



MVCB Weekly News

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www.mvcitrus.org.au

Murray Valley Citrus Board

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New MVCB Chair meets with Citrus Australia Limited (CAL)

New MVCB Chair John Tesoriero and CEO Hugh Flett met recently with CAL Chair, Tanya Chapman and CEO, Judith Damiani. Mr Tesoriero is committed to working with CAL collaboratively in order to further the citrus industry in general and the Murray Valley specifically.

Amongst other issues, Mr Tesoriero confirmed that the MVCB will continue to provide services to all citrus producers within the Murray Valley region including CAL members, whilst Sunraysia Citrus Growers Inc will continue to represent grower's interests. He questioned the need for a separate CAL Committee in the Murray Valley emphasising that existing Murray Valley citrus organisations would be more than capable of providing feedback on strategic initiatives to CAL.

It's disappointing that irrespective of the current organisational arrangements in place, CAL is pushing ahead with the establishment of another committee which will be known as the Murray Valley Regional Advisory Committee.

The functions of this new Committee as outlined by CAL, are all functions that the MVCB and Sunraysia Citrus Growers are more than capable of providing and have been undertaking on behalf of growers for many years. These include:

- the provision of advice on regional priorities to ensure local issues are considered,
- providing input into local policy issues,
- prioritising and implementing industry development projects such as extension and industry information; and
- maintaining a local or regional focus on research and development priorities

MVCB will continue to support growers with our current research and technical agenda and in doing so will liaise with CAL to keep them informed of the immediate challenges as well as the pathways to further industry success.

New Board Determines Levy Collection Policy for 2012-13

At a recent MVCB meeting directors approved resolution 1409 concerning the collections policy for 2012-13. For the benefit of growers and packers this resolution is detailed as follows:

"Pursuant to clauses 16 or 17 of the Murray Valley Citrus Industry Development Order 2012 a charge is payable within 30 days after the end of the month of delivery of citrus fruit which has been sold to the receiver of the fruit."

Cittgroup Report - HLB Lessons Learned from Florida



Asian Citrus Psyllid

Dr Tim Spann, a Florida University researcher, spoke to Murray Valley growers last week on the progress of Huanglongbing (HLB) in Florida.

HLB, also known as citrus greening disease, is caused by a phloem limited bacterium and affects all citrus and a number of related species. To date no natural resistance has been identified among citrus varieties. The disease is spread by the insect vector, Asian citrus psyllid (ACP), which was introduced to Florida in 1998.

Diary Dates:

National Citrus
Conference: 21 to 23
October, Leeton
Soldiers Club, Leeton

International Citrus
Congress: 19 to 23
November, Valencia
Spain

HLB was first discovered in the Southern tip of Florida in 2005 and has since spread to all citrus producing counties in Florida. A psyllid control and tree eradication program was then instigated, but as the disease symptoms can remain latent for two years growers were fighting an uphill battle to remain profitable while removing diseased trees.

In 2006, Florida grower, Maury Boyd chose not to remove HLB affected trees and treat the disease symptoms and single handedly created a revolution within the Florida citrus industry. It became clear to Maury that the disease and ACP were not going to be eradicated from Florida and he had to take steps for his business to remain viable.

HLB blocks the vascular system of the plants so nutrients cannot be distributed throughout the plant and carbohydrates from the leaves cannot be distributed to the roots.



Maury developed a foliar and ground applied nutrient program that stimulates the trees to produce more vascular tissue which allows the infected citrus trees to remain in production much longer. Maury's program is not a silver bullet and does not cure the trees, but it does allow Florida growers to remain in business while researchers try to come up with tolerant and resistant varieties.

Tim urged growers in Australia to be vigilant and report any sightings of ACP or HLB as early detection increases the chance to eradicate the disease and the insect. His take home message was to put all your resources into eradicating ACP if it appears in Australia. The biggest mistake made by the Florida citrus industry was they did not execute control/eradication measures against ACP when it was originally detected in 1998.

Florida researchers now think that the disease was already in Florida when ACP arrived, possibly in back yard trees propagated from illegally imported citrus material. The disease was then able to spread to citrus orchards when the psyllid arrived.

It is possible we already have the disease in Australia in someone's back yard, and it's not spreading as we don't have the vector ACP.

A copy of Tim's presentation is available on our website www.mvcitrus.org.au.

Qfly Update

There were a number of Qfly detected in the Sunraysia Pest Free Area in the last week. The Board is supplying bait spray chemical to growers within its area.

Location	# Qfly	Action
Toolybuc	1	Qfly chemical supplied by the Board
Boundary Bend West	1	Qfly chemical supplied by the Board
Koondrook	1	Under Chemical Control
Barham	2	Under Chemical Control
Barham East	11	Under Chemical Control
Barham Nth East	22	Under Chemical Control

All growers within 1500m have been advised that bait sprays need to start being applied. It is now imperative that bait sprays are applied to ensure this first generation is controlled before they start to increase in numbers.