

Horticulture Innovation Australia

Final Report

Continued Facilitation of the Development of the Tasmanian Apple, Pear, Cherry & Stone Fruit Industries

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Project Number: MT12025

MT12025

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ISBN 0 7341 3734 6

Published and distributed by:
Horticulture Innovation Australia Limited
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Sydney NSW 2000
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Summary

The focus of this project was to maintain and improve communication within the Tasmanian apple, pear, cherry and stone fruit industries and the national industry network. In addition, to provide dissemination of information and resources for growers, in line with the State and National Industry Strategic Plans for the apple, pear, cherry and stone fruit industries. Key industry development services to facilitate export development, market access and international competitiveness were provided. This project was delivered by a Fruit Growers Tasmania (FGT) Project Officer.

The target audience for this project was primarily Tasmanian growers of cherries, pome fruit, stone fruit and berries, however some of the services undertaken through this project have also produced direct benefits for growers nationally, particularly cherry growers. An example of national benefit for the cherry industry was assistance with the annual updating and compilation of the Cherry Export Manual produced by Cherry Growers Australia (CGA) through another Hort Innovation funded project CY12007, '*Export Development of Australian Cherries*', as well as working as a member of the cherry industry Biosecurity Management Programme (BMP) team.

Over the life of this project, and particularly over the last 18 months, based on industry priorities there has been a considerably increased emphasis on exports, particularly for cherry and apple growers. Achieving direct access into China for both apples and cherries has been one of the key reasons for this increased focus. As such, many of the tasks undertaken by this project evolved to become progressively more focused to export related services and activities, often working in conjunction with Hort Innovation funded project MT11013, '*Export Market Maintenance and Development for Tasmanian Fruit*', also delivered by FGT.

In addition to being the first point of contact for growers and packhouses with export related enquiries and running an annual export information, compliance and training day, with over 70 growers and industry stakeholders in attendance. Fruit Growers Tasmania through this project also managed the entire export registration process, acting as the industry liaison point between growers, the Department of Agriculture (now the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources DAWR) and Biosecurity Tasmania (BT). FGT has also given assistance to peak bodies Cherry Growers Australia (CGA) and Apple and Pear Australia Limited (APAL) with registering mainland cherry and apple growers for export.

A resurgence in confidence within the Tasmanian apple and cherry industries has seen record numbers of trees being planted within the State over the past two years, with a majority of these new plantings focused on export. This project has allowed the Project Officer to work with the Tasmanian industry to promote export awareness and market opportunities.

In 2014, Agrifood Skills Australia funded FGT to conduct a Skills Needs Analysis of the Tasmania fruit industry. Information gained from this survey, identified shortage of key management staff, in particular the role of orchard manager, a critical role which could inhibit industry expansion. Nationally the fruit sector lacks substantial capacity building in the skills and training area, therefore the Project Officer in conjunction with FGT has taken a leading role in providing training opportunities in conjunction with Registered Training Organisations (RTO's) for growers and their staff, as well as commencing work with the Tasmanian Institute of Agriculture (TIA) and the University of Tasmania (UTAS) in order to develop a training continuum. This training continuum is aimed at recognising qualifications that bridge both VET

and tertiary qualifications in order to provide clearer career pathways to increase the available pool of skilled workers qualified for these key roles. Substantial work has also been done to establish training courses at the entry levels, with FGT playing a significant role in having Production Horticulture at the Certificate II level re-established as an available course at TasTAFE.

The Project Officer and Management Committee for this project recognised the need to be flexible and proactive in the approach to carrying out activities for the benefit of industry, by being aware of the ever changing circumstances and priorities within industry and adapting resources accordingly. Therefore, project MT12025 has been successful in providing vital strategic support for activities in response to industry needs.

A key recommendation from this project is that industry development activities and services need to be ongoing and consistent in order to continue to provide beneficial outcomes across the industry sectors. Tasmania's pest free status from fruit flies provides the state with favourable market access into key Asian markets such as China, Korea, Japan, Thailand and Taiwan. In order for the Tasmanian industry to keep expanding production, a continued focus on increasing exports is required in order to avoid domestic market failure, as has been seen particularly with cherries in seasons when there is a large domestic crop.

Keywords

Tasmania; Export; Cherry; Apple; Pear; Stone Fruit; Communication; Training; MRL; Compliance.

Introduction

Fruit Growers Tasmania (FGT) is the state body representing cherry, stone fruit, pome fruit and berry growers within Tasmania. FGT was formed in 2004 when the existing Tasmanian stonefruit and pome fruit associations were merged. In 2010, FGT's Constitution was amended to also include berry growers as a membership category.

This project, which commenced 1/7/2012 was developed to follow on from project MT09047 '*Continued Facilitation of the Development of the Tasmanian Apple & Pear Industry*', which finished in May 2012. As well as incorporating most of the tasks from MT09047, the MT12025 proposal also took on many key industry services and activities from project MT07058 '*Combined Fruit Growers Tasmania and Cherry Growers Australia Industry Development Officer*', which finished in June 2012.

The FGT Project Officer undertook project MT12025 to further assist the development of the Tasmanian industry by providing support and key services to Tasmanian apple, pear, cherry, berry and stone fruit growers.

As was the case with project MT09047, communication continued to be a key focus of the project MT12025, with FGT's Project Officer being a central contact point for Tasmanian growers.

This project, utilising FGT's resources, provided ready access to information on new developments in production, training, current industry issues, exporting requirements and other information. This assisted growers with their need for information on best practice and sustainable production.

This project also provided key services to industry such as:

- Coordination of skills and training courses, including seeking funding where available to subsidise the cost to growers (see Appendix 1 for example of information and application form for subsidised staff training);
- Collection of fruit samples for MRL testing and compliance information relating to importing country MRL's;
- Participating as part of the team responsible for the development and updating of the Cherry Export Manual and Biosecurity Management Programme (project CY12007, delivered by Cherry Growers Australia); and
- Coordinating export registrations on behalf of the Tasmanian fruit industry in conjunction with DOA and BT.

FGT provides an important link for growers to the national industry network through its affiliations with national peak industry bodies and Horticulture Innovation Australia (Hort Innovation), as well as maintaining good relations with Government and commercial groups on behalf of growers. The Project Officer utilised these linkages to source and distribute information to facilitate the development of the Tasmanian apple, pear, cherry and summerfruit industries.

It is inevitable that many industry sectors, particularly cherries, berries and apples will experience further growth within Tasmania over the coming years. Over the past 5 years, cherry production both in Tasmania and nationally, has increased significantly and is destined to increase even further over the next 3-4 years, particularly if there are no adverse weather events such as untimely frosts or rain, as

has happened in the past couple of seasons.

The apple industry is undergoing a resurgence of confidence with new plantings, many of which are recently developed “club varieties”, as well as less commercially viable varieties being replaced with more popular traditional varieties such as royal gala. Many of these new plantings are being done with a view to exporting. The falling of the Australian dollar since being above parity with the US dollar for the majority of the time between the start of 2011 and the middle of 2013, has also contributed to the viability of exports.

Tasmania has internationally recognised area freedom from fruit flies, which allows Tasmanian growers either exclusive or favourable access to a number of protocol markets. The increase in new plantings coupled with an increased focus on exports in order to sustain growing production is very positive; however this also leads to increased vulnerability in relation to issues such as maintaining area freedom status from fruit fly for exports, increasing competitiveness and the need to pursue new markets. FGT continues to address these issues by using a proactive approach and through the development of appropriate resources to meet these challenges.

Methodology

This project was delivered by a part-time Project Officer (0.6 FTE). The Project Officer developed annual work plans and feedback was provided by a Project Management Committee, which was made up of the FGT Executive members (please see 'Acknowledgements' on page 19).

The project methodology focussed on four key areas:

1. Communication and skills development (e.g. information on website and in quarterly newsletter, development of training programs),
2. Facilitation of industry activities and services to growers (e.g. MRL testing, Export Registration, linkage with national industry organisations on strategic plans),
3. Manage positive profile for the industry and maintain links to the national industry network (e.g. Liaise with FGT Annual Industry Awards Committee, liaise with University of Tasmania regarding the FGT/UTAS scholarship program),
4. And develop and identify new activities and service opportunities for the industry (e.g. education and training events).

It is important to maintain close association with the national peak industry bodies to gain an awareness of activities and issues across the whole of industry. The Project Officer maintained close relationships with peak bodies, particularly Cherry Growers Australia and Apple and Pear Australia Ltd (APAL) by contributing to CGA Cherry Export Working Group meetings, liaising with APAL and assisting the running of the Future Orchards program in Tasmania, contribution to the *'Integrated Pest Management for Australia Apples and Pears'* (APAL), as well as maintaining ongoing contact with key staff from these organisations to assist with the domestic trade or export of Tasmanian apples and cherries. This project also assisted in the coordination and running of the well attended 2014 National Cherry Conference held in Melbourne, as well as contributing to national cherry industry publications such as the Cherry Export Manual and Biosecurity Management Programme, produced by CGA through the CY12007 project. Other services to the national cherry industry have included assistance to the Cherry Export Working Group and sourcing articles and collation of national newsletter "Australian Cherries".

Another effective way of keeping growers informed is by providing forums featuring national and international experts, to provide growers with direct access to the latest production and development information. As well as numerous seminars, FGT has also run a very successful and well attended annual Conference in May every year, with the exception of 2015. The role of the Project Officer was to assist the current Business Development Manager of FGT, to ensure that relevant industry topics, current research projects and export market information, were presented to Tasmanian fruit growers and industry stakeholders during the conference. The Conference typically runs over 4 days and features highly regarded presenters from both Australia and overseas, in addition to formal conference sessions, this event also provided networking opportunities and field visits. The FGT conference has provided a very good forum for the extension of R&D outcomes to growers across most fruit sectors, attracting growers from the mainland and all around Tasmania. Upon completion of the Conference, cd's with copies of all of the presentations are sent out to delegates, as well as some of the presentation topics being featured in both the FGT newsletter/magazine and national publications such as the CGA newsletter "Australian Cherries". A key goal of the 2014 FGT conference was to provide the Tasmanian cherry industry with information about Little Cherry Virus (LCV1 & LCV2), which was recently diagnosed

in isolated trees on several Tasmanian properties and thought to be introduced to Tasmania, through infected nursery stock from the Mainland. The Project Officer organised to have Dr Ken Eastwell, an internationally recognised specialist on LCV, to present at the conference.

Reviewing the methods of communication resulted in improvements in the website presentation, direct management of content providing more immediate information for growers to use. The FGT members contact booklet content was expanded to promote networking within industry, by including contacts for Government Agencies, exporters and other associated industry stakeholders. Growers were encouraged to increase their use of email communication by the Project Officer through FGT providing regular email updates on activities, advice on events and other information. The Project Officer also contributed to the collection of State apple production figures, as part of the Hort Innovation funded 'Pome Fruit Industry Crop Estimate' project run by APAL and Ag-First.

In order to promote upcoming events and activities, a combination of flyers, newsletter advertisements, emails (including frequent reminders closer to the event date), social media and the FGT website were used. Where applicable, national body communication channels were used in order to maximise attendance. See Appendix 2 and 3 for examples of seminar flyers. The same channels were also used by FGT in order to promote appropriate events being delivered by peak industry bodies.

Training programs were developed for the year ahead and advertised to growers, so they could plan attendance for themselves and/or staff. Additional training options and courses were frequently investigated.

'Export Registration' was identified as a key industry service enhanced by the Project Officer throughout the life of this project and resulted in Tasmanian apple, cherry and stone fruit growers/exporters, all registering through FGT. The Project Officer facilitated this process by designing an automated system database system, using Microsoft Access 2007. This became the basis of system currently used to generate information reports, which are then submitted to Government departments such as DAWR, South East Plants Exports Division and Biosecurity Tasmania. The Project Officer was also the first point of contact for growers/exporters in regards to protocol requirements. Part of export compliance, revolved around the Maximum Residue Limit (MRL) testing. A testing program was developed by FGT staff and the Project Officer to keep growers informed of domestic and export market MRL requirements, as well as providing a NATA accredited testing service. MRL testing is now routinely conducted each season as part of grower quality assurance systems e.g. FreshCare or export requirements. Both these processes were reviewed and enhanced each year by the Project Officer and FGT staff, after consultation with relevant peak industry bodies and national/state departments. To consistently promote a positive profile for the industry, the Project Officer maintained contact with the State Departments of Biosecurity, Primary Industries and Economic Development and other relevant groups, to ensure that industry had the relevant information to make informed inputs into changes of regulatory requirements. In 2015, the Project Officer and several FGT Executive members attended the Tasmanian stakeholder session for biosecurity and export cost recovery redesign. It was suggested to the review committee, that the proposed registered establishment fees would be inhibitive to the export of Tasmanian cherries and apples. After industry contribution, a production-based fee threshold was introduced into the new cost recovery model, which is due to commence on 1 December 2015.

In terms of management of project priorities, regular meetings with FGT's Executive were key to receiving direction. A report of activities was provided to the Executive meetings as well as discussions with the Project Management Committee members in relation to activities, issues and priorities was undertaken regularly. Other activities conducted to effectively manage the project included:

- Taking the opportunity of seeking feedback and input from industry participants as often as possible, e.g. by making telephone/email contact, at industry events etc;
- Production of a diary of events for FGT grower activities to facilitate better planning;
- Completion of Milestone Reports and forward work plans;
- Ongoing evaluation of the cost effectiveness of all activities planned and undertaken;
- Consultation with other state industry organisations and the national industry organisations;
- Contributions to National body industry publications (see Appendix 4 for example of state report in national cherry industry newsletter)
- Maintaining regular communication with Tasmanian representatives on CGA and APAL Boards; and
- Regular liaison with staff at key government departments i.e.: Department of Agriculture, Department of State Growth and Biosecurity Tasmania.

The Project Officer and Management Committee for Project MT12025 recognised the need to be flexible and proactive in the approach to carrying out activities for the benefit of industry, by being aware of the ever changing circumstances and priorities within industry and allocating resources accordingly.

Examples of the quick refocussing of priorities and duties included; upon the signing of the protocol for cherries into China in January 2013, FGT in conjunction with CGA and DAFF, co-ordinated a workshop for growers and packing sheds interested in shipping to China, then facilitated a visit by Chinese inspectors, who needed to audit orchards and packing sheds, and then pre-clear all consignments for the season. This was all accomplished during the cherry season and within 2 weeks of the protocol being signed. 10 growers and 6 packing sheds were registered for China access, with 75 tonnes of cherries sent from Tasmania to China via airfreight for the season.

Another example is in January 2014, when a positive detection for exotic disease: Little Cherry Virus 2 was recorded in a Tasmanian orchard. Fruit Growers Tasmania's resources were quickly redeployed to assist the State Government, forming part of the Emergency Response Team assembled to assess how widely spread the virus was, the likely source of entry into Tasmania and the potential for eradication. FGT's role in this response team was critical in getting information out to industry and also receiving responses to survey information from industry.

Outputs

With an ever increasing need for an “export culture” in order to prevent domestic market failure (particularly in the case of cherries), this project has assisted in the development, production and distribution of the Cherry Export Manual (created as part of the CY12007 project run by CGA). The first manual was developed in 2008, is revised on an annual basis and distributed to cherry levy payers, as well as being made available to download from the Cherry Growers Australia website. This manual is relevant for all exporting cherry growers across Australia, incorporating information about cherry spray guides, MRL’s for major importing countries, export interval period guides, export protocols, export registration processes, Integrated Pest Management and Minor Use Permits. The Project Officer worked directly with FGT staff, Senior Agronomist – Peter Morrison and Dr Penelope Measham – Tasmanian Institute of Agriculture (TIA) in generating the spray guides and collaborating the exporting country, MRL requirements. The Minor Use Permit (PER13131) was also renewed under this project, allowing Tasmanian growers to effectively control pest populations of European Earwig, in cherry orchards.

This project was also part of the CGA “BMP Team”, responsible for the development of the cherry industry Biosecurity Management Programme (BMP) document. The BMP provides a holistic approach to the production of cherries within Australia with a view to improving orchard practices as well as to be used as a tool for seeking export market access and improvement. This Programme outlines the control measures and checkpoints, which combined will give a consolidated, demonstrated and qualified support for market access of cherry fruit from any of the growing regions across the country, irrespective of the State it is grown in. It highlights the work and steps being undertaken to ensure this happens to provide certainty that cherries will be free of pests and diseases of concern to importing countries.

Fundamentally, the BMP is based on internationally accepted verification procedures and systems approaches, along with pathways for providing end point treatments as a failsafe for growers who cannot meet the verification requirements. It includes steps to establish pest risk across different growing regions and/or orchards through pest risk analyses, undertaking control measures for applicable locations, establishing trapping programmes for the purpose(s) of detection, monitoring, delimiting and/or verification. Systems Approaches can then be initiated for appropriate locations to ensure and verify cherries are free from pest and disease.

The BMP document is also intended to be a tool for the Department of Agriculture, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and the Australian Cherry Industry to use in negotiation and trade meetings at all levels, with importing countries in order to seek either market access or market improvement. This is particularly important for mainland cherry growers, who currently have unviable end point treatment requirements such as cold treatment for key markets such as China, Taiwan and Thailand.

Cherry Growers Australia’s Cherry Industry Export Roadmap 2012-2017 has identified the need to increase the percentage of Australia’s total cherry production going to exports, from its current 20% to 50% by 2016/17. Without giving growers all of the information they need to successfully export into protocol and non protocol countries, as well as carrying out work in order to increase and improve market access, this figure will be very difficult to achieve. To encourage export within the Tasmanian fruit sector, the Project Officer was also part of the FGT presence at major trade shows in Hong Kong and Beijing. Asian markets in particular have been identified as key growth market destinations for

Tasmanian fruit. The Project Officer also investigated the potential of Middle-East markets such as Dubai, which has seen increased market interest into all Tasmanian produce.

A significant resource developed under this project to address an identified issue for Tasmanian apple exporters is the China Apple Monitoring Package. Following discussions with DOA and apple growers, this training package and orchard monitoring program was created for China registered apple growers, containing information relating to all pests and diseases of concern to China. Previously under the China Apple Work Plan, growers needed to provide monitoring records for the pests/diseases of concern after harvest, along with copies of their spray guides, which DOA then had to sign off on before providing the final list of registered orchards to China. Final approval from China could take between 1-6 weeks, therefore holding up potential trade. Under this revised system, growers are audited for compliance with the orchard monitoring program during the growing season by DOA and approved immediately if compliant. This means DOA will have the list of approved orchards sent to China prior to harvest, meaning trade can commence as soon as new season's fruit is harvested. A copy of the 2015 revision of this training and monitoring package is attached as Appendix 5. The Project Officer delivered a range of industry development services through this project. Other key outputs and services of benefit to industry through this project included:

- The Project Officer and supporting FGT staff were the first point of contact for grower enquiries in relation to production and export aspects of their businesses, as well as following up issues of concern. This was particularly evident during the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources (DAWR) audit of export registered premises, conducted 30th of November to 6th December 2015;
- Communication of information to growers and other key industry stakeholders on various topics of importance, to assist growers with their need for best practice and sustainable production. These topics included; developments in production, training, current industry issues, export protocol requirements and other information. This information was communicated via a variety of media, including workshops, seminars (see Appendix 6), the biannual FGT newsletter/magazine, mailouts, email and FGT's website;
- Input into export protocols and workplans;
- Organising and running a major annual state conference (every year except 2015). The FGT May Conference was run in order to address some of the many issues industry had identified as priorities. Conferences featured a mix of local, national and international presenters addressing topics from a grower, researcher and consultant's perspective;
- Attendance at industry events both locally and nationally, including assistance with the coordination of the 2014 national cherry conference and 2015 national cherry industry directions forum;
- Organising and facilitating various seminars and workshops;
- Promotion of industry events through newsletters, mailouts, email and the FGT website;
- A member's contact book which is generated annually and sent to all members, making it easier for them to communicate directly. This booklet also contains key contact details for other associated groups such as Government Agencies and exporters;
- Assistance with collation and distribution of FGT newsletter/magazine;
- Input, sourcing of articles and collation of national cherry industry newsletter 'Australian

Cherries' including contribution of content (see Appendix 4);

- Creation of a list of interested growers/exporters to receive export enquiries which are directed to FGT's office;
- Referral of seasonal worker enquiries to interested growers;
- Coordination of bulk orders of protocol tapes and labels on behalf of industry, combining orders to achieve cost savings due to bulk purchasing;
- Coordination and collection of fruit samples for MRL testing, including reviewing test results and forwarding reports to growers. This helps make the process of getting MRL results easier for growers during their busiest times of the year, whilst also minimising costs, via discounted testing rates due to the high volume of samples provided over the year;
- Coordination and participation in conjunction with Biosecurity Tasmania and DOA of overseas inspector visits. Annual visits are received from Korea and Japan for cherries and Taiwan for apples. Other intermittent inspector visits include China for cherries and Thailand for cherries, apples, summerfruit and berries;
- Coordination and participation in major international Trade Shows such as Asia Fruit Logistica (Hong Kong) and the China World Fruit & Vegetable Trade Fair. FGT facilitates bringing export ready grower/exporters to meet prospective customers, as well as holding meetings and discussions with key officials in importing countries. Also collation of Austrade Export Market Development Grant (EMDG) claims in relation to these attendances in order to reduce the costs. Recently, a detailed submission for renewal of FGT's Approved Body status was completed and submitted to Austrade, which will enable FGT to continue to receive ongoing assistance for export market development and promotional under the EMDG Scheme for another 5 years;
- Administration and liaison with University of Tasmania and Fruit Growers Tasmania Executive regarding assessment and selection of annual FGT Scholarship recipient. This Scholarship is run in conjunction with UTAS and is open to students in any field of study who are undertaking their honours research on a topic which is of relevance to the Tasmanian fruit industry;
- Coordination of training courses such as chemical handling, forklift, first aid, chainsaw, tractor handling etc; arranged for growers to assist with gaining and/or maintaining required qualifications for orchard and packing shed staff. Funding sought where available to subsidise the cost of these courses (see Appendix 1 for example of flyer/application sheet for subsidised training). FGT also successfully developed and received funding for larger courses at the Certificate III and IV level. Each course contained 5 different units at the relevant level, with all available positions filled. Previously, subsidised funding has also been achieved to cover full qualifications at Certificate II, III and Diploma level;
- Submissions to APVMA for minor use permits lodged on behalf of industry ie: "Pristine" fungicide in 2013 and "Regent" insecticide in 2014;
- Work undertaken with software developers to create an iPhone app to complement the Tasmanian Fruits Farm Gate Guide. App was launched in February 2013.

Outcomes

This project has clearly produced significant outcomes for both the Tasmanian and National fruit industries, such as growers having a better understanding of requirements for export into both protocol and non protocol markets.

With an ever increasing need for an “export culture” in order to prevent domestic market failure (particularly in the case of cherries), this project has assisted in the development and production of significant tools for cherry growers nationally such as the Cherry Export Manual, and the cherry industry Biosecurity Management Programme (BMP) document. These documents have helped to increase export awareness as well as compliance with export requirements, chemical withholding periods and importing country MRL’s. Without giving growers all of the information they need to successfully export into both protocol and non protocol countries, as well as undertaking work in order to increase and improve market access, increasing exports to meet identified targets will not be achieved.

This project has also had input into the development of export protocols and workplans.

For Tasmanian apple growers, the China Apple Monitoring Package (see Appendix 5) has resolved the significant issue of growers being unable to export into China immediately from harvest. Under this new system, trade can commence as soon as the new season’s fruit is harvested. This has provided apple growers with significantly increased opportunities to export into this market, which holds good potential for premium prices, particularly for recently emerged niche apple varieties such as Rubigold and Tiger Fuji.

The activities undertaken under this project have also regularly delivered key information to growers on best practice and Research & Development outcomes, via multiple channels including seminars, workshops, field days, state & national conferences and also tangible media such as newsletters, export manuals, MRL guides, spray guides and other publications.

Another example of positive outcomes for the Tasmanian industry has been good chemical spray practices and MRL compliance. Sound knowledge of withholding periods and importing country MRL’s is vital, given that many registered chemicals within Australia have either lower, or zero residue levels allowed in some overseas markets. A MRL violation in an overseas market can result in anything from the shipment being destroyed or re-exported, to suspension of trade. Success has been shown through the MRL results received through FGT’s MRL testing program, where over 100 samples are sent for analysis annually. In any given season there has not been greater than 4 samples record a residue level in excess of National limits and in one season there were no violations detected. For all samples detected over the MRL limit, retesting is undertaken and in all cases retested samples have been compliant with MRL’s. In addition, over the life of this project, there has never been an MRL violation reported in an overseas market.

National outcomes include improved awareness of the issues surrounding export, in particular Maximum Residue Limits, chemical use, export protocols and export market workplans. Other outcomes included industry compliance with domestic and export MRL standards, reduced pesticide use and adoption of sustainable orchard management practices.

Other beneficial outcomes of significance through industry services conducted under project MT12025 include:

- Sustained communication systems within the regional industry, national network and with associated organisations and stakeholders. Processes for the receipt and dissemination of information to growers have been improved through the project's activities. A drive to increase the number of growers with email has resulted in almost all Tasmanian growers now being able to access emails, which has resulted in the ability to send more frequent and timely information, with considerable time and cost savings compared with postal mailouts. The Project Officer had moderate success in achieving the target cherry grower email increase. Adding another 20 emails addresses to the original 291, this equated to an increase of 6.9%, 0.1% off the target 7% increase set by July 2015, as outlined in milestone report:106 of this project;
- Better informed industry through both the FGT newsletter/magazine and the CGA national newsletter;
- An increased number of skilled industry participants by the provision of training and education programs, where possible subsidised in order to encourage participation. Funding has been successfully sought to assist with the cost of single training courses as well as larger courses containing multiple skillsets;
- Informed industry participants as to new technology and production developments to equip them to undertake best practice and achieve sustainability and profitability into the future via Conferences, seminars, workshops and field days;
- Support for new industry relevant R&D through ongoing facilitation of the UTAS/FGT Scholarship program.

National industry networks play an important role in overall industry development and Project MT12025 has provided the opportunity for sound alliances to be maintained, particularly with APAL and CGA. Updated Tasmanian grower information is provided to both peak bodies to enable them to maintain an up to date national grower database for distribution of national information. Support for peak body industry development activities is regularly promoted to the local industry.

Development of industry communication, training and education activities and other support services to growers through this project, has assisted the Tasmanian industry in gaining recognition as being professionally managed with a proactive and progressive culture and a sound representative organisation. This recognition has resulted in other horticulture industries (berries and nuts) beginning to seek participation in FGT events such as conferences, seminars and training.

Evaluation and Discussion

It has become clear during the life of the project that there are always industry issues requiring dedicated resources at sufficient levels to ensure that successful, timely and tangible outcomes are achieved.

A key current issue is Market Access/Development, specifically the pursuit of new market access, whilst maintaining access to existing markets. The global industry is becoming more competitive and there will be the added challenges ahead of competing with imports into Australia from countries with lower costs of production and the need for growers to have an increased focus on exporting, in order to prevent market oversupply and therefore maintain a viable return for their product on the domestic market.

If the Australian pomefruit, cherry, berry and summerfruit industries are to experience sustainability in growth, then an ongoing and increased focus has to be placed on export market development and maintenance.

Market development requires ongoing, persistent activity, working closely with Government agencies and includes market maintenance by consistent presence in the market and at international industry events as well seeking access to new markets.

Key benefits to industry from this project include continual support to growers as the first point of contact for enquiries relating to many aspects of their businesses including export registration, compliance with export protocols and workplans, residue testing and MRL's for both the domestic market and importing countries, skills & training and R&D events. It is important that industry has the necessary support services to facilitate export knowledge, assist in clarifying export protocol and workplan requirements as well as coordinating and conducting the export registration process itself. The Department of Agriculture Plant Exports division is not resourced sufficiently to be able to directly handle the registration process one on one with growers, therefore FGT through the Project Officer played an important role in managing this process for industry and ensuring that export application forms and required attachments such as property maps are complete and correct, before the information is sent on to DOA. This ensures that there are no hold-ups with the registration process and makes the process a lot easier for DAWR staff, who then only need to conduct a desktop audit of registrations instead of handling the full process of checking forms and liaising individually with the growers in regards to amendments or additional information required.

The Project Officer and FGT staff also hosts an annual export registration and information day, which has seen record numbers of growers in attendance over the past 2 years. The recorded number of export registered premises has increased from 50 (2013/14), to 59 (2014/15) and to 69 (2015/16). The registration day also incorporates a mandatory China cherry protocol crop monitor training workshop, which is a requirement for cherry growers to attend in order to gain accreditation with DAWR and to be able to register their orchards for export of cherries to China. The Project Officer also had input into the creation of the DAWR approved training package for cherries and apples to China.

The industry nationally has an identified shortage of key orchard managers, a critical skill which could inhibit expansion and the industry lacks substantial capacity building in the skills and training. This has been known for some time and was further verified by an Industry Skills Needs Analysis, which was commissioned by FGT in 2014 and funded by Agrifood Skills.

The Project Officer encouraged growers to capitalise on the FGT provided training opportunities in conjunction with Registered Training Organisations (RTO's) for growers and their staff, as well as

commencing work with Tasmanian Institute of Agriculture and the University of Tasmania in order to develop a training continuum. This training continuum is aimed at recognising qualifications that bridge both VET and tertiary qualifications in order to provide clearer career pathways to increase the available pool of skilled workers qualified for these key roles. FGT has been successful on numerous occasions in securing subsidies in order to significantly reduce the cost of training courses for industry. This has applied to both single courses such as chemical handling and forklift, to larger set courses such as the "Fruit Skills" Certificate III and IV courses developed by FGT. Each course contained 5 different units at the relevant level, making up 1/3 of a full qualification and with a subsidy received from the State Government, cost only \$231 per participant. 35 places were made available for these courses, all of which were filled.

The direction FGT has taken by combining the pome fruit, stone fruit and berry industries has provided direct benefits to industry and reinforced the need to be working together for strong and effective industry management and representation. The utilisation of combined resources and taking advantage of synergies across like industries has also been a positive outcome, particularly now that many growers are growing a variety of fruits such as both cherries and apples. The result has also provided cost effective delivery of industry development activities by combining the industries and eliminating duplication of tasks. A reduction in expenditure of matched government R&D funding has been achieved.

The outcomes achieved provide clear evidence that a combined industry organisation has the potential to provide more effective industry development services to industry than several smaller organisations. It has been demonstrated that much of the success of combining the industries and the ongoing developments were enhanced by the activities undertaken through project MT12025.

Recommendations

This project has clearly demonstrated the importance of communication for the industry, both locally and nationally. The project highlighted the importance of providing access to education and training for growers through courses, conferences, workshops to facilitate the Tasmanian fruit industry's growth and development.

The activities undertaken have produced improvement and enhancement of communication to growers in relation to providing access to industry specific education and training.

FGT resources under project MT12025 have also provided a significant contribution in linking the Tasmanian industry with the national network. Market development/access, distribution of apple, pear, cherry and stone fruit promotional material and other industry development has also been enhanced through the key project activities producing benefits that flow across the national industry.

All of these activities need to be ongoing and consistent in order to continue to provide beneficial outcomes across the industry sectors. Tasmania's pest free status from fruit flies provides the state with favourable market access into key Asian markets such as China, Korea, Japan, Thailand and Taiwan. In order for the Tasmanian industry to keep expanding production, Tasmanian growers need to continue to focus on increasing exports by capitalising on the advantages of being fruit fly free, in order to avoid domestic market failure, as has been seen with cherries in seasons where there is a large domestic crop. The rapid expansion of the Tasmanian blueberry industry will also require a focus towards export markets to avoid domestic market saturation.

In relation this project and FGT project MT11013, which both end in September 2015, it has been identified that due to the increased focus towards exports over the past few years, there is crossover between the two projects in a number of areas, in particular around extension, export training, registration & management, communication and research & development. FGT has therefore submitted a single project proposal MT14039 "*Tasmanian Fruit Industry Export Development, Extension and Industry Services*" to carry on from MT11013 and MT12025, combining key objectives from both projects along with other new objectives in order to underpin the projected growth of the industry from 2015 to 2020. FGT is still awaiting the official feedback from Hort Innovation regarding the proposed combined project.

This project proposal is yet to receive approval, however is considered vital in order to support industry growth. Any new project in this space needs to have the scope to be able to review and evolve activities in order to provide improved output. There also should be sufficient flexibility to address changes or new challenges in the industry as they arise.

Scientific Refereed Publications

None to report.

Intellectual Property/Commercialisation

No commercial IP generated.

Acknowledgements

Team Members/Management Committee:

Mr Jos Driessen, President (until September 2012)
Fruit Growers Tasmania Inc Executive Stonefruit Member

Mr Andrew Scott, President (September 2012 to present) Executive
Fruit Growers Tasmania Inc Executive Pomefruit Member

Mr Howard Hansen, Vice President
Fruit Growers Tasmania Inc Executive Stonefruit and Pomefruit Member

Mr Richard Clark (until September 2012)
Fruit Growers Tasmania Inc Executive Berry Member

Mr Dean Metcalf (September 2012 to present)
Fruit Growers Tasmania Inc Executive Berry Member

Ms Lucy Gregg, Business Development Manager (until September 2013)
Fruit Growers Tasmania Inc

Mr Phil Pyke, Business Development Manager (October 2013 to present)
Fruit Growers Tasmania Inc

Mr Ian Cover, Project Assistant (April 2014 to present)
Fruit Growers Tasmania Inc

Appendices

Appendix 1 - Skills fund 2014 information and application form for training subsidy

Appendix 2 – Example Seminar Flyer (Cherry Night Seminar October 2012)

Appendix 3 – Export rego day 2015 flyer

Appendix 4 - Example of state report from CGA Newsletter – Autumn 2015 edition

Appendix 5 - China Apple Monitoring Package (2015 season revision)

Appendix 6 - 2015 Fruit Extension Day Invitation

Skills Fund 2014 Training assistance



Fruit
Growers
Tasmania Inc

262 Argyle Street
Hobart Tasmania 7000
Tel: 03 62 311 944
Fax: 03 62 311 929
Email: admin@fruitgrowerstas.com.au

Fruit Growers Tasmania in conjunction with TasTAFE is putting together an application on behalf of Members to access Tasmanian State Government funding assistance for the cost of training in both skill sets and full qualifications for your existing employees in 2014.

If successful, funding of up to 80% - 90% of the cost of courses is available, representing a considerable saving for members.

A list of commonly requested short courses (skill sets) and full qualifications is attached, along with indicative full and subsidised pricing. On top of these listed courses, any other accredited courses from TasTAFE can be undertaken as part of this funding application. To search the list of available industry courses, go to:

<https://www.tastafe.tas.edu.au/course-finder/Pages/home.aspx>

To apply, fill in the attached TasTAFE 2014 Expression of Interest form and return to FGT by **no later than Friday 15th November 2013.**

A Skills Tasmania condition of this funding is that it will only be provided for employees who have not received a subsidy for the same qualification/unit in the previous 5 years. Where this becomes apparent after training, TasTAFE reserves the right to charge a full commercial fee for the course. If you are unsure please contact the FGT office for clarification.

Note that employee names must be provided and a separate application form needs to be filled out for each employee. Multiple skill sets and/or qualifications can be included on a single form. The funding application has to be submitted by the end of November, so there will be no opportunity to add additional staff after the cut-off date. If funding approval is received, payment of the subsidised course costs will be required upon enrolment.

If you have any queries, please phone Nick Featherstone on 03 62 311 944.

This application is available to FGT Members only. Please return forms to FGT's Office by post, email or fax by Friday 15th November 2013.

Commonly requested training courses

Course	Duration	Full course cost	Cost with 80% subsidy
		*Indicative per person prices. Some businesses may receive a 90% subsidy depending upon number of full time employees.	
Skill Sets			
Level II First Aid	1-2 days	\$205	\$41*
Forklift	2 days	\$695	\$139*
ChemCert	2 days	\$350	\$70*
Chainsaw	2 days	\$440	\$88*
Tree Felling	3 days	\$1215	\$243*
Tractor operation	1 day	\$250	\$50*
Quad Bike	1 day	\$395 +\$95 Bike Hire if required	\$79 +\$95 Bike Hire if required
Brushcutter	1 day	\$170	\$34*
Intro to WHS Risk Management	2 days	\$700	\$140*
WHS for Officers	1 day	\$500	\$100*
MIG Welding	2 days	\$590	\$118*
Arc Welding	2 days	\$590	\$118*
Full Qualifications			
AHC30610 Certificate III in Production Horticulture	Over 12-24 months	\$5000	\$1000*
AHC40310 Certificate IV in Production Horticulture	Over 24 months	\$5500	\$1100*
AHC50310 Diploma of Production Horticulture	Part time over 1-2 yrs	\$6000	\$1200*
Link to other available courses: www.tastafe.tas.edu.au			

Skills Fund 2014

Frequently Asked Questions and Expression of Interest Form

What is the Skills Fund?

This is an ongoing program by Skills Tasmania subsidising the cost of training in full qualification and skill sets in priority areas. Applications are completed jointly by employer / industry associations in conjunction with their preferred Registered Training Organisation (RTO). They must demonstrate clear skill needs directly benefiting the operation and productivity of the business and employees.

What is an eligible existing worker?

Eligible existing workers are persons who in the previous week worked for one hour or more for pay, profit, commission or payment in kind. Eligible participants excludes income support recipients

Eligible participants are:

- Australian citizens; or
- Permanent residents of Australia living in Tasmania
- Humanitarian refugees.

How much will the training cost?

The cost of the training depends on the cost of the qualification / skill set and the number of full time equivalent (FTE) staff employed by your organisation (not just your program area). The percentage you pay is expected to be based on the following **and in 2014 this applies to skill sets as well:**

1 – 19 FTE employees = 10% contribution

20 – 199 FTE employees = 20% contribution

200- 999 FTE employees = 30% contribution

1000 + FTE employees = 50% contribution

The contribution is typically from \$500 to \$1500 per qualification.

Applications submitted by Industry Associations or regional groups pay 20% contribution.

What is the application process?

Employees should discuss their needs with their supervisor / employer. Employers or Industry Associations applying on behalf of members / employees should undertake some form of training needs analysis (formal or informal) and contact the TasTAFE to discuss their workforce development needs and the potential for a joint application prior to applying

Applications have two parts. Part A is completed by the Employer / Industry Association and Part B by the RTO. The assessment process will involve a phone interview by Skills Tasmania with the nominated contact (owner / human resource manager) within the employer or industry association to help them better understand the organisation's training requirements. Employers need to have solid information (such as completed EOIs) on hand about skill needs and the expected benefits of the training to be credible during this interview.

Experience has demonstrated that overly complex and large scale projects with large numbers of employees involved in training at the same time are often not in the best interests of employers or their staff and that workforce development should often be undertaken in stages spread over a number of years.

What makes a successful application?

The foundation of a successful application is a strong workforce / skills development need that can be substantiated. There must be a clear match between employee needs and the qualification / skills set choice for each employee and participants must be ready to start within two months of the application date.

How much time do participants need to study and attend workshops?

Each qualification varies in how it is delivered. Typically there will be a combination of workshops delivered at a TasTAFE campus, self-paced resources and project work completed in your own time and assessments. Generally workshops run through the day and for 4 – 8 hours. Some workshops may run during the evening and your Teacher will advise you of these. Qualifications should be completed within two years.

We offer a flexible delivery models because all our students have work commitments as well as study and life! It is recommended that you spend some time each week on your study to ensure you progress at a reasonable pace. Your Teacher can advise you of how much time this would be, and can assist if you are having difficulties. Support from your employer is essential in terms of work scheduling and often there is direct involvement of supervisors in workplace learning. Employees and employers must understand the commitment required to undertake the training.

If I am interested, what should I do now?

Employees:

Discuss your situation and interest with your supervisor / human resources manager

Employers:

Contact TasTAFE to discuss your needs – either your Customer Relations Manager (if known) or phone 1300 655 307.

Expression of Interest Form

The **Expression of Interest Form** is a vital tool to assist you in determining accurate and substantiated qualification / participant matches. The EOI form will assist employers in analysing needs and demonstrating to Skills Tasmania in the phone interview that the places are confirmed and ready to start.

TasTAFE generally requires copies of completed EOI forms for each full qualification and skill set participant before we will proceed with a joint application unless otherwise agreed. This requirement is in everyone's benefit as it saves a great deal of time once the places are won as we will have all the details of participants on hand.

In 2014 we have two versions of the form:

Online version

An online survey that is quick and easy to complete and the data collected will go to TasTAFE initially who will then forward it on to your employer or regional group. This form can be accessed here:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/WFPG76N>

Word version

This is provided below and should be sent directly to your employer / industry group provided that they have previously requested you to do so and have indicated that they intend to submit an application to the Skills Fund.

Expression of Interest Form –

Skills Fund 2013 / 14 (Skills Tasmania Program to Fund Training)

(one form per employee – to be completed in consultation with your employer and sent to your employer)

The Skills Fund partially funds the cost of training in priority qualifications and skill sets which meet skill shortage and economic development needs. A non-refundable contribution from either the employer or the individual of 10% to 50% is required upfront on commencement. Funds are limited and TasTAFE in conjunction with employers must apply on a project by project basis.

The Information contained in this form is to assist us in understanding your training and skill development needs and those of your employer to help in a possible application for **funds**. Whilst TasTAFE will endeavor to support training wherever possible, applications must meet certain criteria, have definite identified employee needs and have with a strong chance of success before we will follow through with a formal application.

Employer Details

Business Name

Address.....

State.....Postcode.....

Main Service / Product

Approximate number of employees

Supervisor's: Name

Phone.....

Email Address:.....

Employee Personal Details

Name.....

Address.....

State.....Postcode.....

Telephone

Email Address:

Current Job Title

☐ Part Time Employed

☐ Full Time Employed

☐ Self Employed – not employing others

I commenced my current employment on approximately the following date: / /

Have you successfully completed a previous qualification(s)?
(Please list highest level and most relevant to the nominated qualification) in this EOI

I certify that the information provided is true and correct and understand **that if the applicant has previously been funded by the government to do this skill set or qualification before they will not be eligible for the Skills Fund subsidy.**

Employee's Signature Date

Employee Qualification Preference

What qualification(s) are you most interested in and believe will best meet your needs and those of your employer?

Qualification name:

Skill Set areas of interest:

Training Needs Background Information

Funding supports clear needs with strong benefits to individuals and employers in current and future roles within the current workplace.

Please place a 1, 2, 3 or 4 in the boxes below (1 – strongly agree, 2 – agree, 3 unsure, 4 not applicable)

- ☐ I understand the qualification I wish to undertake and its knowledge and skills focus
- ☐ The qualification would be useful for my current / future role.
- ☐ The qualification is essential for my current / future role.
- ☐ The knowledge and skills will be directly relevant to my day to day duties
- ☐ I currently supervise other staff
- ☐ I am very likely to supervise other staff in future

Three important skills I would like to improve through the qualification are:

1.
2.
3.

I have discussed my training needs with my supervisor(s) and employer and they support my nominated qualification choice
☐ Yes ☐ No

I expect the **non-refundable** participant contribution to be paid for by:
☐ Me ☐ My Employer

I understand that part time training / study requires considerable commitment in time and energy over an extended period and am able to cope with this
☐ Yes ☐ No

Agreement on Common Understanding

Working together with TasTAFE on Skills Fund Applications

The Skills Fund is an excellent opportunity to secure funding to support training and workforce development.

It is a competitive funding source with caps on the number of training places supported and a limited budget. Employers/Industry Associations lead the application process, which must be developed in partnership with at least one of their Registered Training Organisations partners.

TasTAFE is committed to working closely with its industry partners and believes that it is important that both parties have a common understanding of the key issues listed below:

- It is important that requests for places have a sound basis. Each place requested should generally have a specific staff member identified to use it with appropriate background, need, prerequisites and commitment.
- Employers and industry groups must assist with liaison with their employees or members prior to applications and when filling places in successful applications to make the process efficient for everyone involved.
- There is no guarantee that an application will result in successful receipt of funding support.
- TasTAFE reserves the right to only support/partner in applications that are viable to run within a reasonable cost structure and our available resources and that are well supported by an employer or industry association / regional group.
- Employee contributions (paid either by the individual or their employer) will be from 10 - 50% of the cost of the qualification /skill set, must be paid up front and are not refundable. Program costs are determined by TasTAFE on a case by case basis and may vary depending on the delivery model and location of delivery.
- State Government funding for apprenticeships/traineeships takes precedence over the Skills Fund and places cannot be funded by dual funding sources.
- The Skills Fund does not support refresher training of any type. If any unit of competence has been undertaken in the past five years with funding support (typically by PPP or the Skills Fund) the place does not attract funding again for the same units of competency. Should an employer intentionally or inadvertently commit an employee for such refresher training as part of a Skills Fund program run by TasTAFE **the employer will be charged a full commercial fee.**
- All funded training places require assessment for the full subsidy to be paid and as such employees are required to participate in any associated assessment activity. In the event that an employee does not participate in assessment activity and therefore does not attract funding **the employer will be charged a full commercial fee.**

I confirm my understanding of the above and agree to my organisation paying any commercial fees arising from employees undertaking training in a TasTAFE Skills Fund program who do not attract the Skills Tasmania subsidy due to previous completion of the same units of competency or not participating in assessment activities.

Name _____

Title _____

Organisation _____

Date _____



2012 Cherry Night Seminar

When: Tuesday 23rd October, 2012

Where: FGT Office, 262 Argyle Street

Time: 5.30pm Start

Cost: \$ 15.00 FGT members, \$30 Non-members: Includes supper and drinks available for purchase.

RSVP: Friday 19th October 2012

6.00pm: "What do the new water schemes mean for the fruit industry?", Presented by Anthony McHugh, Tasmanian Irrigation

6.30pm: "Effect of orchard practices and chill hours on uniformity of bud burst in sweet cherry", Presented by Nick MacNair, TIA

7.00pm: Dinner

7.30pm: "Insight into USA Orchards from the July Study Tour", Presented by Ross Kile & Peter Morrison

8.00pm "Insight into USA Packing Sheds from the July Study Tour", Presented by Matthew Griggs and Mike Oakley

8.30pm "Spray Nozzles & Spray Technology: Getting It Right",

Fruit Growers Tasmania
262 Argyle Street, Hobart
Tasmania, 720

Phone: 03 6231 1944

Fax: 03 6231 1929

E-mail: bdm@fruitgrowerstas.com.au

RSVP: Friday 19th October 2012



**Fruit
Growers
Tasmania Inc**

2015 FGT Export Information

Training Day*

Wednesday 19th August 2015



10.00am: Morning Tea

FGT Meeting Room - 262 Argyle St, Hobart

- 10.30am Welcome and Overview - Fruit Growers Tasmania
- 10.35am Export Market Overview - Fruit Growers Tasmania
- 10.50am Bookings / Inspections, Trapping Fees - Biosecurity Tasmania
- 11.05am Export Registration Procedure - Fruit Growers Tasmania
- 11.15am Centralisation of RFP document processing to Vic - Dept of Agriculture
- 11.25am Spray Guides, Permits, MRL Testing, Tapes/Labels - Fruit Growers Tasmania/
Peter Morrison
- 11.35am Authorised Officers, MICoR and Inspection Facility Fees - Dept of Agriculture
- 11:50am Brown Rot Prevention/Management - Dr Karen Barry
- 12.10pm Market Access Update/ Cherry Biosecurity Management Programme - Cherry
Growers Australia
- 12.20pm **Fruit Growers Tasmania Annual General Meeting**
- 12.30pm **Lunch - Sponsored by**

linklogistics



personal service flexible solutions

1.00pm **Cherry Pest and Disease workshop** - Penny Measham and Peter Morrison

PLEASE NOTE: Under conditions of the Cherry Protocol to China is it compulsory to attend this session and receive accreditation to be eligible for registration.

* The Export Training Day is focused on the cherry export process however also contains information of importance to export for apple, stonefruit and berry growers ie MRL's, Authorised Officers, MICoR etc



All growers, packers and exporters are strongly advised to attend this event. Agronomists, freight forwarders and other relevant industry representatives are also invited to attend.

Cost:

Free to FGT Grower and Associate Members
FGT Non-Members \$ 40.00

RSVP: Fruit Growers Tasmania

Phone: +61 3 6231 1944

PLEASE RSVP FOR CATERING NUMBERS

262 Argyle Street, Hobart

office@fruitgrowerstas.com.au



Fruit
Growers
Tasmania Inc

STATE REPORTS



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/



**Fruit
Growers
Tasmania Inc**

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**

Monitoring of pests and diseases for apple exports to China

(Including summary of pests of concern to all major protocol markets)

2015-16 season

Quarantine Pests of Concern to Major Apple Protocol Markets

Common Name	Scientific Name	In Tasmania?	China	Japan	Thailand	Taiwan
Codling moth	<i>Cydia pomonella</i>	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Light brown apple moth	<i>Epiphyas postvittana</i>	Y	Y		Y	
Budworm	<i>Helicoverpa punctigera</i>	Y			Y	
Western flower thrips	<i>Frankliniella occidentalis</i>	Y ¹				Y
Plague thrips	<i>Thrips imaginis</i>	Y			Y	
Fuller's rose beetle	<i>Pantomorus cervinus</i>	Y			Y	
White fringed beetle	<i>Naupactus leucoloma</i>	Y				Y
San Jose Scale	<i>Quadraspidiotus perniciosus</i>	Y				
Oystershell scale	<i>Lepidosaphes ulmi</i>	Y			Y	
Mauve pittosporum scale	<i>Parlatoria pittospori</i>	Y			Y	
Pear oyster scale	<i>Diaspidiotus ostreaeformis</i>	Y			Y	
European fruit lecanium	<i>Parthenolecanium corni</i>	Y			Y	
Scarlet mealybug	<i>Pseudococcus calceolariae</i>	Y			y	
Woolly Aphid	<i>Eriosoma lanigerum</i>	Y	Y			
Brown Rot	<i>Monilinia fructicola</i>	Y	Y			
Protocol Pests not found in Tasmania						
Mediterranean fruit fly	<i>Ceratitis capitata</i>	N	Y	Y	Y	Y
Queensland fruit fly	<i>Bactrocera tryoni</i>	N	Y	Y	Y	Y
Lesser Queensland fruit fly	<i>Bactrocera neohumeralis</i>	N			Y	
Jarvis' fruit fly	<i>Bactrocera jarvisi</i>	N			Y	
Privet mite	<i>Brevipalpus obovatus</i>	N			Y	
Burrowing nematode	<i>Radopholus similis</i>	N				Y
Potato cyst nematode	<i>Globodera rostachiensis</i>	N				Y
Stem Nematode	<i>Ditylenchus dipsaci</i>	N				Y
Canker of almond	<i>Botryosphaeria dothidea</i>	N			Y	

¹Thought to be restricted to protected cultivation.

Crop Monitoring for China - Apples

- Growers and Packing Sheds need to be familiar with all requirements of the protocol and workplan. It is recommended that you register on the MiCoR website in order to access these documents:
<http://www.daff.gov.au/micor/Plants/Pages/plants.aspx>
- Monitoring is responsibility of the grower.
- Monitoring for Queensland Fruit Fly and Mediterranean Fruit Fly is not required by growers, as China accepts Tasmania's area freedom for these pests and the statewide monitoring undertaken by Biosecurity Tasmania.
- Monitoring for Codling Moth is undertaken by Biosecurity Tasmania.
- Monitoring for the other pests and diseases must be undertaken by the orchard manager or a staff member delegated by the orchard manager.
- Dept of Ag Canberra will audit orchards between October and December to ensure compliance with protocol, workplan and monitoring requirements.
- If you are unsure;
 - Contact local service/association for information
 - **Fruit Growers Tasmania**

Pests and diseases of Quarantine concern to China for apples

- | | |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Queensland Fruit Fly | <i>Bactrocera tryoni</i> |
| 2. Mediterranean Fruit Fly | <i>Ceratitis capitata</i> |
| 3. Codling Moth | <i>Cydia pomonella</i> |
| 4. Light Brown Apple Moth | <i>Epiphyas postvittana</i> |
| 5. Woolly Apple Aphid | <i>Eriosoma lanigerum</i> |
| 6. Brown Rot | <i>Monilinia fructicola</i> |

Queensland Fruit Fly and Mediterranean Fruit Fly

Bactrocera tryoni and *Ceratitis capitata*

Article 4

The State of Tasmania's existing area freedom fruit fly trapping, monitoring and surveillance system for *Bactrocera tryoni* and *Ceratitis capitata* shall be maintained. AQSIQ should be immediately notified when fruit flies are caught in Tasmania, and apple exportation should be suspended. In the case of suspension of Tasmania's area freedom status apples for export shall undergo cold treatment against fruit flies. Cold treatment shall be conducted pre-export or in-transit under the supervision of DAFF or persons approved by DAFF.

Monitoring for Queensland Fruit Fly and Mediterranean Fruit Fly is not required by growers, as China accepts Tasmania's area freedom for these pests and the statewide monitoring undertaken by Biosecurity Tasmania.

Codling Moth

The survey for *Cydia pomonella* must be conducted from the time of full blossom until the completion of harvesting in the area of designated orchards and packinghouses. One trap should be placed per 1 hectare with at least three traps in orchards of areas less than three hectares. Traps will be checked every two weeks. If the population density reaches 3 or more *Cydia pomonella* in one trap, effective control measures shall be taken immediately. Failure to control by an orchard will result in temporary suspension of that orchard from exporting to China.

Trapping and monitoring for codling moth is not required by growers, as this is undertaken by Biosecurity Tasmania. Biosecurity Tasmania will inform if trapping thresholds are reached, in which case control measures will be required to be undertaken and recorded in spray diaries.

Light Brown Apple Moth - Protocol

System management for *Epiphyas postvittana* and *Monilinia fructicola* must be conducted in the area of designated orchards, detection surveys for the pest and disease must be done before harvest, ensure the fruit is free from the symptoms of the pest and disease.

Light Brown Apple Moth

Epiphyas postvittana

Start Date	Full bloom until end of harvest
Monitoring Type	Pheromone traps
Frequency	Fortnightly
Trap Distribution	A minimum of 1 trap per 10HA per registered block to monitor. Add 1 trap per additional 10HA.
Lure Renewal	As recommended by manufacturer (3-6 weeks for lures)
Threshold	7 moths per trap
Action	Consider insecticide program, applied 130 degree days after threshold reached. Pheromone trap catch information will give an indication of where to increase the surveillance of leaf and fruit clusters for early-stage larvae. See next page for calculating degree days.
Additional	Sample broad-leaved weeds for larvae - may indicate a need for early spray

Calculating Degree Days

Light Brown Apple moth cannot develop when temperatures are below 7°C. Development proceeds at faster rates as the temperature increases.

A degree day is essentially each degree of temperature by which the average temperature on a day exceeds 7°C.

Degree days provide a useful index to the rate at which insects develop and can be used to predict the developmental stage of the majority of the moth population. There are many more-or-less complicated equations for calculating degree days, but a simple and useful approximation can be found by using:

$$\text{Number of degree days} = (\text{min temp} + \text{max temp}) / 2 - 7$$

Maximum and minimum daily temperatures can be determined by using a max-min thermometer.

If orchardists are using a monitoring station for apple or pear black spot, they should ask the manufacturer if it is possible to program the station to also monitor light brown apple moth degree days.

Woolly Apple Aphid

Eriosoma lanigerum

Start Date	Blossom until end of harvest
Monitoring Type	Visual inspection of both trees and roots
Frequency	Fortnightly
Threshold	Presence on any trees
Action	Refer to fact sheet for further information
Additional	<p>Often well controlled within trees as a result of insecticide applications for other pests such as codling moth.</p> <p>During late summer and autumn, apple trees with woolly aphid colonies or damage should be identified and marked for soil drench treatment early the following season.</p>

Brown Rot - Protocol

System management for *Epiphyas postvittana* and *Monilinia fructicola* must be conducted in the area of designated orchards, detection surveys for the pest and disease must be done before harvest, ensure the fruit is free from the symptoms of the pest and disease.

Brown rot

Monilinia fructicola

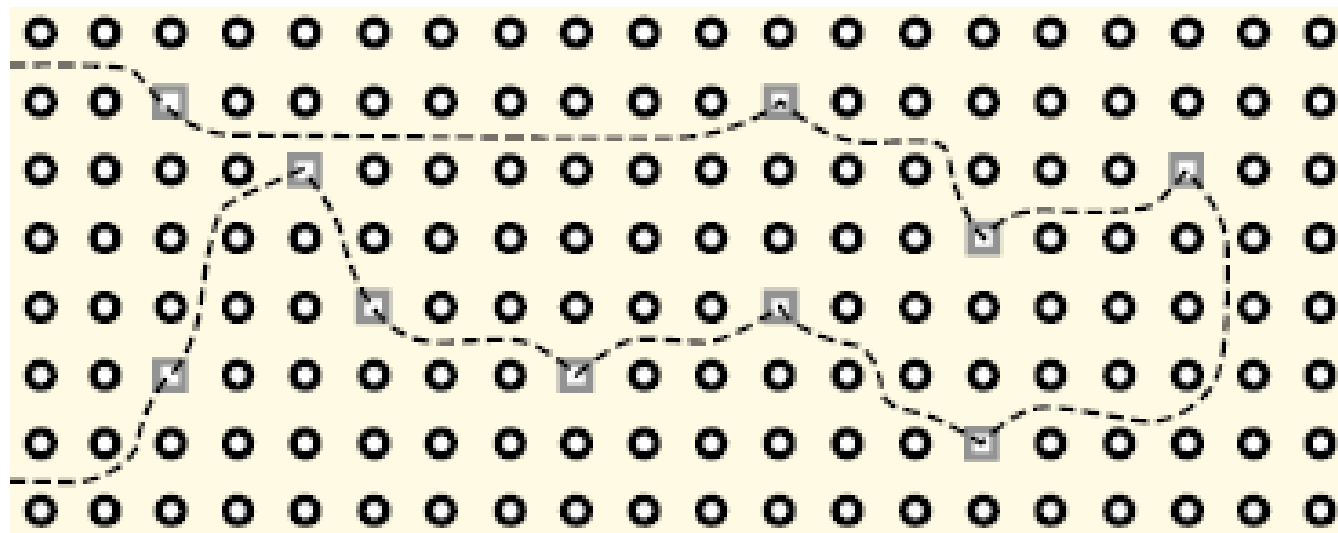
Start Date	Bud burst until end of harvest
Monitoring Type	Visual inspection
Frequency	Fortnightly at a minimum
Threshold for action	Presence
Action	Good IPM should suffice (Systemic fungicides during blossom, fungicide if presence detected thereafter)
Additional	Always refer to importing country MRL's and withholding periods for chemicals prior to spraying.

Monitoring

- Monitor the required number of trees in each registered block a minimum of fortnightly, keeping documented monitoring records.
- Randomly select different trees each time. Ensure the path chosen takes you through the entire block as per diagram on the next page.
- Select trees for monitoring in known “hotspots” of the block, whilst observing other trees you pass for pest and disease problems.
- The number of trees to monitor in each registered block is as follows:
 - $< 1\text{HA} = 10$ trees
 - $1\text{-}3\text{HA} = 15$ trees
 - $3\text{-}4\text{HA} = 20$ trees
 - $4\text{-}6\text{HA} = 25$ trees
 - $> 6\text{HA} = 30$ trees

Monitoring

- Randomly space the trees in each block, as per example below, covering the full block.
- Observe other trees as you pass for signs of pests and disease.



○ Tree □ Sampling tree ---- Path through the orchard while monitoring

Monitoring

- Keep records using monitoring sheet provided.
- Have spray and monitoring records available for Dept of Ag audit and provide a copy to your nominated packing shed(s).
- Monitoring for China does not replace orchard best practice.

Orchard Manager or Nominated Crop Monitor: **Registered Block Name:.....**

China Apple Monitoring Form

Tasmanian Fruits Extension Day 20 November 15



Marketing, pollination, pests and diseases, protected cropping and orchard walks

Tasmanian Fruits Extension Day Home Hill Winery 20 November

Fruit Growers Tasmania is pleased to announce this exciting extension day

Supported by the team from the Tasmanian Institute of Agriculture, the extensive program will include presenters with backgrounds in production, pollination, pests and diseases and plant protection.

Hosted at the impressive Home Hill Winery at Nairn Rd, Raneagh, there will also be displays from the Farm Safe program and Highfield Industries.

Presenters will include Rowan Little, General Manager of Montague Fresh - an Australian packer,

procurer, logistics provider and marketer of fresh produce. Trevor Monson is internationally known as an expert in bees and pollination, focusing on the effects of pests, diseases and chemicals on bee populations.

Dr Katja Hogendoorn is a Research Associate in the Plant Protection group and specialises in research on bees as vectors of beneficial microbes.

Dr Penny Measham is well known to many through her research in cherries. However, she is presenting on her new area of responsibility - Queensland fruit fly which is of

strong concern to Tasmanian growers.

Other presenters include Dr Nigel Swartz, Dr Karen Brown, Peter Morrison, Andrew Hall, Nigel Bartels, Scott Price, Dr Sally Bound, Steve Wilson and Nic Hansen.

Our thanks to our sponsors in Visy who have made this day possible through their generous support.

FGT members - \$35.00

Non-members - \$45.00

Students - \$35.00

Anyone wishing to attend must register for catering purposes - please register at office@fruitgrowerstas.com.au





Trevor Monson - Bee Broker

Trevor Monson is a second generation beekeeper who has wide experience in most sectors of the agricultural, horticultural and forestry industries as well as beekeeping. Having managed and worked in these fields has kept him in touch with issues affecting Australian agriculture. His specialty is in pollination services to a wide range of growers and managing companies which cover practically all crops that need honey bees. Being responsible for Australia's largest almond orchards will see him contracting 120 beekeepers in supplying 45,000 hives this year. His expertise is sought after at all levels of farming, forestry, industry, research, policy-making and government advisory bodies, such as the current Honey Bee Research Commission. His private and government sponsored research visits to the USA have enriched his knowledge even further, especially in the fields of pollination, bee husbandry and the dangers of chemicals, pests and diseases on the honey bee.

Rowan Little - General Manager Montague Fresh

Rowan's position as General Manager of Montague Fresh requires the management of the overall process of taking key products from breeder through to the end customer. This

means working with breeders, growers (including our orchards), packing technologies, transport and logistics services providers, retailers and the end consumer

Dr Katja Hogendoorn - University of Adelaide

Katja Hogendoorn is a postdoctoral research associate in the Plant Protection group. Her research focuses on bees as vectors of beneficial microbes ('entomovectoring'), the behavioural ecology of native bees, and on the importance and potential of native bees as crop pollinators. Katja currently leads an innovation project funded by the federal Department of Agriculture to introduce entomovectoring in cherry orchards and vineyards for the control of Cherry Brown rot and Botrytis bunch rot. In addition, Katja researches revegetation strategies to enhance the presence of pollinators on apple, pear and lucerne. The latter project is funded by Primary Industries and Regions, South Australia.



Program

0930 -Welcome and morning tea

9.50am - Nitrogen studies in apples Dr Nigel Swarts - TIA

10.10am - Talking about cider TIA

10.30am - Marketing your fruit
Rowan Little General Manager
Montague Fresh

11.00am Break

11.50am National Fruit Fly
Program Dr Penny Measham HIA

12.10pm National Cherry
Development Program Peter
Morrison Roberts Ltd

12.30pm Pollination practices
and issues Trevor Monson
Pollination specialist

12.50pm Bees and trichoderma
Katja Hogendoorn

1.10pm Lunch at Home Hill

2.00pm - Frost mitigation Steve
Wilson

2.20pm - Field walk - Hansen
Orchards to cover cherry rot,
crop covers, tunnels and netting -
Tas Institute of Agriculture

3.30pm - Field Walk (pome)
Calvert Bros Rookwood
Ranelagh to cover artificial spur
extinction - Tas Institute of
Agriculture

Alternative second field walk -
Cherries Tasmania Old Beach
autumn raspberries and mulch
production