



MVCB Weekly News

18 December, 2012

www.mvcitrus.org.au

Murray Valley Citrus Board

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Citrus Inquiry Looms

THE Federal Coalition wants an inquiry into the Australian citrus industry.

Senator Colbeck said if the inquiry was formally approved, it would start taking public submissions early next year. He said the inquiry would look at all areas of the citrus industry - including governance, management and production.

Senator Colbeck said problems such as produce dumping and cheap imported concentrate had come to his attention when he was chairman of the Senate's food processing inquiry earlier in the year.

"A few issues popped up and there has been a lot of discussion about these in the media this year, and I think it's time we take a look," Senator Colbeck said. "It will be a constructive inquiry, aimed to look at the current issues and how they might be managed."

(Source The Weekly Times 12 December 2012)

If it is approved the inquiry will be subject to parliamentary privilege. This means that citrus industry stakeholders will be able express themselves without fear of legal action. There will also be an opportunity to provide confidential responses.

Proposed Amendments to Foreign Workers Bill

Proposed amendments to the Migration Bill (Reform of Employer Sanctions) will place growers under further pressure to ensure their employees are not working in Australia illegally.

The proposed changes will require growers to establish a contractual obligation with their labour hire company to ensure that foreign workers supplied through the labour company are permitted to work in Australia and to ensure foreign workers are treated ethically.

This would mean that responsibility would ultimately lie with the growers and not the hire company which employs the foreign labour.

Currently the labour hire company is responsible for checking their employees have valid working visas for Australia.

The link below sets out the proposed amendments <http://www.immi.gov.au/managing-australias-borders/compliance/info-employers/legislative-reforms-policy.htm>

Qfly Update

Detections of Qfly within the Board's defined area are still low as evidenced by the samples received from Vic DPI last week. The Board encourages growers in the Buronga outbreak to continue to use Naturalure supplied by the Board.

Area	# Qfly	Action
Buronga	1	Extends Outbreak
Buronga	Larvae	Extends Outbreak
Buronga	10	Extends Outbreak
Toolybuc Town	1	Extends Outbreak
Goodnight Nth	8	Extends Outbreak
Swan Hill	2	Extends Outbreak

It is very pleasing to note that Beverford South and Tooleybuc Qfly outbreaks have now been reinstated for the domestic markets. Growers in these areas may be affected by adjacent quarantine areas.

DPI Victoria will no longer be producing a monthly Fruit Fly Situation in Victoria. Instead

DPI Victoria will be updating the Fruit Fly Situation in Victoria on a weekly basis and will be available from the following link: <http://www.dpi.vic.gov.au/agriculture/pests-diseases-and-weeds/pest-insects/queensland-fruit-fly/aqueensland-fruit-fly-outbreak-information/viuc-fruit-fly-situation>

Other areas that are due for reinstatement by the end of December are, Beverford, Dareton North, Euston, Lake Boga, Speewa and Swan Hill North West.

Budgens First to Stock ‘Citrus Caviar’ In Market

Budgens, (a supermarket chain in the UK) has become the first retail brand in the UK to stock the ‘Finger lime’ fruit, also known as ‘citrus caviar’. The fruit will be available at the Budgens of Islington store in London, in time for Christmas, and the symbol group said it could be rolled out nationally in 2013 if it proves popular with customers.



Citrus caviar, which is native to Australia, has the shape and size of an adult finger and a bright skin, ranging from green, orange, yellow or red. The nickname stems from the fruit’s juicy pearl-like insides which can be beads of white, bright pink, lime green or yellow. The fruit can be eaten on its own, or added to drinks, and tastes especially good with Champagne.

Citrus caviar will be available in Budgens of Islington from December 13th, at £4.99 per 100g punnet.

(Source: NamNews - Thursday 13th December 2012)

Export Efficiency Powers Review

Minister Joe Ludwig has confirmed in a letter to Citrus Australia (CAL) the control of horticultural exports, enabled by the HMRDS Act, had been reviewed and was found in breach of the principles of national competition policy. Minister Ludwig noted that the citrus industry was the only industry to make significant use of the export efficiency powers.

Presently, these powers are used to ensure exports of citrus to the United States are made to a single importer, DNE World Fruit Sales, and that exports of oranges to China comply with Horticulture Australia Ltd’s Citrus to China marketing program.

Talks between Citrus Australia and Minister Ludwig to establish how industry would like to proceed have begun, says Citrus Australia Chief Executive Officer Judith Damiani. “He has presented two options following the review outcome. Basically, we are going to change, but we have to decide on a clean cut or a transition plan in place to move forward.”

Citrus Australia has received feedback from the key US export groups and will finalise its position at a Board meeting over 10 and 11 December. “We’ll make our decision and send that back to the Minister, as he wants to act on it immediately.” Judith added that, for the most part, exporters were looking for clarity on whether industry would continue to use a single importer DNE (contracted by HAL) or not so they could plan for the future.

(Source: Citrus Australia Website 8 December 2012)

Growers wishing to provide feedback to CAL on the two options are urged to ring their office on (03) 5023 6333.

Office Christmas Closure

The MVCB office will be closed from **5:00pm Friday 21st December 2012** and will re-open for business at **8.30am Monday 14th January 2013**. For any urgent enquires please telephone Mary Cannard on 0427 211 890 or Tony Bothroyd on 0407 325 934.

Season’s Greetings

The Board and staff wish all Murray Valley growers the very best for the Christmas season trusting that it will be a safe and happy one. As we enter a new year we all look forward to a more rewarding season for growers in 2013.