



Smart Phone Use in Horticulture CITTgroup

The use of smart phones, tablet devices and social media is increasing across all industries and more and more applications are being invented for use in the agriculture and horticulture sector. By 2013 there will only be smart phones on the market, and while it may take a few more years for all phone users to have smart phones there is a real need for growers to make themselves aware of the new technology and how it can be used in horticultural businesses.

MVCB has engaged Steve Lorimer, Knowledge Broker from the Victorian DPI's Horticultural Industry Network, to run a session for growers to learn about the new technology and its use in horticulture.

This session will be held at the MVCB Boardroom on Wednesday, 6th June, 2012 starting at 3:00pm. Steve will be presenting information in an easy to understand format that does not require any pre-knowledge of smart phone and other tablet devices

Topics to be covered are:

- Introduction to Social Media – types and how they can be useful in horticulture.
- Introduction to Mobile Computing – types of operating systems, useful horticultural applications and mobile sites and cloud computing.

To register for this CITTgroup please ring the Board's office on (03) 5051 0504.

Sunraysia Projects Secure State Government Grants

Two Sunraysia citrus businesses have been given a funding boost to create jobs from the Victorian State Government Business Flood Recovery Fund.

Manna Farms, located in Nangiloc, will receive \$60,000 toward establishing a packing facility for bio-dynamic and organic citrus and avocados. Seven Fields received \$500,000 in funding which it will put towards expanding an existing table grape packing shed to incorporate new citrus packing and shipping equipment.

Source: Sunraysia Daily 5/5/2012.

Red Grapefruit Exported to Japan for the First Time

Australian Red Grapefruit is finally being exported to the lucrative Japanese market, with the first consignment shipped out of Fremantle in Western Australia this weekend. Ord River grower Lachlan Dobson says, 'this is basically a trial shipment to confirm the logistics of getting the fruit from Kununurra to Fremantle and then to Japan. This will be the first time Australian Red Grapefruit will be seen in Japan, so it's an introduction and hopefully we get some follow-up orders by the end of the season.'

This will hopefully pave the way for Grapefruit growers right across the country. Japan is the biggest importer of Red Grapefruit in the world and it's a real boost for the Australian industry to finally have some fruit in that market. For the citrus industry this is very significant as the domestic market in Australia is not strong for grapefruit and to have this window into the biggest market in the world is a really good launching pad.

Source: ABC Rural 4/5/12

Picking Training DVDs

In the last week MVCB has had quite a few enquiries regarding the 'Harvest the Rewards' training video for pickers. These videos have now been transferred to DVD and are available in four languages, English, Vietnamese, Punjabi and Turkish. Anyone requiring a copy of these DVDs please contact the Board's office on (03) 5051 0500.

Is Your HAL Citrus Export Licence Up-To-Date?

As the export season for oranges is approaching it is a good idea to check that your Horticulture Australia Citrus Export Licence is up to date. Your Licence should begin with the prefix HAL&..... An application for the 2012 Citrus Export Licence can be found at www.horticulture.com.au If you have any queries please call Ivor Thomas, Export Licensing Officer at Horticulture Australia, Ph: 02 82952331, mobile 0414136922, or email ivor.thomas@horticulture.com.au

Free Energy Audit for Victorian Citrus Property

Vic DPI has funding available to undertake a Level 2 Energy Audit on a Victorian citrus property in the next two months. The property must be in Victoria, grow citrus and have a packhouse with at least one coolroom. The Energy Audits will be done by a private company in accordance with AS/NZS 3598:2000 Energy Audits standards.

The property owner will receive a copy of the company's report which will identify energy usage levels, and prioritised options for energy and cost savings. The audit will consider heating/cooling, lighting, use of appliances, hot water, renewable energy opportunities, fittings, pumps, motors, vehicles etc. It will also identify opportunities for savings through behavioural change in the use of existing buildings and systems. DPI will pay for the initial audit and there may be options for ongoing monitoring. DPI will receive a copy of the report and wish to promote the findings and use the report to plan extension activities. The audit process requires the property owner to provide 24 months of electricity and energy bills, details of facility size (packhouse area, property acreage etc), metering arrangements, equipment specifications where possible, control systems, fabric, floor area, overview of energy using equipment, staff levels, etc. Please contact Mary Cannard on 0427 211890 to participate in this research.