



MVCB Weekly News

25 September, 2012

www.mvcitrus.org.au

**Murray
Valley
Citrus
Board**

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Qfly Update

All growers within 1500m of an outbreak epicentre 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.

Growers will be able to pick up their next allocation of Naturalure this week. Growers in the **Boundary Bend, Kenley, Goodnight, Tol Tol** outbreak areas will be able to collect their chemical on **Tuesday 25 September** from Russell Anderson's property, Murray Valley Highway, Boundary Bend.

Growers in the **Cabarita North, Buronga, Gol Gol and Dareton** outbreaks will be able to collect chemical on **Thursday 27 September** from the Board office, 58 Pine Avenue, Mildura any time after 9:00am. Individual growers have been sent a text message with the details of each meeting. Please ring Mary Cannard on 0427 211 890 or Tony Bothroyd on 0407 325 934.

The Board will be meeting this week with Victorian DPI staff to discuss the ongoing maintenance of the Sunraysia PFA. Further meetings will be scheduled in two weeks time.

Citrus Gall Wasp Information Session

Citrus Gall Wasp (CGW) is a pest that is slowly spreading through the Sunraysia district. Originally Holland's Lake was the only district affected by this pest, but it has now moved into orchards in Buronga, Gol Gol, Dareton and Coomealla.



The Board has funded two research projects to help Murray Valley growers combat this new pest. Specific parasitoid wasps were released over a number of years in a few orchards and now they have built up in numbers enough to be able to move parasitized galls into other orchards. Board staff will be undertaking the movement of galls this season to help spread the parasite to other infested orchards.

The second project is investigating the use of a number of more IPM friendly chemical options. This project has identified Horticultural Mineral Oil as a chemical that is able to control CGW without upsetting the delicate balance of natural enemies in the orchard.

The Board will be holding a CGW information session and BBQ breakfast on Wednesday 10 October starting at 8:30am. The workshop will be held at Shane Smyth's property at 442 Reserve Road East, Holland's Lake.

Entomologist, Jianhua Mo, will be presenting his findings on the chemical trials and life cycle data he has collected over the last two seasons.

Please register your intent to attend this workshop by ringing the Board's office on (03) 5051 0504.

Diary Dates:

Citrus Gall Wasp
Workshop:
Wednesday 10
October, Smyth's
Property, Coomealla

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

International Citrus
Congress: 19 to 23
November, Valencia
Spain

Madec Offering Free Chemical Users Course

Madec are offering growers free chemical users courses until the end of the year.

The full three day course provides the training required by many Quality Assurance Programs and allows growers to develop an awareness of their obligations to meet current legislation and accepted industry standards.

The dates for the full course are:

October - 9, 11, 16

November - 8, 13, 15

December - 6, 11, 13

The update/refresher course delivers in one day the most up to date training that targets the latest changes in chemicals and safety use issues and prepares users to correctly identify relevant issues both current and upcoming.

Riverland Irrigators Squeezed

Riverland irrigators are paying a hefty price yet again for their efficient use of water, this time in the form of skyrocketing electricity bills. The cost of pumping water to properties has jumped by more than 70 per cent in four years, according to analysis by the Central Irrigation Trust.

And while the carbon tax and other renewable energy schemes have played a role in pushing the trust's electricity bills from \$1.8 million to \$3.1 million since the 2010 financial year, network costs issued by ETSA account for more than half the impost, jumping from \$938,000 to \$1.7 million.

The trust's chief executive, Gavin McMahon, said the costs were worn directly by the region's irrigators, who were also facing increased bills on their farms.

He said Riverland irrigators were effectively paying for their water efficiency because pumping water through pipes used a lot of electricity. Many irrigators interstate still rely on open channels which utilise gravity.

"Everybody says get more efficient and use pumps and pipes," Mr McMahon said. "We've done all of that and then all of a sudden this starts to hit you. What is happening in a lot of places up river, they are actually stopping their moves to convert to pipes because this is unviable. The fact we are saving water has an added cost to it. The upstream growers haven't got this cost."

The rising electricity costs are a particular burden for the region's citrus growers, who are yet again struggling to make a profit this year despite the breaking of the drought.

Cooltong irrigator Jack Papageorgiou said spiralling electricity prices, combined with tough export conditions and an excess of fruit, were conspiring to make citrus growing in the region unsustainable.

There are about 500 citrus growers in the Riverland, second only to wine grape growers in terms of irrigator numbers in the region. Many of these farmers left their oranges on trees last year because citrus prices dropped so low they didn't cover the cost of picking.

Mr Papageorgiou said the cost of production was higher than the price growers could get on the market.

(Source: The Weekly Times September 24)