

Murray Valley Citrus Board Newsletter



17 July 2012

BBQ Breakfast and Farm Walk

Many growers are already thinking about next season's crop load and the effect of winter yellows on flowering and fruiting. There is a likelihood of stressed trees bearing a heavy load of small fruit in the 2013/14 season. Therefore MVCB will be holding a Cirtgroup BBQ Breakfast on Wednesday 25th July, 2012, starting at 8:30am at Sam Cross's farm Silver City Highway, Curlwaa.

The Topics to be covered are:

- preliminary results from the on farm trials mulch trials
- crop regulation using flower manipulation/pruning
- winter yellows

All growers are urged to attend to minimise the risk of having a large crop of small fruit in the 2013/14 season.

Citrus Growers' Survey on Biological Control

The University of Sydney is undertaking a research project that is looking at the use of biological control agents and the perceptions of citrus growers towards them. The study is being conducted by Mahmuda Begum under the supervision of Dr Sarah Mansfield. The project involves interviews and questionnaire surveys with citrus growers. All aspects of the study, including results, will be strictly confidential. Data will be analysed in an aggregated form and individual participants will not be identifiable in any publications. This study will benefit citrus growers as they will receive better information about augmentative biological control.

Citrus growers are being asked to participate in an online survey which will take approximately 15 to 20 minutes to complete. To complete the survey please follow the link below:

<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/JCJGZYD>

If you have any questions or enquires please feel free to contact Mahmuda Begum by email at mbeg8932@uni.sydney.edu.au or by telephone on 0432 492 009.

Pakistan Parasitoid May save the Californian Citrus Industry

An alternative approach to controlling Asian Citrus Psyllid (ACP) in urban areas of Los Angeles has been to employ natural enemies of ACP, in particular, host-specific parasitoids from the Punjab of Pakistan that attack the nymphs of ACP. Parasitoids attacking ACP have been collected from this region on five different occasions and tested for safety in quarantine at the University of California, Riverside. Releases of more than 6,000 parasitoids have recently occurred at almost 40 different release sites in Los Angeles and it appears that from these initial efforts the parasitoid *Tamarixia Radiata* may have established in about 20% of the release sites and in one instance, it may have already moved about 100 meters on its own to nearby ACP infestations. While not a silver bullet solution, bio-control may be the best tool available to California to reduce ACP populations in heavily infested urban areas which in turn has the

potential to reduce migration pressure towards commercial production areas.

California is not the only region pursuing biocontrol of ACP with parasitoids that attack the nymphs. Some of the first biocontrol programs against ACP using *T. Radiata* were started in Reunion Island, Taiwan and China. Similarly, programs have been running in Florida since the 1990s. Interest in parasitoids, especially *T. Radiata*, has risen in Mexico which, in the absence of large-scale pesticide application programs, has invested in mass production and releases of natural enemies to help small farmers combat this pest. Proactive biocontrol efforts are also underway in parts of Central America such as Costa Rica and South America, for example Brazil. *Source:* <http://www.freshfruitportal.com/2012/07/13/>

Citrus Industry Advisory Committee Expressions of Interest
Horticulture Australia (HAL) in partnership with Citrus Australia Limited is inviting expressions of interest to fill three positions on the Citrus Industry Advisory Committee (IAC). The role of the Citrus IAC is to provide strategic advice to HAL on the investment of national citrus statutory R&D and marketing levies that are managed by HAL.

HAL is seeking to appoint appropriate skilled and passionate persons that can demonstrate the following competencies:

- Extensive industry experience - in production and marketing
- Strong commercial agribusiness acumen
- Export market access/export marketing
- Biosecurity and plant health
- Agricultural communication and extension
- National industry perspective

Applicants should forward a CV that addresses the above competencies and outlines all relevant experience to:

Expression of Interest – Citrus IAC

Horticulture Australia Limited,

Level 7, 179 Elizabeth Street, Sydney, NSW 2000 or apply@horticulture.comn.au Applications close 20 July 2012.

Board IT Problems

The Board has been experiencing ongoing IT problems over the last two weeks. We have been unable to send out the last two market reports by email. If you require a copy of the latest market report faxed to you, please ring the Board's office on 03 5051 0500. The MVCB website is currently inaccessible, apologies for any inconvenience.

Voting Meeting

The Board will not be holding a voting meeting on 24 July as previously advised. The voting meeting is being held over until the new Board is in place.