Adelaide Hills Council and Adelaide Hills Tourism for amendments to the current Adelaide Hills Council Development Plan to bring it in line with Mt Barker and to simplify planning for agriculture and agritourism. Feedback from the Minister has been that agritourism is a high priority for planning reforms and the date for implementation has been brought forward to June 30 2020.

Business Management for Adaption and Resilience

This area of focus looks at ways in which businesses can be supported to adapt to change and disruption. This includes showcasing examples of successful innovation and adaption to change at all scales of operation, investigating what services are available relating to business administration support and providing opportunities to learn from each other. It is also recognised that Ag Tech can play a role in this space.

If you are interested in more information on any of the above or would like to be involved, please contact Susie Green.

Agritourism

In recent strategic planning workshops for horticulture in the Adelaide Hills Region, Agritourism has been identified as an area of opportunity for horticulture. The Hailstorm Recovery Working Group has also identified Agritourism as an area of potential opportunity.

So what is agritourism? Australian Regional Tourism Ltd provide the following definition.

"Traditionally thought of as being simply farm stays and winery visits, the term agritourism now encompasses a wide variety of activities where agriculture and tourism intersect. Essentially, 'agritourism' is the act of going to a region to visit a farm or food-related business (including restaurants, markets/events, produce outlets and natural attractions) for enjoyment, education, or to participate in activities and events."

The following article draws from a number of Agritourism guides and resources that are readily available from various parts of the world.

Agritourism can provide a number of potential benefits. It can create a diversified income stream, generating new sources of income, or enabling the grower to sell their produce directly to the consumer at higher returns. It can also create value-adding opportunities or enable the grower to build on their brand, allowing consumers to see firsthand how the produce that they are purchasing in the shops is grown. It also has the potential to underpin a regional brand identity, allowing visitors to associate the produce that they enjoy when visiting the region, to produce that they may see in the shops.

So where to start?

A key point to remember is that agritourism brings people to your orchard, so you must enjoy meeting people and plan activities that visitors will want to participate in.

Agritourism doesn't necessarily mean doing something different than what you are already doing on your orchard; the difference is that you are going to show the public what you do.

Starting small, with one-off events can be an invaluable way of testing the waters without major investment, substantial risk or significant change to your business model. It also allows for easier adjustment as you develop new skills, and provides the chance to adapt and tweak your offering as new opportunities become more apparent.

Authentic experiences appeal to visitors that want to learn about how their food is produced. Simply showcasing what you do does not need to involve a lot of expense and is a great way to get experience hosting visitors. Agritourism does not need to be a full year commitment and can be seasonal.

An important consideration from the outset is to identify the type of customer you hope to attract. Each audience you hope to attract will have different interests and expectations.

First impressions count for everything, so it is important to make sure you present your orchard in a way that make people want to be there.

"Regardless of the type of farm, a farm that opens doors to visitors, should be tidy, safe, and project a wholesome image of farming today. Agritourism farms are often the only connection people have with agriculture so your role is as an ambassador for the industry. A positive image and message are vital for successful agritourism."

Monika Roth and Jim Ochterski from Cornell University Cooperative Extension in "Getting started in Agritourism"

Visitors generally expect:

- the orchard and facilities are clean and well-maintained
- parking is easy to find, suitable in all weather and adequate*
- visitors can easily figure out where to go when they arrive
- staff are evident and welcoming, and let visitors know what is on offer
- facilities are safe and accessible for all visitors
- there are sanitary bathrooms with a toilet and sink
- the facility accepts credit or debit cards**

*If there is not adequate parking on-site, consider alternative options. Is there somewhere nearby where visitors can safely walk from? Is it possible to transport visitors by bus or shuttle from nearby parking?

**There are a number of cheap and simple credit card options available that link to devices such as phones or tablets. Alternatively, EFTPOS facilities can readily be arranged with your bank. For most tourists, credit card facilities are expected and can also lead to greater sales.

Identify what areas of the farm you will make available to visitors. Make these visitor areas attractive and work out how best to exclude visitors from areas you do not want them to go. It is not uncommon that visitors will wander off and explore on their own so clear signage or fencing may be needed. Clear signage to parking areas is important and don't assume visitors will know where **not** to park. Visitors are not familiar with working orchard operations and may not show what you may consider to be common sense.

Making an effort can make a big difference to the visitor experience and a happy visitor is much more likely to come again and make recommendations to others.

Some points to consider:

- Visitor areas and entrances are clearly marked
- Junk and unused equipment is out-of sight
- Toilets are cleaned regularly and stocked
- Visitors can easily determine restricted areas of the farm
- Hours, days, or season of operation is indicated at the entrance
- Parking areas are clearly marked and safe for visitors

Income sources

Depending on what you offer, it is possible to generate income from a range of sources, value adding to the original product offering. This includes:

- Admission fees for events or on-farm experiences
- Tour fees, if you are offering specialised tours, or other activity fees
- Sales of fresh produce
- Sales of processed farm products
- Craft / souvenir sales
- Class / skill-building fees for specialised classes (eg grafting, pruning etc)
- Tasting fee for value added products
- Facility rental for events hosted by external operators
- Farm lodging
- Food service

Managing risk

Inviting visitors onto your property can create a range of new risks to your business. You are obligated to exercise the highest duty of care toward visitors, who are usually not familiar with your property, therefore managing risks to prevent incidents is a very important consideration. However, the additional risks should not prevent you from undertaking an agritourism venture and there are a number of approaches that can be taken to minimise risks.

Inspect your property for hidden dangers, being mindful of the fact that some dangers that may be obvious to you may be less obvious to visitors. Keep the property in reasonable safe repair, anticipate foreseeable dangers and take actions to prevent potentially harmful situations. Work out which areas of your property are open for public access and which areas are "off limits".

Ensure clear signage warning against unauthorized entry in those areas, using terms such as "Staff Only" and "No Visitor Entry."

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To the extent possible, remove anything in the public areas that could pose a danger to non-farmers and visiting children. Explain to visitors that it is very important that they remain in visitor areas on working farms.

Liability insurance exists to help you mitigate losses in the event of a mishap on the orchard. You should talk with your Insurer when you start planning your agritourism venture to understand what is and isn't allowed under your current policy. An agritourism operation may require a separate policy or a rider on your existing farm policy.

Cooking and serving food require you to meet food safety regulations and if doing so your kitchen should be registered with the local Council.

An additional consideration is biosecurity and the risk of visitors bringing infected soil, fruit or plant material onto your property. Risks can be reduced by ensuring that visitors keep to restricted areas of the property and park in designated parking areas. You should also ask that visitors do not bring fruit, vegetables or plant material onto your property. The Cherry Growers Biosecurity Manual also highlights the following suggestions for Pick Your Own Orchards:

"Signs can point people in the right direction and prevent them from straying into production areas, and footbaths could be located at the entry to the orchard to minimise risks. Sentinel plants – varieties that are more susceptible to disease or close to high traffic areas frequented by visitors – can be checked regularly to give an early indication of pest or disease problems."

Marketing and Promotion

Once you have determined your agritourism venture, the next step is to attract visitors through marketing and promotion. A key step is identifying your target audiences. Who do you want to visit? You can then define your target area for promotion. Digital media platforms such as websites and social media can be a cheap and effective means of reaching target audiences.

You should also consider who can you link in with to get free exposure through newspaper articles, newsletters, online posts and if you spend dollars on advertising, consider what will hit your target audience and deliver the best return on investment.

Connecting with Adelaide Hills Tourism and other tourism operators to gain access to their networks, knowledge and expertise can be extremely helpful and there are also a number of free outlets to list your tourism venture. The Australian Tourism Data Warehouse provides free online listing for tourism events and activities that has significant reach across many digital platforms.

You also should build your marketing brand or image. What do you want to be known for? What is your brand? This will help you to develop marketing materials such as leaflets, posters and signage to promote your event or activity.

Other considerations

Agritourism can require a shift in mindset to start thinking of yourself as a tourism enterprise. You may need to develop new and different skills, adhere to different regulations and build new infrastructure as the focus of your business shifts.

Outsourcing and creating business partnerships can be an effective way of bringing the new skills and expertise into your business to adapt more quickly. Agritourism may also create employment or professional development opportunities for other family members and help build succession pathways for the next generation.

Agritourism is not for everyone, but it can provide valid and viable additional revenue streams for all scales of businesses.

Hints & Tips for Labour Hire Licensing Scheme

Article by Mark McAllister, MADEC

All labour hire providers operating in SA must be licensed by 1 November 2019.

From 1 November 2019 if you provide labour hire services without being licensed, or engage an unlicensed labour hire provider, penalties may apply.

Here are some tips and hints to help you.

1. ***How do I check if my Contractor has either applied and or has been granted a license?***

   To check whether a labour hire contractor has been granted a licence, go to the following link: https://secure.cbs.sa.gov.au/OccLicPubReg/LicenceSearch.php

   You will need to fill in certain information as follows:
   - **License Type**- select from drop down menu Labour Hire
   - **License Category**- at bottom of the page type in the word Responsible, then click the search button.

   To check whether a labour hire contractor has submitted an application for a licence that is still pending approval, go to the following link: https://secure.cbs.sa.gov.au/OccLicPubReg/LHSapplications.php

   You can use the search option on the top right hand side of the screen to find a business which has applied for a Labour Hire License.

2. ***Which Government department is handling any queries?***

   The office of Licensing and Registration
   Consumer and Business Services
   95 Grenfell Street, Adelaide
   Ph: 08 8204 8512 l Email: occupational@sa.gov.au
   Website: www.cbs.sa.gov.au

3. ***Does my contractor need to be registered by 1st November 2019?***

   All labour hire providers operating in SA must be licensed by 1 November 2019. From 1 November 2019 if you provide labour hire services without being licensed, or engage an unlicensed labour hire provider, penalties may apply.

4. ***My contractor was on the applied list and does not show in either Applied or Registered?***

   Applicants only appear on the objection register for a period of 14 days from the date the application is lodged. Once the 14 days has passed they will no longer be visible on this register.

5. ***How does my contractor apply for a license and what information do they need to supply and what is entailed with an application?***

   The contractor will need to go to https://www.sa.gov.au/topics/business-and-trade/licensing/labour-hire-licence to apply for a Labour Hire License; this covers off fees, who needs to be on the application, police clearances, financial solvency, knowledge & experience including completion of courses within 12 months, applying for exemption, what information needs to supplied of any changes to the business etc.

6. ***Does this mean that my invoice for Labour Hire Contractor Services needs to reflect the same business name as per the license and should reflect the Labour Hire License number?***

   Yes, for accounting and auditing purposes Invoice business name and Labour Hire License Number need to show the same information.

The importance of formulations – what are you risking?

Article by Justin Tiller, Senior Agronomist, EE Muir & Sons

Did you know that there is a lot more that goes into a product formulation than just the active ingredient? In fact, some products have as many as 30 different individual additives that go into making up the product including surfactants, solvents, dispersants, buffers etc.

You may also not know that to register and bring a product to market that is a copy of an existing product requires no detailed information on what is in the container (other than the level of active ingredient). Therefore, there are no guarantees that it will perform the same as the original product, even if they both contain exactly the same amount of active ingredient. Further to that, we have no information to support how that product will behave in your spray tank or in the local environment once applied to your precious crop.

Formulating crop protection products is a highly specialised field that requires the expertise of chemical engineers to carefully select the right ratios of the right additives to allow the finished product to do what it needs to do. It must be able to be transported from the manufacturing site to your property without settling, disperse readily when you add it to your spray tank, mix with other products applied at the correct dose and finally be applied to your fruit without causing damage to the waxy cuticle, lenticels etc.

You may be tempted to save a few dollars by using a generically formulated product. You could save 10%, even 20% on the cost of some products. But is it worth the risk? A typical apple grower might spend up to $3000/ha/season on crop protection products, so maybe you could save $300/ha/season. But think about this. According to APAL's 2017 Orchard Business Analysis report, the average gross value of an Australian apple crop was $68,000/ha with the highest value orchard in that study having a gross crop value of $122,000/ha. So why put a crop valued at tens of thousands of dollars per hectare at risk while only saving a few hundred dollars?

Things don't often go wrong. Most of the time generic products seem to be applied to crops with no problems. But if something did go wrong, what happens then? Having the support of global companies - in many cases the same companies that discovered and developed those products, means you have resources and expertise that can be accessed at the time we need it. That should help everybody sleep better at night (apart from in thinning season – we can't do much about that).

Generic crop protection products are not new and have been around for many years. Traders and generic manufacturers come and go. As a major supplier to local industry, we have the opportunity to purchase and sell cheap generic products the same as everybody else. But we generally choose not to. The size of the reward does not warrant the risk. And there is nothing better than being able to sleep soundly at night knowing that some of the world's smartest and largest companies have got our back.

Thanks to Syngenta for contributing and ensuring the accuracy of the information presented in this article.

ORCHARD UPDATE

October 2019

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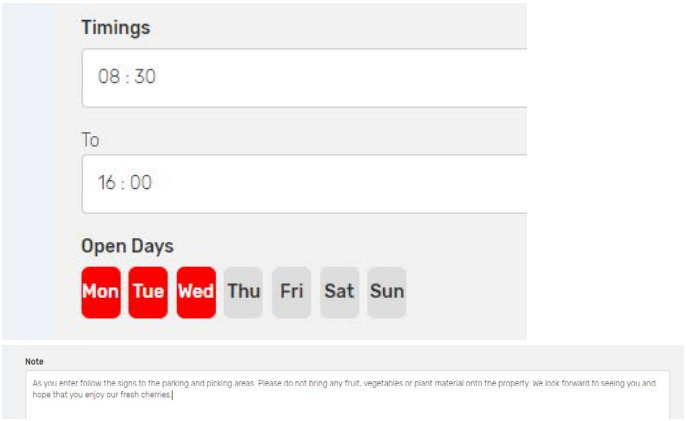
Fresh Cherries

Fresh Cherries App Login

All Cherry Map participants are reminded that they are now able to update when they are open and closed in real time on the Fresh Cherries App. By default, all orchards are shown as being Closed, therefore, all map participants are expected to take responsibility to login and at the start of the season and through the season to show when you are open.

You can update what times you open and close as well as which days you are open. You can also add in site specific comments and directions.

Please contact Susie Green on admin@cherriessa.com.au if you require a reminder of your login details.



Royal Adelaide Show Wrap Up

Apple & Pear Growers Association of SA had another successful promotion at the Royal Adelaide Show this year. We were set up in a new location at the southern end of the Goyder Pavilion, which saw a different flow of traffic past the stand.

The promotion once again featured Hailstorm Heroes, as well as showcasing the different varieties of apples and pears, including a selection of the newer varieties, including Bravo, Kanzi, Jazz and Rockit. As well as the usual slinkies and juice, there was a strong emphasis on providing tastings of Hailstorm Heroes as well as of the different varieties. This generated a lot of interest and engagement from the public with over 30,000 pieces of fruit sold or given away over the duration of the show.

The display featured a showcase of new varieties above the competitive entries and this year also saw the introduction of the new branding for Australian pears. Overall the display, selling area and people working on the stand led to us being awarded First Prize for the best exhibitor in Horticulture.

A very big thanks must go to the large number of people who work together to bring together the showcase at the Adelaide Show, which is not only our largest promotion for the year, but is also an important fund raiser for the association. Thanks in particular go to Mel Ware for running the stand so smoothly, Simon Green, Casey Bellman, Matt and Andy Flavell for setting up and pulling down the stand along with a number of other odd jobs behind the scenes, Glyndon Flavell and Joe Schinella for judging the competitive fruit section, Ceravolo Orchards and Ashton Valley Fresh, Appelinna Hills, Filsell Orchards, Lenswood Apples, Flavells Fruit Sales and Gilmours Orchards for provision of fruit and juice, Casey Groth and Matt Millhouse for running fruit tastings and everyone else who put up their hands to do a shift on the stand or helped out in any way. Your efforts and inputs are greatly appreciated. Thanks also to those growers who put in the effort to enter fruit into the competitive section, which is an important part of our display and allows us to have such a large and prominent footprint for very little cost.

Commercial Fruit Competitive Results

Best collection of four trays of pears
Gilmours Orchards — *First*

Gala, one tray
Ceravolo Orchards Pty Ltd — *First*

Granny Smith, one tray
Ceravolo Orchards Pty Ltd — *First*

Fuji, one tray
Filsell Apples — *First*

Pink Lady (High Colour Strain), one tray
Filsell Apples — *First*

CHAMPION TRAY OF APPLES
Ceravolo Orchards Pty Ltd — *Champion*

MOST SUCCESSFUL EXHIBITOR IN APPLE TRAY CLASSES
Ceravolo Orchards Pty Ltd — *Special*

Gala, one plate of five
Ceravolo Orchards Pty Ltd — *First*

Granny Smith, one plate of five
Ceravolo Orchards Pty Ltd — *First*

Fuji, one plate of five
Ceravolo Orchards Pty Ltd — *First*

Cripps Pink presented to Pink Lady standard, one plate of five
Ceravolo Orchards Pty Ltd — *First*

Any Club variety, one plate of five
Ceravolo Orchards Pty Ltd — *First*

CHAMPION PLATE OF APPLES
Ceravolo Orchards Pty Ltd — *Champion*

MOST SUCCESSFUL EXHIBITOR IN APPLE PLATE CLASSES
Ceravolo Orchards Pty Ltd — *Special*

Packham, one tray
Gilmours Orchards — *First*

Josephine, one tray
Gilmours Orchards — *First*

Beurre Bosc, one tray
Gilmours Orchards — *First*

Corella, one tray
Gilmours Orchards — *First*

Red D'Anjou, one tray
Gilmours Orchards — *First*

Any other variety, one tray
Gilmours Orchards — *Second*

CHAMPION TRAY OF PEARS
Gilmours Orchards — *Champion*

MOST SUCCESSFUL EXHIBITOR IN PEAR TRAY CLASSES
Gilmours Orchards — *Special*

Packham, one plate of five
Gilmours Orchards — *First*

Josephine, one plate of five
Gilmours Orchards — *First*

Beurre Bosc, one plate of five
Gilmours Orchards — *First*

Corella, one plate of five
Gilmours Orchards — *First*

Red D'Anjou, one plate of five
Gilmours Orchards — *First*

CHAMPION PLATE OF PEARS
Gilmours Orchards — *Champion*

MOST SUCCESSFUL EXHIBITOR IN PEAR PLATE CLASSES
Gilmours Orchards — *Special*

Nijisseiko, one tray
Magarey & Sons, A A — *First*

Nijisseiko, one plate of five
Magarey & Sons, A A — *First*

MOST SUCCESSFUL EXHIBITOR IN NASHI CLASSES
Magarey & Sons, A A — *Special*