

Murray Valley Citrus Board Newsletter



3 July 2012

Message from the Chairman.

This is the final MVCB Weekly News from the term of the Board from 2008-12. Following the recent vote by growers there will be a new Board responding to the issues of the Murray Valley growers for the next four years.

The last four years have seen growers face many issues and the Board has at all times been reactive to these issues. The Board was at all times willing to work with all sectors of the citrus industry as well as other horticultural commodities. Sadly, a co-operative approach was not reciprocated by some sectors of the industry.

Now that growers have voted for the re-making of the Board it is hoped that this is respected by all sectors of the citrus industry and the next four years sees a co-operative approach to addressing the needs of the citrus industry.

The Board thanks growers and MVCB staff for their support over the past four years and we look forward to another progressive four years for growers in the Murray Valley.

Illegal citrus imports infected with canker

MORE than one-and-a-half tonnes of prohibited food has been seized in the latest operation conducted by officers from Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) Biosecurity.

Earlier this month biosecurity officers in Melbourne performed a targeted inspection on a consignment of packaged food from Thailand. The officers found 142 kilograms of kaffir lime leaves, 817kg of sticky rice cake wrapped in banana leaf and 615kg of frozen sator (a type of fragrant bean).

First assistant secretary for DAFF Quarantine Operations, Tim Chapman, said plant items such as these pose a risk to Australia's biosecurity. "Before such items can be brought into Australia, the importer must ensure that the goods meet Australia's import conditions," Mr Chapman said.

"Following testing of the seized items, DAFF plant pathologists identified citrus canker on the unlawfully imported kaffir lime leaves.

"Further investigations at the importer's premises confirmed a previous undeclared consignment of kaffir lime leaves. We have traced and recovered almost 15kg of this product from 23 retail outlets in Victoria. "While we did find some of the leaves to be infected with citrus canker the risk to Australian citrus producers is very low because the items were only sold through retail outlets for cooking. "Both importations are being investigated and if there is sufficient evidence they will be referred to the Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions for prosecution. Importers who fail to comply with Australia's Biosecurity laws face fines up to \$1.1 million and possible imprisonment. "Undeclared food, plant material and animal products from overseas could introduce pests and diseases into Australia, and have a serious impact on our valuable agriculture and tourism industries and unique environment. "Significant seizures such as these continue to demonstrate the excellent work our people are doing in helping to protect the health and safety of Australia's plant and animal industries."

Source: Stock and Land 1 July 2012

Citrus Industry Advisory Committee Expressions of Interest

Horticulture Australia (HAL) in partnership with Citrus Australia Limited, is inviting expressions of interest to fill 3 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.