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

24 March 2020 - APAL Future Business Update, Discretionary Mutual Fund, Adelaide Hills

16 April 2020 - PMA A-NZ Food Safety, Managing the Risk, Adelaide

28-29 May 2020 - Fruit Growers Tasmania Conference, Launceston

4 -5 June 2020 - APAL Industry Forum, Melbourne

Mid June 2020 - National Cherry Conference and Export Workshop, Melbourne (Date TBC)

23 June 2020 - Future Orchards Orchard Walk, Adelaide Hills

15- 17 June 2020 - Hort Connections, Brisbane

20-21 August 2020 - Fruit Growers Victoria Conference, Shepparton

Rainfall

(*Rainfall for the year of 2019 - source BOM*)

Ashton - 726.8 mm (*avg 1048.2 mm*)

Birdwood - 450.0 mm (avg 718.2 mm)

Cudlee Creek, Milbrook Reservoir - 621.1 mm (*avg 851.3 mm*)

Lenswood - 704.0 mm (avg 1011.5 mm)

Loxton - 128.6 mm (*avg 256.0 mm*)

Nangwarry - 641.2 mm (*avg 686.6 mm*)

Prospect Hill - 681.4 mm (*avg 837.3 mm*)

Uraidla - 828.0 mm (*avg 1083.1 mm*)

Woodside, Inverbrackie - 461.2 mm (*avg 672.4 mm*)

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

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From the Office

BMSB - a Stinking Threat

Source: Apple & Pear Australia Limited

The rapid spread of the exotic pest Brown Marmorated Stink Bug (BMSB: Halyomorpha halys) across the northern hemisphere is putting unprecedented pressure on Australia's biosecurity defences. While authorities work hard to keep this unwanted pest out, growers need to know what it looks like and be ready to respond if an outbreak occurs.

Native to Asia, the BMSB is currently establishing itself as a serious horticultural pest across the globe, first appearing in the USA in the 1990s, in Europe in 2007 and more recently in Chile.

So severe was the impact of BMSB in Italy this season that growers abandoned affected crops and the country's entire pear crop was declared at risk. Even under netting losses of 30-40 per cent were reported.

Robert Wiedmer, Technical Coordinator at the Northern Italy-based extension group Beratungsring, told AFG that from a first detection in 2012 and first reported damage in 2014, BMSB had spread across the entire country, where it has no native predator, with the majority of the damage recorded in the northern fruit-growing regions.

"The bug is now found all over Italy," he said. "The first damage was observed in Emilia Romagna in 2014, and since then the infested area has expanded every year and the damage has increased."

BMSB feeds on just about any agricultural and horticultural crop you can think of with a host range of over 300 plants ranging from stone and pome fruit, cherries, tree nuts, citrus, berries, kiwifruit, tomatoes, capsicum and other vegetables to corn, soybeans, cereals and cotton and ornamentals. In Italy Robert said pears had proved particularly attractive.

"This is why the damage to pears is particularly bad and has led to total crop losses in some cases this year," he said. "The losses also depend very much on the location of the orchard. The damage to apple crops is lower."

BMSB is yet to establish in Australia, where it currently sits at number 10 on the High Priority Pest list for apples and pears.

Biosecurity response consultant at research group cesar Dr Jessica Lye predicts that when the list is next revised BMSB will move up due to its rapid spread across North America and Europe, its wide host range, ability to wreak economic havoc and incredibly effective habit of hitchhiking all over the globe.

The risk to agriculture includes not only crop losses – which based on world-wide experience can run to 80 per cent – but also major challenges to Integrated Pest and Disease Management (IPDM) programs, possible market access issues and the economic impact of any control zones and movement restrictions imposed in response to outbreaks.

In an interview with Good Fruit Grower magazine in March this year, Greg Krawczyk, entomologist at Pennsylvania State University's Fruit Research and Extension Centre in Adams County said the use of broad-spectrum chemistry in response to BMSB in the US had wiped out natural predators of secondary pests such as woolly apple aphid, scales, mites and aphids, populations of which had then escalated and impacted crops as a result.

As well as being an agricultural pest, BMSB is also a major public nuisance pest, seeking shelter in homes and buildings, vehicles and sheds, often in large numbers, where, true to its name, it produces a foul smell if crushed or disturbed. If once established in cities and towns, experts argue it will be near impossible to eradicate.

So far this year there have been 54 detections of the pest and in early December a ship carrying 3500 cars and heavy machinery was turned back after bugs were found aboard.

The numbers of BMSB reaching Australian borders have been steadily rising since it was first detected here in large numbers in 2014-15 in vehicles and machinery shipped from the United States. It is inevitable that some bugs will sneak through.

BMSB has been detected post-border in WA, QLD, Vic and NSW on three occasions in 2017-18 and eight in 2018-2019, triggering prompt eradication responses by State Governments. The bug has also been found in SA hiding in imported goods and picked up by border controls in Tasmania. As weather warms up Victoria and WA have ongoing surveillance around detection sites from last season to confirm all bugs have been eradicated.

Arguably the most important action growers can take is simply to be aware of the risk, what the bug looks like and what to do if you spot it – contain it and contact the Australian Exotic Plant Pest Hotline on **1800 084 881**.

A big challenge for Australian growers is that there are a large number of Australian native stink bugs which are similar to BMSB, and cause similar damage to fruit. It is important to know what you are looking for, but not to be alarmed until absolute identification has been established.

For further information and the full article see https://apal.org.au/bmsb-vigilance-global-spread/

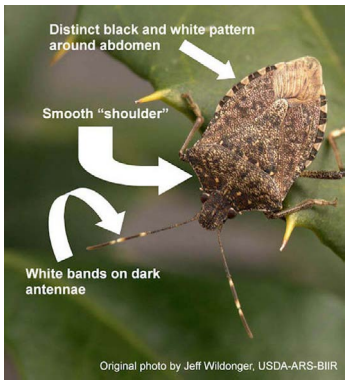

Photo above: David R. Lance, USDA APHIS PPQ, Bugwood.org

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ORCHARD UPDATE
February
ATTENTION CHERRY GROWERS!
This is your livelihood for next year and these buds need your attention NOW! Next season starts right now. If you want to maximise your yield and your fruit size, you must look after these potential fruit buds now. Post Harvest Nutrition is a small and simple management input that makes a huge difference to your crop potential next year.

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Discretionary Mutual Fund for Apple and Pear Growers

Initial results from APAL's industry-wide Discretionary Mutual Fund (DMF) feasibility study show 12 per cent of apple and pear businesses are paying more than $6.5 million a year in premiums...with only $1 million paid in claims last financial year!

A series of half-day sessions will be held in February/March to discuss the next steps in addressing the rising costs of insurance premiums.

The South Australia session will be held on 24th March from 12:15 pm to 4.30 pm at the Haus Conference & Events Centre, 38A Main St Hahndorf.

For further information and to register for this event go to https://apal.org.au/events/sa-future-business-update-discretionary-mutual-fund-is-it-feasible/

National Cherry Conference

A national cherry conference will be held in Melbourne in mid June 2020 - the first national conference for cherry growers for six years. Delivered by Cherry Growers Australia with support from Cherry Growers SA, Fruit Growers Tasmania and Cherry Growers Victoria, the conference will provide an opportunity for growers and the supply chain to come together and hear about the latest innovations in the cherry industry.

The conference will also dovetail into the national cherry export workshop, which is also to be held in Melbourne based on feedback from last year's export workshop. Further information and dates will be available soon.

APFIP looks to a new direction

By Scott Price, APFIP Chair

For more than 25 years, the Australian Pome Fruit Improvement Program (APFIP) has been supported by grower levies to independently evaluate new apple and pear varieties, promote and distribute virus free nursery material, and establish a certification scheme.

Over this time APFIP has racked up quite a few achievements including significantly shortening the time new plant material has to spend in quarantine. But the new variety landscape has changed and, in response, APFIP is changing as well.

Growers are also adapting, with one of the important changes I have observed in the industry being the establishment of new plantings on training systems and, particularly on the mainland, the increasing adoption of nets. However, an issue that remains and may get worse if restrictions are placed on access to the soil fumigant Chloropicrin, is apple replant disease.

While growers in Australia have adopted new varieties and certified material ensuring planting stock is free of known viruses, there has not been the same uptake or access to new rootstocks. In Australia, we've mostly stuck with M26 but around the world there are some really promising new rootstocks that show resistance to replant disease. This is one area that APFIP wants to explore on behalf of growers as we take on new challenges and look to our future.

The APFIP Board, once the same as the APAL Board, has evolved into a subset of the APAL Board. This allows interested directors to focus on APFIP and invest more time into supporting its development.

We are re-engaging with the program's work to ensure we all better understand it to inform decision-making. In June we met in Tasmania and visited the heritage collection in Grove, and in October we met in the Goulburn Valley where we partook in another valuable visit to the Victorian Government's research station at Tatura.

This engagement is supported by APFIP's Operation Manager Tom Frankcomb who took up the reins in October 2018. Since then he has been very busy meeting with growers across all the growing regions to hear from growers directly. He has also been visiting our evaluation sites to review their status.

With all this fresh input and thinking, we have prepared and submitted a review of APFIP to Hort Innovation outlining the current status of the program's activities and outlining our plan up until the end of the program's current funding cycle (June 2020) and beyond.

A lot of this work is still in progress as we decide on our exact course of action.

However, we've already made some changes to what we are doing. With the review of all the APFIP evaluation sites we've requested some site maintenance and removal of unwanted trees. New plantings also took place in winter 2019 and we're investigating how to better capture all the data from these sites. Plus, with abundant, real-time weather data now readily available at growers' fingertips we have ceased investing in the APFIP weather stations, allowing us to invest elsewhere.

To keep you informed we plan to share more news, stories and updates across our newly established APFIP Facebook page. Or stay tuned to APAL's Industry Juice newsletter or Australian Fruitgrower magazine, and your state fruit grower organisations for updates.

Cudlee Creek Fires

On Friday 20th December 2019, after several days of temperatures above 40 degrees Celcius and in catastrophic fire conditions, a bushfire started at Hollands Creek Road, Cudlee Creek. The fire quickly spread into the nearby Mt Crawford Forest and ended up burning some 25,000 hectares across Cudlee Creek, Lenswood, Lobethal, Woodside, Charleston, Mt Torrens, Kenton Valley, Birdwood, Inverbrackie and Bruckunga.

Approximately 25 hectares of apple and cherry orchards of six growers were directly impacted by fire, with at least 2 other orchards suffering damage to net and surrounding fences and paddocks. There was also damage to tractors, irrigation and other infrastructure. The efforts of many farm fire units and landholders should be acknowledged, saving further losses and spread of fire as well as saving many neighbouring houses. Some growers were also impacted by smoke inhalation, heat and fatigue and our thoughts are with Kym Green's son in law Shayne Boyle, who is recovering from 50% burns to his body.

Apple & Pear Growers Association of SA and Cherry Growers Assocation of SA are working directly with the affected growers in ensuring that they have access to support during their long road to recovery. They face a difficult road ahead as they begin the clean up process and monitor trees that have been burnt to assess which blocks will require replanting and which trees have a hope of recovering. Impacted orchardists face some unique challenges and the Associations are working with the recovery coordinator Alex Zimmerman and government representatives and agencies to ensure these needs are understood.

If you know of someone who has been impacted and requires assistance, they can register at the Recovery Centre, in the Fabrik Arts and Heritage in the Old Woollen Mill, 1 Lobethal Road, Lobethal. The Recovery Centre is open between 8 am and 6 pm on weekdays and from 9 am to 1 pm on Saturdays.

All the up to date information on available support and assistance can be found on the Department of Human Services website at https://dhs.sa.gov.au/services/disaster-recovery/cudleecreek.

Horticulture Bushfire Appeal

The South Australian Produce Markets kickstarted an Appeal for horticulture growers that were impacted by the Cudlee Creek fires in January, donating $20,000.

The Appeal was set up to raise funds to help in the recovery process, with all money raised to go directly only to horticulture growers that were fire impacted.

The Appeal raised funds through collection tins that were held at Pick a Local, Pick SA stores throughout SA and through private and business donations. Foodbank SA managed the Appeal to ensure appropriate accountability and that all funds go to the growers without a handling or administration fee.

The Appeal formally finished up on Saturday 15th February with a fundraising "Produce to Platter" event at the Market Cafe, with $75,000 raised in total.

While the Appeal is now formally closed and funds will be distributed to growers shortly, there is still an opportunity to make a donation. If you would like to contribute to the Appeal, please contact Susie Green on sgreen@apgasa.com or 0417 451 999.

Lessons Learnt from the Bushfires

With the Cudlee Creek fires being the worst fires to hit our growing region in more than 30 years, there are many lessons to be learnt around how fires impact on orchards and how industry can be better prepared in the future. A group of growers who were impacted by the fires or helped to fight the fires came together on the 12th Feb to share their insights and thoughts. A collection of common observations from that session are outlined below.

Observations on Fire Behaviour

In some areas, the fire burnt ferociously, raining embers well ahead of the fire, creating spot fires in many places at once. Where this was occurring, there was typically a lot going on at the same time with multiple fires at multiple locations across a property.

The intensity of the fire as it moved out of the Fox Creek forest was very high. Growers were able to prevent fire from burning in the orchard immediately adjacent to the forest but there was significant radiant heat damage to trees and netting melted. Significant ember attack meant that the fire jumped ahead from the front and moved quickly. In some areas some spot fires were still being observed 5 hours after the initial fire front went through.

In other areas, growers reported that the fire was more slow-moving, burning across the wind.

General observations were that the fire was easier to stop where there was lower fuel load. In areas of higher fuel load, it was much harder to stop. Long grass that had been mowed was also much easier to put out than long grass standing tall.

Farm fire units played an important role saving property and growers were grateful for the help of neighbours and other growers.

Orchard rows in some instances acted as wicks where there was dry grass or mulch under trees. Burning under trees caused significant damage to the cambium at the base of the trees and melted drip lines.

Significant radiant heat damage was observed in orchards adjacent to areas of high fuel load, such as forest, scrub and blocks of pines.

Orchard that had mini-sprinklers with totally green grass was very defendable. Orchard with drippers and dry grass either mid row or under tree was much more difficult to defend and vulnerable to ember attack. Fire burnt under trees less where there were bare weed spray strips.

Netting provided some protection against ember attack. In some orchards burning leaves melted holes in the net, but by the time the leaves landed on the ground they had lost their heat and there were significantly fewer spot fires under net. Netting tended to melt, not burn.

Orchard Preparedness

The growers also shared their thoughts and learnings on preparedness for bushfire, particularly if you are planning on staying to defend.

- Take responsibility for your own preparedness.
- Do not expect help from others or the CFS and plan for not getting help.
- Keep grass, headlands and orchard inter-rows well mown.
- Look after your own road verges where ever possible.
- Reduce fuel loads near sheds, houses, critical water points and orchards. This includes removing long grass, flammable debris, wood piles, flammable understorey and trees etc.
- Keep tracks well maintained and allow ready access into your property. Farm units reported issues with encountering locked gates and poorly maintained tracks, making it much more difficult to help other landholders out.
- Exposed irrigation valves and critical pipework must be protected to avoid losing water supplies. Either keep grass well mown and green around them or have them protected with sprinklers.
- Lack of preparedness by neighbours can also be an issue. Consider how you can better protect yourself against high neighbouring fuel loads.
- If choosing to stay and defend, as much as possible, operate in pairs rather than on your own.
- Prioritise what is saved first, as in a bad fire you may not be able to save everything. Orchard is not insured so some growers have the policy to save orchard first, sheds second and houses last, but there is also emotional value on homes, which may influence your decision making in the heat of the moment.
- Have sprinkler systems over sheds and houses to help protect them.
- Disced fire breaks can be very effective.
- It is essential to have a generator and pump or gravity fed tanks in case of loss of power. You should also plan for possible extended power outages.
- Consider what are your backup water supply options if the main water supply becomes compromised. Also allow that you will potentially go through a lot of water.

- Davey pumps or similar can be useful for pumping out of dams – a long hose is required.
- It is important to know your own capabilities and not put yourself in situations you can't manage.
- Make considerations on how you will manage workers on your properties during a fire as you have a responsibility for their wellbeing. This includes contractors and seasonal workers who may not be familiar with the area. What is your policy on catastrophic days and what is your back-up plan if a fire impacts on an area where you have orchards? For pick your own orchards and shed door sales, these considerations also extend to the visiting public.
- For continuitiy of your orchard oprations, consider options for back-up power for power outages, and plan for extended outages. Having change-over switches installed will allow you to plug generators into your power system. Some growers are looking at PTO driven generators to give more flexibility for irrigation pumps etc. Soft starting generators are important to reduce generator size requirements.

There is also a range of excellent information available on the CFS website regarding general bushfire preparedness and the Apple & Pear Growers and Cherry Growers Associations will look to coordinate some CFS information and training sessions with industry.

Farm Fire Units

The CFS has arrangements in place that recognise the role that farm fire units play in fighting fires. A Personal Farm Fire Fighting Unit sticker can be provided by the CFS to vehicles and equipment used for firefighting and ancillary equipment such as heavy plant, farm machinery and implements. The sticker is intended to provide a distinctive mark of recognition for emergency personnel and *may* assist in providing access through road closures.

Stickers are not provided for vehicles and ancillary equipment used for the private defence of domestic dwellings in a bushfire.

There is a suite of invaluable information on Farm Fire Units available on the CFS website - https://www.cfs.sa.gov.au/site/prepare_for_a_fire/farm_fire_units.jsp.

If you are logged on as a farm fire unit to the fire ground, you are also afforded some level of insurance protection.

Notes for what is required for farm units are provided in the Private Farm Fire Unit Handbook on the CFS website. The following observations were also made by growers.

- Keep a kit with all equipment and PPE in your ute or farm fire unit.
- Include bolt cutters or wire cutters in your fire kit for quick access through fences.
- Flashing lights and reflective stickers can help to reduce risks of collisions in conditions of poor visibility.
- Use a wetting agent in firefighting water.
- Spray units on the back of tractors can be effective within burning orchards and around buildings and for mopping up. They can get up and down orchards rows readily, hold larger volumes of water and can be filled up quickly under spray fill ups. You need to remember to adjust the pressure regulator on the sprayer. You can fit fire hoses to spray units.
- However, towed units can be problematic in the heat of the fire – they are less manoeuvrable than utes, and can jack-knife and get in difficult situations in the heat of the moment.
- Tractors are ok for protecting the edges, mopping up etc but are not fast enough around the fire front.
- Using 1000 litre shuttles with camlock fittings on the back of utes can provide flexibility. You can have spare shuttles being filled at a fill up point and you can quickly fork on and off and replace empty ones on the back of the ute. If using 1000 litre shuttles, you also need to be mindful of only filling to the volume that the vehicle can support it's weight and the high centre of gravity on sloping sites.

Personal Protection

Wearing the correct types of personal protective clothing and safety equipment is essential when fire fighting. The CFS farm fire unit handbook recommends that clothing:

- must be made of cotton or natural fibre
- cover the main part of the body but allow for good airflow
- be loose fitting with sleeves rolled down and trouser legs not tucked into boots
- includes other garments worn under protective clothing that should also be loose fitting and made of cotton or natural fibre.

Wearing the correct safety equipment including boots, gloves, eye protection, face masks and head protection is essential.

Growers with CFS experience reported that masks with cartridges can tend to be very hot and sweaty. The CFS use P2 masks, which are readily available from hardware stores.

A head light can also be useful for night time fires. First Aid Kits are also an essential part of a Farm Fire Unit.

Photo credit Serena Flavell. Mopping up with Farm Fire Unit.

New Annual Wage Arrangements

Source: Fair Work Ombudsman

On 12 February 2020, the Fair Work Commission made determinations that added new rules about annual wage arrangements in the Horticulture Award. An employer and a full-time employee may now enter into a written agreement for the employee to be paid an annualised wage.

An annualised wage arrangement is a mechanism that allows an employer to pay an annual wage which satisfies award entitlements - that is, an "all-inclusive" annual rate.

The new rules start from the first full pay period on or after 1 March 2020. Part-time and casual employees can't have annual wage arrangements under the award.

Annual wage arrangements can include entitlements such as:

- Minimum wages
- Allowances
- Ordinary hours of work and rostering
- Overtime
- Annual leave loading
- Public holiday rates of pay

Where a written agreement for an annualised wage agreement is entered into, the agreement must specify:

- the annualised wage that is payable
- which provisions of the award will be satisfied by payment of the annualised wage
- the method by which the annualised wage has been calculated (including specification of each separate component of the annualised wage and any overtime or penalty assumptions used in the calculation)
- the outer limit of ordinary hours and overtime hours which the employee may be required to work in a pay period without being intitled to an amount in excess of the annualised wage.

Employers need to record the annual wage arrangement in writing and give their employees a copy. The employer must also record the employee's starting and finishing time and unpaid breaks taken. Employees have to acknowledge the record of hours they have worked is correct by signing in writing or electronically at the end of every pay period or roster cycle.

An employees' annual wage will generally include an amount for penalty rates and overtime. However, sometimes the annual wage isn't enough if the employee is working extra hours or at a time they don't usually work. If an employee works more than the outer limit of hours in a pay period or roster cycle, they are entitled to be paid at the award overtime or penalty rate.

Employers have to undertake an reconciliation of their employees' annual wages:

- every 12 months after the arrangement starts
- when the arrangement ends, or
- when the employment ends

Employers have to make sure their employees have been paid at least the same amount they would have been paid if they weren't on an annual wage, for all the hours they have worked. If an employee's annual wage is less than the award payments that they would have received, their employer has to pay them the difference within 14 days.

For more information on the annualised wage arrangements see https://www.fairwork.gov.au/about-us/news-and-media-releases/website-news/new-rules-for-annualised-wage-arrangements.

The latest version of the Horticulture Award can be found at http://awardviewer.fwo.gov.au/award/show/MA000028, with the annualised wage arrangements shown in Section 15 of the Award.

Employers should consider getting independent advice prior to implementing annualised wage arrangements. This is a new addition to the Horticulture Award.

Adelaide Hills Council Australia Day Civic Awards

Apple and Pear Growers Association of SA's innaugural Pome Fest event held in 2019 was recognised in this year's Australia Day Civic Awards, receiving the Adelaide Hills Council Community Event of the Year Award. Pome Fest was an initiative created after the second consecutive year of hail damage to the region's apple and pear crops. Close to 1000 visitors participated in activities that highlighted an innovative, productive and resilient industry. Thanks must go to everyone who hosted a tour, held a stall at the market or helped out behind the scenes to make the event the success that it was. Planning is now underway for Pome Fest 2020.

Congratulations also go to pear grower Rick Drury, from Drury's Orchards in Inglewood, who was awarded the Citizen of the Year Award for his contribution to the community, in particular through many years of service to the CFS.

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Apple & Pear Growers Association of SA are pleased to welcome back CMTP Mobility and Protection Solutions as gold sponsors. CMTP are premium suppliers of bins, pallets, export and domestic certification. Crates and small boxes for storage and presentation usage are also available and locally made. All product can be delivered. For more information go to www.cmtp.com.au or contact Troy on 0414 511 103.

APAL Industry Forum 2020

APAL is holding this year's forum in Melbourne on 4th & 5th June with a theme of "Future Proofing - what's keeping you awake?".

The industry forum is a once a year opportunity to come together as an industry and explore the latest thinking and discuss the key issues influencing how we grow quality fruit and operate into the future.

Further information will follow shortly but keep the following dates free:

Wednesday 3 June, Networking Event, 6–8pm

Thursday 4 June, APAL Industry Forum Day 1, 8.30am – 5.30pm

APAL Awards for Excellence Gala Dinner, 6.30–10.30pm

Friday, 5 June, APAL Industry Forum Day 2, 9.30am – 4.30pm

Also keep an eye on https://apal.org.au/events/apal-industry-forum-2020/

Applications open for the 2020 Churchill Fellowships

A Churchill Fellowship can offer you (as an Australian citizen) a life-changing opportunity to travel overseas to investigate a topic or an issue that you are passionate about.

It is for anyone who has exhausted alternatives within Australia and would like to see what other countries are doing successfully in a similar space to inspire new ideas, innovation, and excellence.

The high international regard for Churchill Fellowships provides a pathway for Churchill Fellows to access expertise from around the world that is not typically available to everyone, expanding your knowledge and experience for the benefit of Australian society.

There is a high level of visibility and credibility associated with being a Churchill Fellow.

No prescribed qualifications are required in order to apply for a Churchill Fellowship, however, the Fellowship is NOT designed to enable applicants to complete tertiary qualifications.

The subject of your proposed project is limitless provided a benefit to Australia is evident and a willingness to share the knowledge gained with Australia is displayed.

100+ Fellowships will be available for award in 2020.

For further information go to https://www.churchilltrust.com.au/application-process/how-to-apply/

Cherry Post Harvest Meeting

Cherry Growers SA held their annual Post Harvest meeting on Thursday 28th February at the Summit Community Centre, where there was a general rundown of the season. Growers reported mixed results from the season, with some growers crops well down on last year and others having a good, average crop. Fruit set was light in places and the heat in December also had an impact.

Prices held up well throughout the season, partially due to a smaller national crop, but also due to strong export demand, with around a third of national production being exported in 2019/20. Export prices consistently set the domestic price, with potential for more fruit to be exported.

Growers also shared their thoughts on areas of priority for Cherry Growers SA to focus on in the year ahead.

Susie Green gave a presentation on bushfire preparedness for orchards, sharing some of the key learnings from those impacted by the Cudlee Creek fires.

Darren Graetz closed out the evening with a presentation on the new variety trial, with several varieties showing strong promise.

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