



Vic DPI Consults With Growers Over Board Remaking

Board chair Jan Denham, CEO Hugh Flett and Industry Development Officer Mary Cannard accompanied representatives from Vic DPI last week to consult growers about the renewal of the MVCB for another four year term. Consultation meetings were conducted in Barham, Tooleybuc, Nangiloc, Irymple and Ellerslie. The number of growers who attended these meetings was very pleasing, with the opportunity to question both DPI staff and Board representatives about the case for renewing the Board for a further term. It was clear that many growers had concerns about how the important regional issues of concern to them would be addressed adequately without having a regional statutory Board in place.

The Board representatives explained some of the critical work that has been undertaken by the MVCB on behalf of growers, such as maintaining market access, biosecurity, pest incursions (QFF), on farm field trials, extension services, securing critical water for permanent plantings, maintenance of the Pest Free Area, crop forecasting and promotion of Murray Valley citrus categories. The Board articulated how the focus on these issues had saved Murray Valley growers approximately \$25.6M over the last four years representing a return on investment to growers of 1:9.

Vic DPI is seeking submissions from growers regarding the continuation of the Board which must be received by 18 March 2012. The MVCB urges all citrus growers in the Murray Valley to consider the importance of maintaining a regional Board to represent their interests. Growers will be asked to vote on the continuation of the MVCB in early to mid April.

Forrest Calls for Increased OJ Testing

The Nationals Federal Member for Mallee John Forrest has urged Parliament to support a Coalition push for increased testing of imported orange juice to protect Australian consumers for ingesting the fungicide carbendazim.

‘For some time now I have been very concerned that Biosecurity Australia and its policing agency, the Australian Quarantine Inspection Service, seem to be preoccupied with controlling the quality of our exports,’ Mr Forrest said. ‘However, given the risk

that carbendazim poses to human health, I would have thought that the government would have made this a priority and instructed AQIS to increase the percentage of imported orange juice concentrate that they test’.

Source: Media Release, National Federal Member for Mallee John Forrest

Preliminary Crop Forecast

Based on fruit density counts and preliminary fruit sizing data taken during January and February it is estimated that this season’s total Navel crop will be 78,332 tonnes. Last year’s actual Navel production totalled 89,148 tonnes based on levy returns.

Early Season Navels	18,208 tonnes
Mid Season Navels	21,476 tonnes
Late Season Navels	38,648 tonnes
Valencia*	31,500 tonnes
Afourer Mandarin	3,753 tonnes
Other Mandarins	7,298 tonnes
Tangelo	1,312 tonnes
Grapefruit*	4,352 tonnes

The Murray Valley crop forecast is produced by MVCB and is funded by grower levies and Horticulture Australia Limited. The final crop forecast will be available in April.

*Harvest still being carried out

Vietnam Import Permit Required

The Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) has been advised that an import permit is required for all plant and plant product imports into Vietnam. To avoid delays in the clearance of plant and plant product consignments exported from Australia, it is recommended that exporters obtain a copy of a valid import permit.

From 1 April 2012, an officially translated copy of the import permit or evidence in writing issued by the Vietnam National Plant Protection Organisation (NPPO) that an import permit is not required for the particular commodity, will be mandatory and must be presented to the DAFF Biosecurity inspector at the time of inspection.