

Citrep

Issue #67 • December 2011

Newsletter of the Murray Valley Citrus Board

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Jan Denham

Chairman's Report

As the year draws to a close it is timely to reflect back on the MVCB activities. In the 2010 December Citrep I concluded with the hope that we could "look forward to a better year in 2011".

Unfortunately, this optimistic view was not to be. Citrus growers have experienced one of the worst years for returns, coupled with heavy crops and the continued Queensland Fruit Fly (QFF) outbreaks. Although of not much consolation, it has also been a terrible year for many southern hemisphere growers around the world.

In this past year we have placed a strong focus on promotions. The Board set aside funds for in-store promotions in conjunction with the National citrus promotions. We extended the in-store promotions to include late season Grapefruit and Valencia 're-greening' commencing in late January. The 'Taste of Melbourne' promotion in September was a very successful event. At that time of the year, a wide range of varieties is available for tasting and consumers had the opportunity to experience citrus they had not tasted before. (There were many who had not tasted Tangelos, for example.)

Cittgroup activities continued to be well supported and appreciated by growers. The On-Farm Field Trial and Managing in Difficult Times sessions were very successful. On-farm field trials are funded by the MVCB with VC funding from Horticulture Australia [HAL]. The Board also funds Mary Cannard's position with VC funding from HAL.

In the past year, QFF management has been a major part of the Board's activities. As the Department of Primary Industries has withdrawn from carrying out eradication on commercial properties, it has fallen on the Board to co-ordinate these activities. Without the resources of the Board, it would be the responsibility of growers to purchase treatments for those in the 1.5 km radius of a QFF epicentre.

At times of incursions such as the QFF, the importance of the Board and its capacity to react immediately with resources is invaluable to growers.

The current Board's four-year term will finish in June, 2012. Sunraysia Citrus Growers (SCG) has written to the Minister for Agriculture requesting a grower poll to re-make the Murray Valley Citrus Board for another four-year term. Early in the New Year all growers will be sent a proposal for the re-making of the Board, prepared by the Department of Primary Industries, Victoria. This paper will outline the achievements of the past four years along with key arguments both 'for' and 'against' the re-making of the MVCB.

Cont'd page 3...



Hugh Flett

Chief Executive's Report

Season 2011-12 has been a challenging one for growers. A larger crop than 'average' with smaller fruit has proven to be difficult to find a market at commercial returns, when confronted with the high exchange rate and increased competition from South American countries.

This in turn placed additional supply pressure on domestic markets, which forced prices and returns to growers lower than seen previously.

To exacerbate circumstances even further, growers have had to contend with Queensland Fruit Fly (QFF) outbreaks. These have rendered most of the Greater Sunraysia Pest Free Area into an area where fruit was required to be treated by one method or another. For export markets, cold treatment became necessary and for domestic markets the majority of produce received an in-line treatment during packing. Both treatments eroded returns to growers even further.

The Board has continued to take a leading role in the battle against Queensland Fruit Fly (QFF) incursions. As state governments move away from support at farm level, the Board has funded and procured the chemical Naturalure for use on citrus properties within a 1500m radius of QFF outbreaks. By the time you read this, these growers will have applied six weekly applications of Naturalure in an endeavour to achieve eradication and a return to being 'pest free'. At the same time, the Department of Primary Industry Victoria has been treating the peri urban areas in outbreak zones. Of the 34 active QFF outbreaks within Sunraysia nearly half are

on commercial fruit growing properties. This is a situation that the industry has not been confronted with previously, and unless a concerted effort is made and success achieved, then the future of the Pest Free Area is in jeopardy in the longer term. The Board will continue to work with government at both a State and Federal level to protect Murray Valley growers from one of the industries problem pests.

With the larger crop forecast early in the year, the Board with the approval of growers ramped up its promotions of all citrus categories. A great deal of effort has gone into promotions, notwithstanding that it is difficult to compete with other alternatives in the market place. The competition for the consumer dollar is fierce and the structure of the retailing environment in Australia can be another impediment to increased sales. The Board will continue to invest in promotions and the education of consumers about the benefits of citrus and additional ways to use citrus.

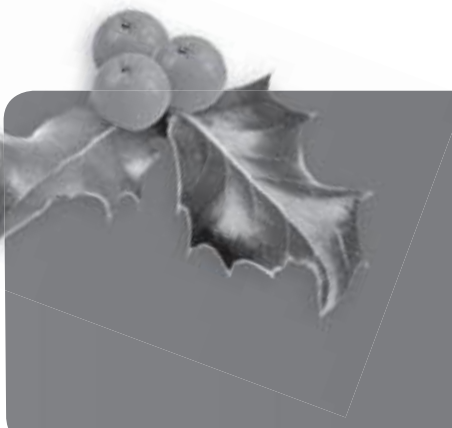
There is a trend developing to overplant new varieties to the point where the economic returns are less than the cost of production. We have seen a number of newer varieties boom in terms of hectares planted and now that these are producing the market for them has become

oversupplied. We urge growers to be very careful in the planning stage when looking at new varieties. Growers need to ensure that they have checked all available sources of information prior to ordering trees.

The staff and the Board have continued to work hard in the interests of all growers. I extend my appreciation to Mary Cannard our Industry Development officer, Tony Bothroyd our Field officer, Deb Scott in administration, Sue Chapman our accountant, Marian Tobin our executive support and Jill Purich in administration, for all their endeavours throughout the year. We are sorry to be losing Marian who has retired after many years of great service to the Board. Similarly, we wish Jill all the best as she moves on to a full time role elsewhere. Our Board has seen several new directors through the course of the year and I thank all of our Directors for their input and passion for the citrus industry.

As the end of the year draws closer we hope that growers are able to take some time out with family and friends. We extend our best wishes to you all and trust that 2012 will prove to be a much better year for citrus growers. Merry Christmas and a Happy and prosperous New Year.

Hugh Flett
CEO, MVCB



The Board, CEO and staff of the
growers for an enjoyable and safe
we can all look forward to

MVCB and Nangiloc/Colignan Primary School Partnership Expands

Mr Eric Wright, Principal, Nangiloc/Colignan Primary School has advised of the recent involvement of Ouyen Secondary College in expanding the MVCB's locally based citrus promotion program.



Nangiloc/Colignan Primary School students taking part in their third *Journey of the Orange* experience in August 2010.

"Ouyen Secondary College year 10 students decided to focus on citrus for an economics study. They had heard about the current plight of citrus growers and wanted to assist in some small way.

Initially, the Secondary College contacted the MVCB, which then directed them to us. As a result, four Ouyen students and a staff member visited our school and our children briefed them on our Enterprise Learning Project.

We demonstrated our kitchen and juicer and they wanted one then and there. We showed them how to make Slurpee, gave them a taste and they wanted more.

Overall, the Ouyen students left very excited. They made a decision to assist Tony Bothroyd with citrus promotion at the Tour of the Murray River bike race in Ouyen on their Vanilla Slice Triumph day. There they provided Slurpee, citrus juice, dried oranges and orange-based cakes.

Chairman's Report *Cont'd...*

The Board extends thanks to Hugh Flett (CEO) and all of the MVCB staff for their efforts over the past year in delivering services to the growers of the Murray Valley. A special thank you to Marian Tobin who has retired once again, for the service she has given the Board over the years. Marian has been an integral part of the team and we have appreciated her generosity in offering her home for special Board functions.

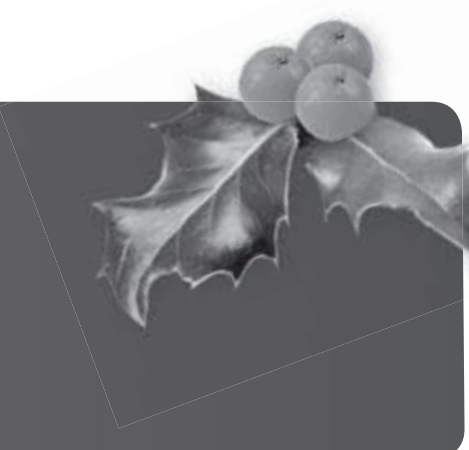
Although the Board has had a number of changes throughout the year we have continued, along with Sunraysia and Mid-Murray Growers, to represent the interests of citrus growers in the Murray Valley. My thanks are extended to all Board Members for their support and efforts over the past year.

I wish all growers, staff and Board members a very safe Merry Christmas and New Year.

Jan Denham
Chairman, MVCB

The Ouyen students want us to continue to supply them with fruit as they intend to provide Slurpee all year round. Clearly, they were impressed by how organised and confident our children were. We aim to continue to assist Ouyen in any way we can."

MVCB extend best wishes to all a safe Christmas. Our hope is that to a rewarding New Year.





Mary Cannard's

Recently, I was given the opportunity to travel to the Punjab region in Pakistan to participate in an AusAid funded citrus project, headed-up by Dr Tahir Kurshid, Senior Research Scientist at the NSW Department of Primary Industries.

The trip was wholly funded by the AusAid project, which aims to help develop the citrus industry in Pakistan as well as to aid the Australian citrus industry by providing heat tolerant citrus germplasm.

My role was to present information on the structure and operations of the Murray Valley Citrus Board, the part Citigroups play in the transfer of research into the field and my duties as a Citrus Industry Development Officer. One of our objectives was to encourage growers to form a grower organisation to reduce reliance on government, and to direct research so that it meets industry needs.

Pakistan is one of the top ten citrus producing countries in the world and is the largest producer of Kinnow mandarins. 95% of the total Kinnow produced all over the world is grown in Pakistan. Kinnow, from California, dominates production and together with Feutrell, from Australia, represents 80% of citrus grown in Pakistan. Blood oranges, grapefruit and some Navels are also grown. Sargodha is the main citrus producing district within the Punjab province, with about 23% of Pakistan's total citrus plantings, producing around 650,000 metric tons of fruit each year.

We arrived in Lahore and my initial impression was of a large, leafy, modern city. Known as the garden city it is well named, with many large parks and gardens that I would love to visit. The Moguls ruled Pakistan for a couple of hundred years until the late 1700's; it was then ruled by the Sikhs until the mid 1800's and then by the British, until Pakistan obtained its independence in 1947. Bangladesh, or East Pakistan as it was known, gained its independence from Pakistan in 1971. Therefore, travelling through the city I saw a fantastic mixture of ancient, old colonial and modern buildings of varying architectural styles.



This spread left-right:
 1. Researchers, Extension Staff, Growers and Project Collaborators 2. Farmers Field School
 3. Farmers Field School Participants

Visit To Pakistan

It was interesting to note that modern and older cars shared the roads with a plethora of motorbikes, bicycles, motorised rickshaws, gloriously decorated trucks and buses and the occasional donkey cart. At first glance, the traffic appeared to be muddled chaos, but after some time you realise that all these modes of transport are able to patiently share the road with very few incidents and lots of horn blowing, which is more about letting the other drivers know you're coming through rather than road rage. Driving in your lane only seems mandatory on the highways - everywhere else it seems like everyone weaves in and out or jockeys for the best positions - even manoeuvring between cars coming the other way!

We stayed in Lahore overnight and travelled to Faisalabad early the next morning (a two hour drive on modern freeways peppered with Toll booths). (Abad means a populous

place or a place where many people live, so lots of towns and cities have the - abad ending). The trip was fascinating, going past villages and rice fields. I also saw wheat, cotton, sugarcane, bamboo plantations and everywhere we went there were Eucalypt trees planted around paddocks and on the sides of the roads. These were imported from Australia due to their high transpiration rates and are used to keep the water table down to an acceptable level. Carts pulled by donkeys became very prevalent as we left the city behind. We were sometimes driven standing up in a cart in what seemed to me a great feat of balance.

The buildings in the villages were all made of small locally made bricks with many of the walls rendered in mud to keep them cool in summer. Summer temperatures are quite high with most days reaching between 40 and 50°C. Water buffalo were everywhere (including on the streets of

the smaller towns). The milk of water buffalo is preferred over normal cow's milk as it has a higher fat content. Village walls were covered in cowpats - they dry them out to use as fuel for fires later on. There is a great divide between rich and poor - we passed a rubbish dump with a few people obviously living and scavenging within the dump.

We met with officials from the project: researchers, extension staff and citrus growers at the Faisalabad University for a full day workshop. My job was to give a presentation on the Murray Valley Citrus Board and its functions and operations, as well as how Cittgroups are run to transfer new technology to the farms. They are trying to encourage growers to be more self-sufficient and to not rely on government funding to build the industry. The growers

Mary Cannard's Visit To Pakistan *Cont'd from page 9...*



don't seem very keen on paying a levy, but are keen to start a grower organisation. They are also trying to encourage more collaboration between the growers and researchers. We then participated in a very lively group discussion on how they could form a growers' group.

The next day we visited the citrus research centre in Sargodha. It was a two hour drive out into the country where we came to a small town bustling with water buffalo, goats, motorbikes, cars, rickshaws, donkeys, carts and people. We met with the citrus researchers and caught up with the work they were doing. (Some breeding work for seedless fruit, irrigation monitoring etc) Flood irrigation is usual, but some trials of a pressurised system have been set up under this project using under tree sprinklers and drip.

Due to electricity load shedding, a diesel pump has been installed to run the pressurised system. (Water availability can be a bit hit or miss.) Good quality river water is usually available, but when it is

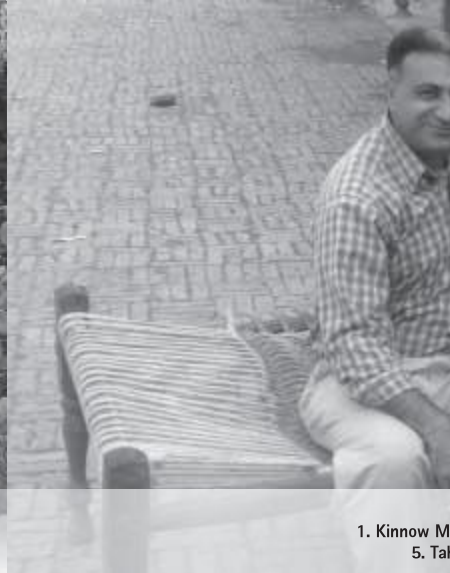
not, they use aquifers that have an EC of 1500, thus creating soil damage due to excess salts. Water costs the equivalent of \$3/Ha per year.

I found the people to be very respectful, warm and welcoming and very generous with their time and information. For lunch we were taken to a nearby restaurant, which served amazing food. I think I surprised everyone with my liking for their hot, spicy food. After lunch we returned to the research centre, and while Tahir went to check out some of the work he had organised on his last visit, I went to smoke a hookah with the centre director, causing much hilarity amongst the staff as Pakistani women only smoke within the confines of their homes.

We also attended a farmer field school - similar to our Cittgroups. They have 25 farmers who are registered to attend fortnightly and all do so religiously - farmers not registered are also allowed to attend. The group of farmers I saw seem to have the same demographic as we do, ie the

majority were over 50. They use a system where farmers teach themselves and are only facilitated by an extension officer. As they have never really been educated in farming they are learning to identify insect pests, nutritional disorders, disease etc. They are also learning canopy management - no pruning has ever been done in the past and there is resistance to instigate a pruning regime.

The school was held on a grower's property where canopy management and high-density trials are conducted. (In the field they observed damaged leaves, branches and fruit in groups of five - each group having a spokesman.) Items were brought back and attached to butcher's paper, with comments on what they thought the problems were. The spokesmen then took turns in describing what the identified problems were and how to manage them. This led to much discussion in the group and seemed to get them thinking on their own, making it easier to remember what they should be doing.



This spread clockwise from top left:
 1. Kinnow Mandarin. 2. Flood Irrigation. 3. Garden of Eden. 4. Decorated Truck.
 5. Tahir and Mary. 6. Mary smoking a hookah. 7. Examining the Pruning.

They included us in the discussions and were very interested to hear how we manage nutrition, pests etc. They are extremely grateful to have visiting 'experts' (I use the term very loosely) from Australia to share our knowledge and experience. Again, I was asked to talk about our grower organisation and how it operates, and from what I could understand they are keen to get started in this direction. While English is the national language, most of the growers are more fluent in Urdu.

The farmer's 25 Ha property we visited was quite lovely. Besides citrus, he has planted dates, plums, apricots, almonds, mangoes and pomegranates. He also has many types of flowering plants - a real Garden of Eden. He also farms fish, using a large lake with an island in the middle. He grows fan palms as well, to sell as advanced plants. Again, I caused much hilarity when I took him up on the offer of rowing me around the lake - not really sure why that was.

The farmer introduced me to his wife (only the second woman I spoke to while I was

there, besides hotel staff) and she insisted on having her photo taken with me. She also showed me around her very modern house (compared to the local village) with great tiling and exquisitely carved wooden furniture.

Speaking of women - not many wear the burka or any covering on the hair at all, and many are dressed in western clothing. Most people took great pains to tell me that their country is safe and it is only in the northwest province where there is trouble. I would have to agree from what I've seen and heard. Most Pakistanis are moderate, peace loving Muslims who were very respectful, warm, kind and generous.

Security is very tight and I felt safe during the whole trip. Cars are searched for bombs before they enter the hotel grounds, which includes a search underneath the car with mirrors and a search of the engine bay. Before entering the hotels and the university we had to go through a metal detector and our baggage was x-rayed as well. The Australian High Commission provided a

bullet-proof car and driver for us to move around. By the end of the trip I certainly had the feeling that security was only there to make people, ie westerners, feel safe after the bad press the whole of Pakistan receives.

All in all, I enjoyed a great experience and I'm thinking of going back as a tourist to visit some of the ancient parts of the city and the fabulous gardens we drove past. My thanks go to AusAid and Tahir Khurshid for including me in the project.

Mary Cannard
 IDO, MVCB



Mary and Kristi Goldup serving samples.

Taste of Melbourne

The *Taste of Melbourne* (Melbourne's ultimate tasting menu) was held in the Royal Exhibition Building, Carlton on 15 - 18 September, 2011.

It was billed as the official *Taste of Melbourne* menu of signature dishes presented by a selection of the city's finest restaurants. It brought together an impressive line-up of premium food and drink producers for a comprehensive 'foodie' experience under one roof.

"See Melbourne's best chefs in the Australian Gourmet Traveller Taste Kitchen, enjoy an intimate Q and A with your favourite chef at the Australian Gourmet Traveller Chef's Table or indulge in fine wines at the Gourmet Traveller Wine Theatre. Browse the exhibition stalls of the Taste and Artisan Producers' Market and sample fine food and drink

before taking it home to create your own gourmet experience." [Taste of Melbourne publicity brochure]

The MVCB was listed in the Taste Producers Directory as Stand 72.

The MVCB continues to drive a targeted and diverse promotional campaign that is drawing a growing amount of commendation from growers. It is seen as a constructive attempt to combat a situation where, despite having a large, good-quality crop, citrus growers are facing a season of hard work possibly ending in financial loss.

The industry has had to face the negative impact of a high Australian dollar that makes it difficult to export, a flooded local market that has depressed prices and significant extra costs due to such factors as fruit fly treatment and much higher quarantine inspection fees.

Given the format of the *Taste of Melbourne* promotion, the MVCB was in good company with a demonstration stand that was well located and compact. The visual presentation was appropriate and colourful with a concentration on the varieties of fruit and juices in season.

My first impressions of the promotion were very positive. Vast crowds were in attendance and the pace throughout the historical Exhibition Building was organised but hectic. Its architectural



urne Promotion

significance was obvious: an ideal location for a venture of this type to promote much of the best of Victoria's produce.

Of real interest was the fact that the MCVB had the only fresh food stand at the venue. This was a noticeable reason why there was such a high level of consumer interest over the four-day period. Tony Bothroyd, Field Officer, MCVB stated that the Thursday evening session was frenetic. "Crowds consistently gathered up to ten deep in front of the stall, and we distributed as much sampling on the night as we did at the full day demonstration at Hanging Rock in February."

Mary Cannard, Industry Development Officer said that the involvement of the MCVB was a response to an inquiry. "In many ways we came into this promotion

blindfolded, but the response has been fantastic. Every session was jam-packed.

The crowd could be described as up-market and the suppliers at the top end of the market chain. All have a real wish to try new things. Every citrus variety has been a hit. Overall, I believe it was a great promotion for citrus. It was also an extremely busy time for Tony and I, and we were amazed at how many people were not aware of the colourful varieties of citrus such as Ruby grapefruit, Blood oranges and the new pink fleshed Cara Cara Navel orange. It was great to get the message out that citrus is more than just ordinary, everyday oranges –there are now some very 'sexy' varieties on offer.

It was also an appropriate time to promote citrus as so many varieties were in season.

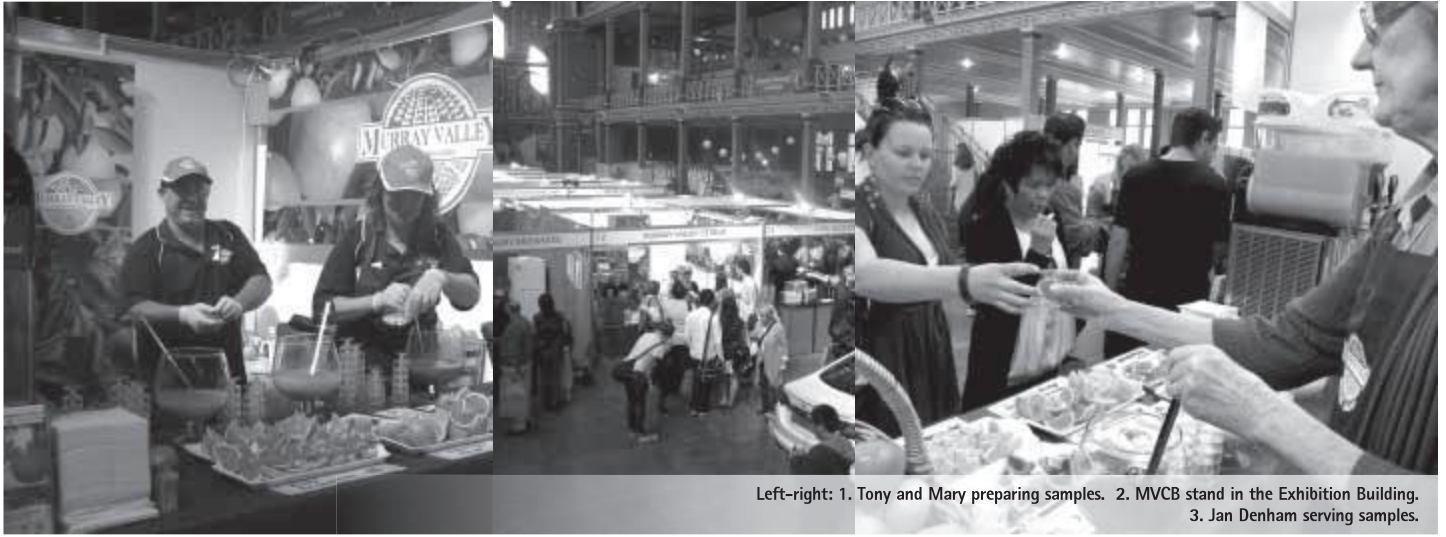
Blood orange, both the juice and the fruit was the biggest hit. Many consumers knew the variety from travelling through Europe, but were surprised to find it being grown in Australia. There was a high demand to know where the juice or the fruit could be purchased.

Surprisingly, Ruby grapefruit was also very popular, perhaps because of the demographic of those visiting the event – ie 'foodies' looking for something new and different to serve at their dinner parties: the whole Masterchef phenomenon at work.

There were also a lot of questions regarding the seasonality of Australian citrus. Luckily, we had a pamphlet setting out when the different varieties were available,

Cont'd page 10...

Taste of Melbourne Promotion *Cont'd from page 9...*



Left-right: 1. Tony and Mary preparing samples. 2. MVCB stand in the Exhibition Building. 3. Jan Denham serving samples.

establishing that Australian citrus is available all year round.

Importantly, there were many clear comments indicating that people were very keen to only buy Australian produce.

Ms Jan Denham, Chairman, MVCB reinforced the observation that it was the best time to become involved with consumer promotion as there were so many citrus varieties available.

"Many were keen to know the variety origins especially Tangelos and some who looked at the Blood oranges said *we have had those before, but thought they were off.*

The Mildura Fruit Company and EJT supplied some 32 cartons of fruit and close to 300 litre of orange juice embracing all varieties. From the very positive feedback, their generosity has been well rewarded and we acknowledge their valued contribution with appreciation."

A great deal of planning goes into a promotion of this type and it has to be done professionally to compete in such a high profile environment. In this regard, the MVCB performed well. The overall produce on offer was of the highest quality. A large variety of small goods, chocolates, wines, oils, vinegar, meats, fine dressings, cider, salt, aquaculture, beers, coffee, cheeses, ice creams and honey etc was freely available.

Throughout the time I was in attendance, I approached a number of the constant stream of consumers who took advantage of the citrus tastings on offer.

Reactions such as fantastic, beautiful and amazing were forthcoming. Blood orange

juice again added to its already extensive fan club.

Already, some positive outcomes have come from the venture. Direct enquiries have been made by providers to restaurants and up-market delicatessens regarding where to source many of the citrus varieties on display. These enquiries are being treated seriously. However, three observations are worthy of further consideration:

- Much remains to be done by the industry in informing the general public about the desirable and competitive qualities of citrus products. This includes those who profess to be genuinely interested in food.

Kristi Goldup made some interesting comments in this regard. "As a younger grower, this is the first time I have volunteered to assist in a MVCB promotion. I am amazed at what is involved. To be asked questions and be recognised as a grower makes it all worthwhile and highlights the importance of growers getting the feel and reaction of direct consumer contact.

After tasting some orange juice one consumer stated that he could not believe it was 100% juice. It was so sweet and tasteful that he expected that additives had been utilised. Growers need this direct contact with consumers. We are the first and essential part of the food chain and I really felt like a citrus industry promoter and enjoyed the satisfaction derived from this."

- In promotional events of this magnitude, more staff are needed in operating the promotional stalls. Tony Bothroyd and Mary Cannard were assisted for some

sessions by Kristi Goldup, Tony Fay and Jan Denham, but with crowds lining-up ten to twelve deep waiting to sample and discuss the products, staff get little or no respite from the constant pressure.

People at food events like this do want to know, and their interest is a guarantee that they will spread the word, particularly if they are impressed by the product and the enthusiasm and knowledge of the presenters.

- The reality is that promotions of this type do work. They get the citrus message across to a large number of more secure, higher income consumers in a focussed and receptive environment. One stall literally feeds off the other.

The MVCB and its staff are to be congratulated on another very successful venture mounted in the interests of growers.

At the time of writing, the next promotion is at the Spring Harvest Picnic at Werribee Park on November 27, followed by the Harvest Picnic at Hanging Rock on February 26, 2012.

I look forward to these promotions once again.

E. Warhurst
Compiler

Your Rural Financial Counselling Service – A Comprehensive Update

Who are we? Our correct title is Rural Financial Counselling Service Victoria – Murray Mallee. We are a local financial counselling service operating in North West Victoria, from Tresco to the South Australian border and from Charlton in the south across to Warracknabeal.

We have an office in Mildura with five experienced counsellors servicing the irrigated areas including Robinvale. We also have one counsellor operating from our Swan Hill office, looking after Tresco, Swan Hill, Nyah and one counsellor down in Woomelang looking after the dry land farmers.

We are governed by a board of local people drawn from a variety of professions. **We are totally independent, impartial, free and confidential.**

Who we are not!

We are not to be confused with Rural Finance Corporation, a State Government owned specialist provider of finance to the rural sector, based in Bendigo. The title Rural Financial Counsellor can often be shortened and we quickly become Rural Finance.

We are not Centrelink. Whilst we have a close working relationship with the staff of Centrelink, we are not part of Centrelink. Many of the programs administered by Centrelink for farmers require us to be conversant with the complex details of those programs.

We are not financial planners. Again the words financial counselling can easily be misconstrued as financial planners. Financial planners can give advice on financial products and financial matters and are licensed to do so. Our counsellors operate on a "no advice" model and strictly adhere to this.

Assistance

What we do is help local farmers to:

- Understand their current financial position and options for their farming future
- Prepare cash flow budgets for Banks, lenders, etc
- Communicate and/or negotiate with lenders and creditors including Banks, municipal councils and water authorities
- Create a plan for farm succession and adjustment
- Refer to appropriate support services
- Provide information and help with assessing current government assistance

- Make application for Flood Grants and Flood Loans

We are prepared to meet with you on farm or in our Mildura or Swan Hill office. There is very little **FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE** available now.

Flood Grants

A Clean-up and Restoration Grant from the Victorian Government of up to \$25,000 is now available for the clean-up, removal of debris and business restoration for Primary Producers who have suffered direct physical damage as a result of the February 2011 flood events in the Mildura Rural City Council, Swan Hill Rural City Council and the Buloke Shire.

The Grant is a discretionary payment and although not income tested is based on the needs of the applicant, which must be demonstrated through an assessment process. There was a similar grant of \$15,000 in NSW but this grant expired on 31 August.

Flood Loans

There is a \$200,000 low interest loan that farmers can apply for if they have suffered losses as a result of direct damage to their property, crops, pasture, stock, fencing, plant and equipment, and who are assessed to be in need of concessional financial assistance.

Loans will attract interest at 2.8% per annum for an initial period not exceeding five years. Loans for working capital will only attract the concessional interest rate for a period of twelve months. Adequate security will be required for any lending. The Clean-up and Restoration Grant and the Flood Damage Assistance Loans are administered by Rural Finance.

Farmers will need to demonstrate that the majority of their time and capital are devoted to the farming operation and in normal circumstances the major portion of their income is derived from farming.

Climate Change Adjustment Program (CCAP) and or Transitional Income Support (TIS)

Transitional Income Support is an income support payment paid to farmers in serious financial difficulty, to adapt to changing circumstances, including climate change. To be eligible for this payment farmers must meet income and assets tests. Current rate for support payment is \$878.80 per fortnight for couples.

There is also a CCAP Advice and Training Grant of up to \$5,500 (GST included) to assist farmers and their partners to obtain professional advice and training to adjust and adapt to the impacts of climate change.

The CCAP/TIS program is administered by Centrelink. Applicants will need to provide proof of identity and details of bank accounts, financial statements and tax returns.

Farmers are urged not to 'self assess' their own circumstances but are encouraged to call on our Rural Financial Counsellors who are familiar with assistance measures to discuss their particular circumstances and criteria.

This can be done by calling our Mildura office on 5022 0799 or Swan Hill office on 5032 2562 or contact:

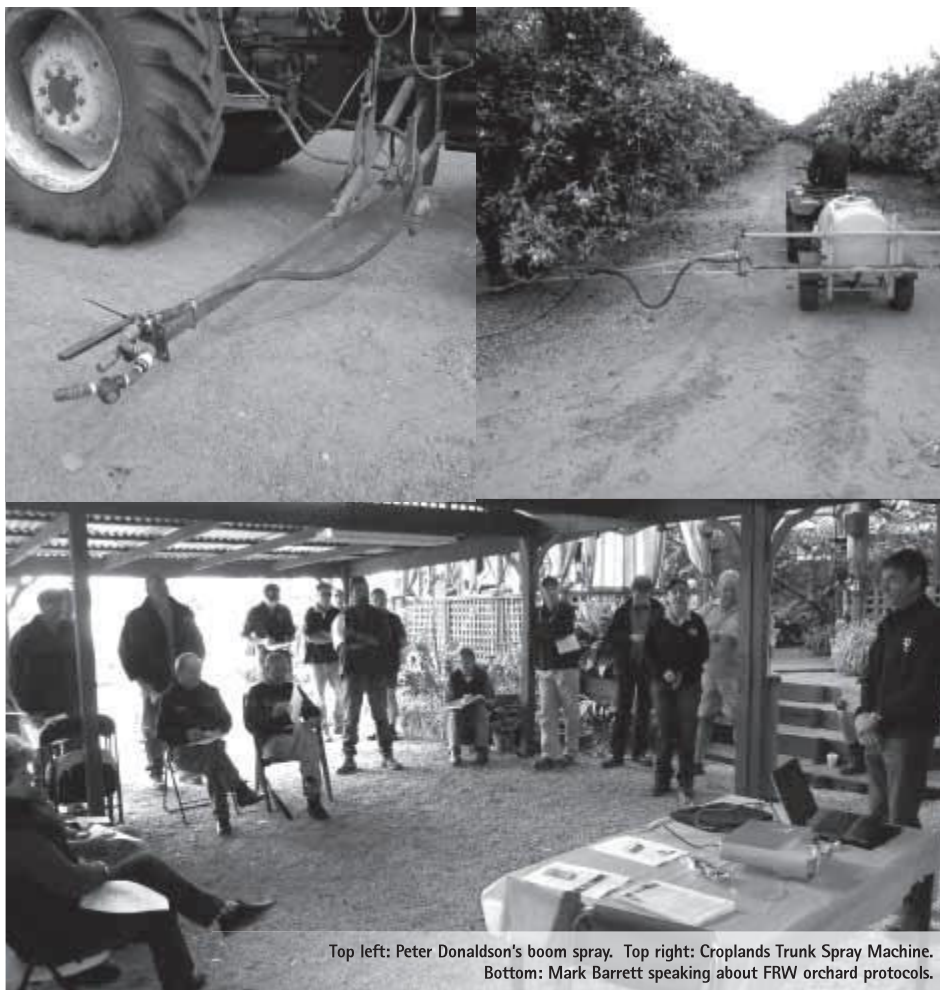
Belinda Piccirillo: 0488 304 204
Stephanie Ferdelja: 0400 411 411
George Stone: 0400 173 521
David Talbot: 0427 164 489
Marcus Heley: 0418 772 241
Teresa O'Brien: 0409 188 724
John Byrne: 0428 238 683

Don Seward

Senior Rural Financial Counsellor
Coordinator
RFCS Victoria – Murray Mallee.
Supported by the Australian Government and Victorian Government.

Fuller's Rose Weevil Orchard Protocols for Korea, China and Thailand

A recent Cittgroup and BBQ breakfast was held on the Bertalli property, encouraging growers to apply orchard protocols and trunk band sprays for Fuller's Rose Weevil (FRW) to enable their fruit to be exported to China, Korea and Thailand.



Top left: Peter Donaldson's boom spray. Top right: Croplands Trunk Spray Machine. Bottom: Mark Barrett speaking about FRW orchard protocols.

FRW is a quarantine pest of concern to all three of these markets. Growers need to be aware that specific orchard protocols must be carried out to ensure their fruit can be exported to these markets. Growers need to have a monthly monitoring system, starting in spring for the pests of quarantine concern. This can be done by the grower or by a contract pest scout. Steven Falivene (NSW DPI) has developed an Asian Export Pest Monitoring Guide that will provide all the information needed to conduct pest monitoring. Growers can contact the MVCB to obtain a copy of this guide.

An official inspection of the block will need to be undertaken in March/April by an AQIS registered crop inspector. If FRW is detected in a citrus block during this inspection, there will need to be trunk band sprays applied in December or else it will be suspended from supplying fruit to Korea, Thailand or China.

The key message to growers is that they must begin orchard controls for Fuller's Rose Weevil in December to enable blocks to be registered for export and eliminate FRW eggs under fruit calyxes

China, Korea and Thailand FRW Orchard Protocol key points:

- Monthly pest monitoring from late Spring until harvest for the quarantine pests of concern
- Skirt trees at minimum 300mm above ground level
- No branches to touch the ground for entire season
- Regular weed management to ensure FRW do not reach the tree canopy
- Trunk band spraying is required, starting middle to late December if FRW is detected. Spray trunks 3 times, at 6 weekly intervals with either Matador, Karate or Trojan
- Spray bands must be at least 300mm wide and encircle the whole trunk
- Block inspection by an AQIS registered crop inspector

Trunk band spray equipment was on display at the Cittgroup and included an effective low cost, boom spray from Peter Donaldson at Palinyewah Producers. Peter's model was made from spare parts found around the farm plus some new purchased parts at a total cost of \$200. The boom is mounted in front of the driver's seat so Peter can better estimate when the boom reaches the trunk of a tree and when to press the spray button.

Mark Barrett (SARDI) demonstrated a double-armed, trunk spray machine developed by Croplands, costing around \$5000. This machine sprays both rows of trees and has tree detection technology that automatically sprays the trunk when driven down the row.

Nigel McWilliams from Interlink displayed a boom spray available from them for \$500, which is modeled on Peter Donaldson boom spray.

**For more information on this Cittgroup, please contact Mary Cannard.
Email: mary@mvcitrus.org.au**



Jeremy Giddings

Achieving Adequate Water Penetration?

A number of irrigators are commenting that they are having difficulty in achieving an acceptable level of water penetration. These responses are coming from irrigators who have a range of soil types, irrigating with both drip and full cover sprinklers.

Some situations have resulted in irrigators applying larger than normal irrigations (often 15-20hrs), while still not achieving adequate penetration (often only as little as 20cm) and a high level of runoff resulting.

The poor penetration is usually identified by those irrigators who have adopted some form of precise soil moisture monitoring such as EnviroSCAN, but can be identified by more basic monitoring tools as well as soil auguring.

There are various schools of thought as to why poor water penetration is occurring. There may be a range of reasons, however, the most common cause seems to be that upon wetting the soil is dispersing and not allowing adequate water penetration. The fact that an application of gypsum generally corrects this problem tends to confirm this (example shown).

The Murray River passing through Sunraysia has had very low levels of salinity in recent seasons (typically 110-150 EC units). While this is great news from a crop health viewpoint, it is well recognised that this water quality can create dispersion in soils which were once subjected to higher levels of salinity (which they were when the river was typically 300-500 EC, and sometimes greater). Rainfall (usually 20-50 EC) often has the same effect.

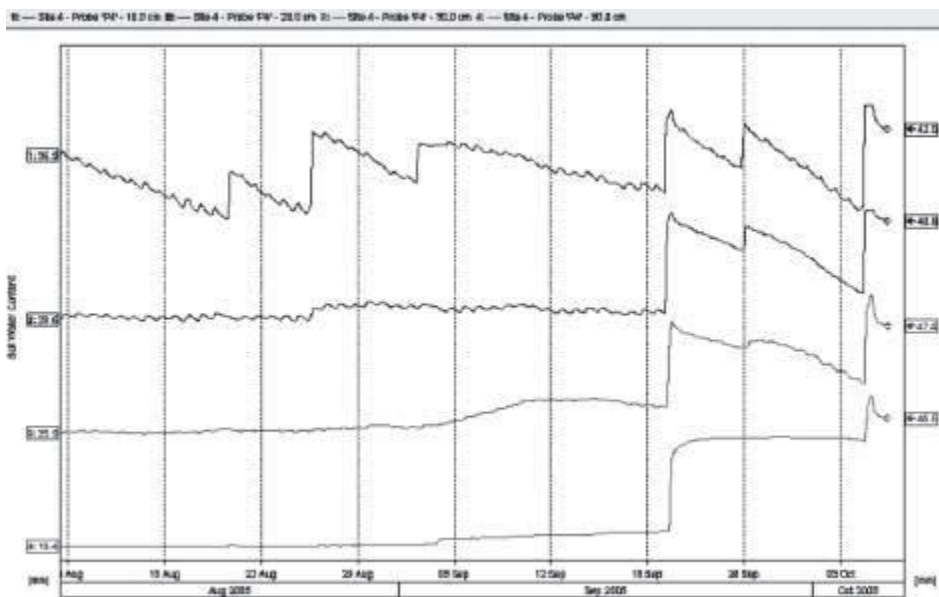
Fortunately, most irrigators have overcome this problem through the application of gypsum, which has become a more regular management practice on a range of soil types, including loams, where you would not expect dispersion to be a problem.

This is an issue that can take a few seasons to develop, as profiles become stripped of salt. Irrigators who fertigate regularly may not see this problem

as fertigation will raise the EC of the irrigation water. The problem has not been observed on the Darling River or into South Australia, where higher river salinities generally exist.

In summary, if it appears that your irrigation interval is not lasting like it used to, or excessive runoff is often occurring, dig a hole and determine if you are achieving adequate penetration. To determine if gypsum may help, you can conduct a simple dispersion test, or get an agronomist to carry one out. Simply applying additional hours of irrigation will not always correct the problem.

Jeremy Giddings
Irrigation Officer, Industry & Investment NSW, Primary Industries



Poor water penetration was occurring on this property. A gypsum application prior to the fourth irrigation in mid September immediately resulted in significantly greater water penetration in irrigations 4, 5 and 6. The four lines represent soil moisture readings from sensors located 10, 20, 30 and 50 cm below the surface.

A Promotion With a Difference



Left: AFL XMEN'S luncheon. Right: Denis Jewell, Julie Jewell, Mark Weightman and Lyn Gratton at the luncheon.

Mildura Magpies promote citrus at AFL XMEN's Brownlow luncheon.

The Mildura Magpies, a Sunraysia supporter group of the Collingwood Football Club, negotiated a partnership with the AFL XMEN (a group of ex-VFL and AFL players) and the MVCB, to provide packages for table decoration at their Brownlow Luncheon, which would profile local produce and assist in the promotion of the Mildura region. Co-ordinated by Ron O'Dwyer, a former Collingwood and Carlton player, the annual luncheon held at Hilton on the Park, Melbourne on 16 September 2011, provided an opportunity to meet past players and former Brownlow medallists.

Ms Julie Jewell who heads up the Mildura Magpies, is an outstanding promoter of Mildura and obviously a keen Collingwood supporter. Julie explains that an invitation was extended to the Mildura Magpies to attend this year's luncheon to start the festive season of 'Football Finals' in Melbourne.

"We felt it would be a great opportunity to personalise our growers story of hardship due to the floods and at the same time to highlight our wonderful citrus produce at such a prestigious event. The MVCB came on-board and supplied Afourer mandarins, Late Lane Navels, Tangelos, Blood oranges and peelers for the function. As a promotional exercise, the feedback has been very positive. Overall, it proved to be another effective means of highlighting our citrus industry."

The fruit was used as decoration at each table along with enough citrus peelers for each person attending.

Master of Ceremonies, Mark Doran (formerly of WIN TV, Mildura) did not understand how the peeler worked. "As a local Mildura representative, I was asked to come to the stage in front of the large gathering to do a demonstration. The exercise then developed into representatives from each table attempting to use the peeler. As a result, citrus became the talking point with many favourable comments about the produce and the peelers which were eagerly collected at the conclusion of the luncheon."

Subsequently, positive feedback has come from many different sources. One text message received from a female attendee, who asked if she could have some oranges for her students, stated that, "26 of my students now know how a good orange should taste and how to use your citrus peeler."

"As the Mildura Magpies, our appreciation is extended to the MVCB for the provision of the table centre displays for the AFL XMEN's luncheon," Julie Jewell said. "It was a very positive promotion for the district and for the citrus industry."

Clearly, Julie Jewell did a first rate job of promoting the MVCB and the produce it

supplied. Anne Nash, a Committee and promotions member, supports this statement. "The fruit was a major success and the tables looked great. The promotion of Mildura was absolutely amazing with at least 2 of the 31/2 hours of the luncheon dedicated to Mildura. The orange peelers received the most attention with Julie Jewell giving an amazing demonstration that encouraged the bulky, energetic footballers, ex-footballers and attending dignitaries to peel an orange. What a laugh, but we got some great coverage.

Thank you to the MVCB for your fantastic support. Mildura was certainly put on the map with four packages to auction including houseboat holidays, evenings at Stefano's restaurant and even a bottle of Penfolds Grange Hermitage. The proceeds from the auction will be used to assist disadvantaged youth from our region and link them into a program with the AFL XMEN's 'Be a Sport Program' and other initiatives to assist Mildura and our people," Anne concluded.

Obviously, this was a novel and highly appreciated promotion of citrus and Sunraysia.

Murray Valley Citrus Board Product Price List

Available through the Murray Valley Citrus Board office.

Item Name	Grower Price
PUBLICATIONS	
Citrus Disease and Disorders	\$30.00
Citrus Growing Manual	\$22.00
Drip Irrigation Book	\$10.00
Good Bug Book	\$44.50
CD The Good, the Bug and the Ugly	\$70.00
PRODUCTS	
Citrus Peelers - Complete	\$1.00
Cranston Gauge	\$48.00
Hand Lens	\$8.50
Citrus Sizing Rings (USA & Domestic measurements)	\$25.00
Phenolphthalein PH Indicator	\$50.00
NET BAG SALES	
Grapefruit 3 kg net bags - per 1000	\$220.00
Imperial 1.5 kg net bags - per 500	\$110.00
Navel 3 kg net bags - per 1000	\$220.00
Valencia 3 kg net bags - per 1000	\$220.00
MEETING ROOM FACILITIES	
Half day Board Room hire	\$55.00
Full day Board Room hire	\$110.00
Half day Projector Multimedia hire	\$110.00
Full day Projector Multimedia hire	\$220.00
Coffee Tea & Biscuits (per head) - Board Room hire	\$2.50
CITREP NEWSLETTER ADVERTISING	
<i>Black & White</i>	
1/9 PAGE Portrait (60 mm x 85 mm)	\$35.00
2/9 PAGE Landscape (125 mm x 85 mm)	\$70.00
2/9 PAGE Portrait (60 mm x 175 mm)	\$70.00
4/9 PAGE Portrait (125 mm x 175 mm)	\$140.00
1/3 PAGE Landscape (190 mm x 85 mm)	\$110.00
2/3 PAGE Landscape (190 mm x 175 mm)	\$200.00
FULL PAGE (190 mm x 265 mm)	\$275.00
<i>Colour</i>	
1/9 PAGE Portrait (60 mm x 85 mm)	\$80.00
2/9 PAGE Landscape (125 mm x 85 mm)	\$160.00
2/9 PAGE Portrait (60 mm x 175 mm)	\$160.00
4/9 PAGE Portrait (125 mm x 175 mm)	\$310.00
1/3 PAGE Landscape (190 mm x 85 mm)	\$240.00
2/3 PAGE Landscape (190 mm x 175 mm)	\$500.00
FULL PAGE (190 mm x 265 mm)	\$610.00
FLYER - 1 PAGE INSERT	\$300.00

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