



# Special Edition Citrep

Issue #53 • June 2008

Newsletter of the Murray Valley Citrus Board



Back L-R: Mr. Keith Richards, Mr. Robert Farnsworth, Mr. Stuart Holland, Mr. Andrew (Mick) Hollingworth, Ms. Paula Gordon Front L-R: Mr. Colin Nankivell, Mr. Robert Mansell, Mr. John Tesoriero  
Inset L-R: Dr. Ken Bevington, Mr. David Hunt-Sharman

## Farewell to the Board

This edition of Citrep recognizes the contribution of the current Murray Valley Citrus Board that has served for the past six years.



Robert Mansell

## Chairman's Final Report

### Great News!

The Greater Sunraysia Pest Free Area (from Barham to Lake Culleraine) has now officially achieved twelve months without a single fruit fly detection. This should enable us to negotiate Area Freedom status with Japan, Korea, Taiwan and eventually China, in the near future. It means not having to store the fruit at 1°C at Shepparton for 16 days. Therefore, we should be on the same footing as South Australia, which will help us with other valuable markets.

The term of this Board finishes on 30 June, with three of the nine Board members continuing for a further four years. I would like to thank and congratulate the Board members and staff for their support and the way in which they have performed as a team in addressing all the issues as they arose, always with the best interests of growers and the industry at heart. The MVCB has 'kicked many important goals' for the Murray Valley during its term of office.

The Board has had a good working relationship with other Citrus Boards and grower organisations including other commodity groups. These relationships help to give us credibility when dealing with governments. The MVCB is seen as a leader in horticulture (the Murray Valley is the largest exporting region for citrus in Australia), and provides good and timely investment in research.

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## Chairman's Farewell Report

Cont'd...

I will not be continuing as a Board member, so I would like to take this opportunity to wish the new Board and staff my very best wishes for the future. I would like to thank Eddie and Nancye Warhurst for their efforts in making the Citrep a very readable publication and for their patience in encouraging me (sometimes at the last minute) to present my reports.

Here's hoping for rain in the catchments. (40 days and 40 nights).

**Robert Mansell** Chairman,  
MVCB



John Tesoriero

## Chief Executive's Report

A valuable opportunity presented itself at short notice in April for me to join a trade delegation to Japan, Hong Kong, Korea and China with the Federal Agriculture Minister Tony Burke and his advisors. Mr Jeff Scott, Chief Executive, Australian Table Grape Association was also a participant in the visit.



(L-R) Jeff Scott, Chief Executive, Australian Table Grape Assoc Inc.; Hon Tony Burke, MP, Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry; John Tesoriero, Chief Executive, MVCB.

The main purpose of the delegation from a citrus industry perspective was to discuss seasonal fruit fly area freedom (June – December) for citrus export to Japan from the Greater Sunraysia Pest Free Area (PFA).

In addition, discussions were held with Chinese quarantine officials aimed at amending the current citrus export protocol.

With regard to China, we are seeking recognition of a systems approach to the management of Fuller's Rose Weevil in lieu of the current orchard freedom requirement; adoption of 2 to 3°C for cold treatment; recognition of inland Pest Free Areas; access to southern Chinese Ports; and removal of the requirement for recalibration of temperature probes on arrival.

In relation to Japan, it is pleasing that Australia has now satisfied all of Japan's requests for information on the Greater Sunraysia PFA.

It is proposed that Japan will conduct a verification visit to our region in mid to late May 2008 that will, hopefully, finalise the issue of seasonal area freedom for exports to Japan from our PFA. Chinese quarantine officials indicated that they were considering our requests for amendment of the current protocol and that any amendment would be science based. However, no indication was given re a time frame for further consultation and/or a decision at this stage.

Being part of the trade delegation with the Minister and his key advisers was

extremely worthwhile. It highlighted to our trading partners the importance the government places on trade in horticulture and provided an excellent networking opportunity for industry participants.

Throughout the visit, we were invited to all the ministerial functions.

The Minister was pushing Australian table grapes and citrus in all of his keynote speeches, and we were often asked to follow his presentation outlining our industry issues about market access, overviews about food safety and quality, guarantee of supply and how important their markets were to Australia.

His key focus was the world food shortage, Australian food safety reputation, climate change and our Australian clean and green production.

You couldn't put a value on our networking and interaction with Minister Burke and his advisers over those two weeks.

Some concern was expressed that Australian citrus could flood the Japanese market, but our volume of exports will not allow that to happen. The Minister was very strong on that point.

Overall, the visitation was timely and very worthwhile.

**John Tesoriero** Chief Executive,  
MVCB

# Beware of Frost Damage to Citrus Fruits

Now that winter is here, growers need to be aware of the potential for frost damage to their fruit.

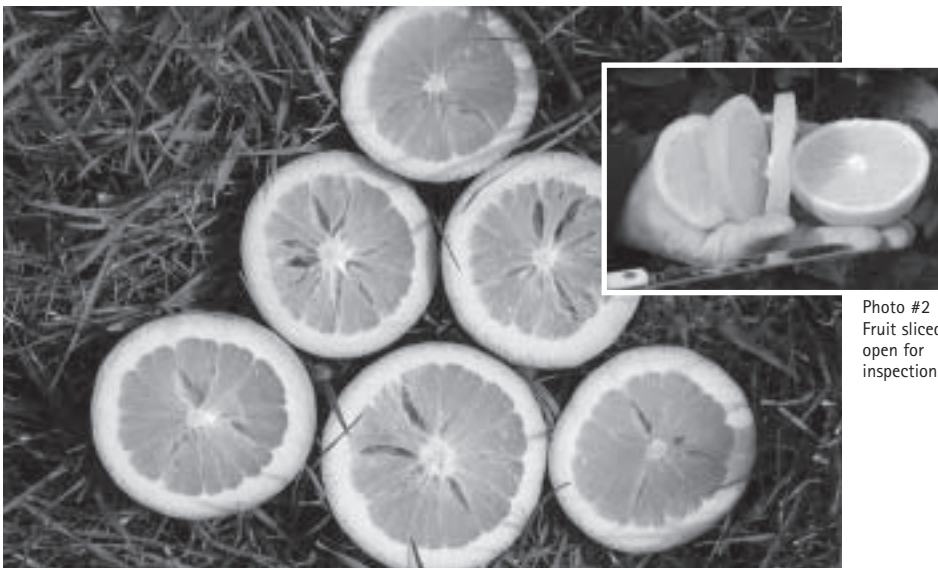


Photo #1 Frost Damage to fruit centres.

Frosts occur on cloudless nights when clear skies allow heat to be lost rapidly from soil and plant surfaces. They can be particularly severe if this is combined with windless conditions, as cold air near ground level does not mix with warmer air higher up.

Frost damage is a time and temperature relationship. Ripe citrus pulp freezes at about  $-1.9^{\circ}\text{C}$  to  $-3.9^{\circ}\text{C}$ . If air temperature is below  $-2^{\circ}\text{C}$  for only a short time, fruit does not freeze because enough heat is stored in their mass to prevent it. Immature fruit is more vulnerable to damage than mature fruit. As fruit ripens, its sugar content increases, producing a more concentrated solution that has a lower freezing point. Smaller, mature fruit will freeze more quickly than larger mature fruit, as the store of heat energy in smaller fruit is less.

If the temperature drops to  $-2^{\circ}\text{C}$  for 4 hours or more, growers need to check their orchards for frost-damaged fruit. Damage is more likely to occur the longer fruit is exposed to this threshold. Low lying areas, especially those near unirrigated land, and ends of rows (depending on topography) are usually affected first. A bare, damp, compact soil is the best protection against frost. Weeds, because they reduce the

amount of heat absorbed by the soil during the day, should be removed or closely mowed. This also applies to cover crops. Damp soils store more heat during the day and more readily conduct heat to the surface. Heat conduction is better in compact soils.

Look for areas with external fruit and shoot burn to help identify frosted areas. External fruit damage such as a water soaked rind or ruptured oil glands can occur within 1 to 14 days after a frost. However, fruit may have internal damage without any external signs. Internal damage to fruit can be identified a day or two after a frost by the water-soaked appearance inside. However, it may take up to 14 days for internal damage to be expressed.

Early symptoms of internal frost damage are ruptured juice sacs and pale centres. As the juice forms ice crystals, it expands in volume and ruptures the juice sacks causing internal damage. The juice leaks out and eventually evaporates through the rind. Portions of the fruit dry out with most damage seen in the centre as illustrated in Photo #1.

To check if internal damage has occurred, slice fruit early on the morning frost has occurred to identify if ice has formed

within the fruit. Assess the whole patch randomly by cutting numerous fruit from the outer canopy in the lower and upper parts of both sides of the tree; sample at least 50 fruit per patch. Begin by cutting small fruit and if frost damage is found move onto larger fruit.

Slice some known unaffected fruit first to calibrate your eye for differences. Use a sharp knife, preferably with a blade longer than the width of the fruit. Cut fruit in about four separate slices to assess the whole of the fruit as shown in Photo #2. Taste suspected frost damaged fruit as it will have an 'off' flavour.

If frost damage is found in an isolated area only, continue sampling to define the section where frost damage has occurred and tape this area off. Record the patch and the number of damaged fruit (eg 2 in 100) with the date in your diary for future reference.

The greatest danger when frost damage occurs at full harvest is the temptation to pick immediately. If you suspect frost damage has occurred, suspend harvest operations and communicate with your packing house. Re-assess the orchard for frost damage by cutting fruit at regular short intervals, for a period of at least two weeks. Damage may be apparent after one week and symptoms become more visible as time progresses.

Don't be tempted to send frost-damaged fruit to your packer, as you may end up with a bill. Frost damaged fruit on the market not only undermines consumer confidence in the Australian citrus industry, it will also affect market prices for undamaged fruit.

**Mary Cannard IDO, MVCB**

# Making of the Murray Valley Citrus Board Order

## A Brief Overview

The Murray Valley Citrus Board's four-year term is about to expire. Consequently, it is up to growers to decide if they want to see the Board continue to operate and provide industry-based services to growers.

The Minister for Agriculture, the Hon Joe Helper MP, received a petition from Murray Valley citrus producers (SCG and MMCG) requesting that the Murray Valley Citrus Board (MVCB) be remade under the provisions of the Agriculture Industry Development Act (AIDA) 1990, for a further four year term, from 1 July 2008 to 30 June 2012.

To discuss this important issue, Mr Kevin Cock, representing SCG Inc. welcomed participants to a consultative meeting in Mildura on 3 April, 2008. This followed a similar meeting held in Barham, NSW the day before.

The key issue for discussion was to consider the remaking of the Murray Valley Citrus Board Order. The Order was defined as a legislated way of raising money from an industry in a defined area, from a defined sector of the industry and for a defined purpose (eg R and D, extension, market information etc).

It also provides for the establishment of an Industry Development Committee (IDC) - nominated by industry to deliver these services. (The Committee comprises industry personnel plus Government representatives.)

Mr Stuart Holland, DPI Victoria and Government nominee on the MVCB, explained the process and gave some background of the Order and an IDC. He outlined the key features of the Order and the Committee structure. An IDC gives legal authority to raise a charge for industry specific services to undertake activities agreed to by the industry. An IDC only exists if industry votes for it.

Stuart then outlined how an IDC operates (including the key section of the function of the Board over a four year term) together with sources of income.

Mr Robert Mansell, Chairman, MVCB presented the key highlights of the current Board's activities to date. Specific reference was made to 2005 activities and further initiatives taken in 2006 and 2007.

The extensive number of projects and programs undertaken was aptly summarised when Robert stated that 'the office is always extremely busy'.

Ms Mary Cannard, Industry Development Officer, MVCB gave a summary of the key projects undertaken. These fell under the program summary headings of encouraging greater uptake of best practise and innovative technology, the provision of high quality industry data and the development of generic and targeted promotional strategies.

The MVCB key projects included the 'Impact on Citrus Leadership Project', Industry Development Officer and Citigroup Co-ordinator, Pest Free Area - Greater Sunraysia, Tri-State Fruit Fly Community Awareness Program, increased selection efficiency in the national Citrus Scion Breeding Program, the Agrilate Project and the establishment of Citrus Gall Wasp parasite in the Sunraysia region.

Finally, the case for and against the proposal was outlined and included potential and comparative costs.

The polling and voting procedure was also made clear noting:

- The proposal on which citrus growers must vote
- Eligibility to vote
- Polling and voting arrangements and timeframes

The result of the poll will be determined by a simple majority of valid votes counted. The Victorian Minister for Agriculture will then give consideration to the poll results and the feedback into the report and decide on the remaking of the Order.

Questions from the floor were then taken.

Some points raised were:

- The importance of having a good turnout at the poll.
- Not allowing apathy to get in the way of this happening.

- The Board and staff have provided valuable service to the needs of growers and deliver it well.
- If the Board doesn't continue, where will growers get such essential services?

In closing the meeting, Kevin Cock paid tribute to the current Chairman of the MVCB. Robert Mansell had spent 19 years on the Board, the last 6 as Chairman, and his commitment to the industry was significant and appreciated by all. The comments were acknowledged with acclamation.

### E. Warhurst Compiler

## STOP PRESS

The voting process has now concluded. If the total vote was positive, Victoria and New South Wales would be ready to gazette on 27 June 2008 for the Order to be put in place from 1 July 2008.

# The Murray Valley Citrus Board (MVCB) and its Key Areas of Operation, Performance and Achievements

The following is a summary of the current MVCB's operations over the past three to four years. It clearly indicates that the Board can look back with a deserved measure of pride in its achievements in servicing the citrus industry, locally and beyond.

This section describes the key areas of MVCB operation over the last 3–4 years and outlines a proposed direction for a new four year term of operation from 1 July 2008.

## Role In Current Water Shortage

The current water supply position continues as a significant threat, not only for citrus producers, but also all horticultural production throughout the Murray Valley.

To brief producers on the situation, the MVCB facilitated an important water forum at the Coomealla Club, Dareton on 23 November, 2006. In excess of 240 producers attended the forum.

MVCB also played a major role in securing critical needs water for New South Wales citrus producers from July, 2007 to March 2008. This was achieved through effective advocacy with the NSW government and the Department of Water and Energy. MVCB's Planting Statistics Data Base proved invaluable for determining water allocations to producers based on plant requirements (bearing, non-bearing trees etc).

## Response To The Severe Frost Event

Severe frost events throughout the Murray Valley in May and June 2006 had a major impact on production in 2006/07. The last frost event of similar magnitude occurred in 1982. Temperatures plummeted to  $-11^{\circ}\text{C}$  and  $-14^{\circ}\text{C}$  on some citrus properties in the Nangiloc/Colignan area of Victoria where approximately 65% of Murray Valley citrus production occurs. The damage to individual properties varied from none to significant, depending on the location of the orchard. A conservative estimate of the damage was lost citrus production of 16,000 tonnes.

In response to the frost event, the MVCB conducted frost damage assessment workshops throughout the region. The workshops demonstrated to growers a sampling method to identify and isolate where internal fruit damage occurred,

enabling producers to harvest with some confidence.

The industry was pleased to note that there were very few incidents of frost-damaged fruit reaching the market.

## Market Access Activities

Area freedom status (fruit fly freedom) for Japan, Taiwan and Korea remains a high priority for Murray Valley producers and exporters. The criteria for gaining initial area freedom is 12 months free of any fruit fly detection. However, within two months of achieving the benchmark 12 months for Japan, two wild flies were detected in traps in Mildura in March 2007, and this was followed by a further two detections in Mildura in May 2007. While not constituting an outbreak, the detections thwarted initial efforts to gain area freedom for this important market. Despite these problems it is significant that Indonesia has reinstated area freedom for Murray Valley citrus exports.

In October 2005, Australian citrus producers gained official market access to the People's Republic of China. However, the protocol as it relates to orchard freedom from Fuller's Rose Weevil (FRW) is proving a major barrier to trade and is unworkable for southern Australian regions. Queensland, on the other hand, was able to export about 19 containers of mandarins to China during the year.

In an attempt to overcome this difficult protocol, the MVCB approached the former Federal Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, The Hon. Peter McGauran with a request for assistance. The Minister indicated a willingness to fund relevant FRW research. The MVCB responded by undertaking a study into previous FRW

research, and coordinated a workshop of researchers to develop strategies to control or manage FRW in the orchard.

This resulted in three funding applications being submitted to Horticulture Australia Ltd (HAL); two dealing with post harvest treatment and the other with orchard control strategies and research. All three projects have now been approved. (Total budget, \$1.2 million).

Industry remains hopeful of a favourable outcome when the protocol is renegotiated. This process commenced in October 2007. A successful outcome will probably require a systems approach to the management of FRW, requiring a combination of orchard and post harvest treatments, rather than trying to meet orchard freedom from this pest which is considered virtually impossible.

## MVCB Leadership Program

The MVCB ran a second *Impact on Citrus* program conducted by Leading Industries early in 2007. Ten young citrus industry participants passed the leadership training program and presented their projects to The Hon. Sussan Ley, (former) Parliamentary Secretary to Minister McGauran, Federal Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry. These young people are considered future leaders of the industry and we look forward to their on-going involvement in the citrus industry.

## Support for State and National Promotions

The MVCB provided support to the National Promotions Committee through committee membership and strategic advice.

## The Murray Valley Citrus Board (MVCB) and its Key Areas of Operation, Performance and Achievements *Cont'd...*

Mick Hollingworth and John Tesoriero represented MVCB on the National Committee.

The MVCB also continued to support the Melbourne Citrus Committee with its promotions, e.g. Athletics Victoria and the school programs. Both these promotional programs aim to encourage the greater consumption of citrus.

### Role in Establishment and Operation of Pest Free Area

The MVCB and the citrus industry have played a key role in a partnership to develop a new Pest Free Area (PFA) strategy for the Sunraysia district. This partnership includes the stone fruit and table grape industries, Department of Primary Industries (DPI) Victoria and the NSW Department of Primary Industries. Nearly \$1.5 million has been invested in this initiative, the bulk of which has come from DPI Victoria with additional resources from industry and Horticulture Australia Ltd. (HAL). The MVCB and the other two industry bodies jointly sought and won agreement for HAL to provide some of the industry investment in the project. The MVCB manages the interests of the citrus industry for this project, the management committee of which is chaired by Mr Peter Bailey from DPI Victoria.

A Memorandum of Understanding has been signed setting out project management and co-funding arrangements. A company has been appointed for two years to create public awareness of the new PFA. The PFA creates a boundary around production areas that are internationally recognised as free from fruit fly. The Greater Sunraysia PFA stretches from Lake Cullulleraine to east of Barham on the Murray River. This boundary is within the Fruit Fly Exclusion Zone (FFEZ) and means that the area can be managed much more effectively. This also gives DPI Victoria the ability to control fruit movement within the PFA borders and put roadblocks just outside the boundaries where they can inspect travellers, confiscate fruit and impose fines on anyone carrying fruit illegally.

### Advocacy and Advice

The MVCB advised Federal and State Parliamentarians regarding the critical need for water for citrus in July, August and

September 2007. During 2007, the MVCB also met with:

- Federal Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, The Hon. Peter McGauran and his Parliamentary Secretary The Hon. Sussan Ley;
- Victorian Community Cabinet in Mildura;
- Victorian Minister for Agriculture, Joe Helper MP; and
- Victorian Minister for Water, Environment and Climate Change, John Thwaites MP.

### Strategic Direction

The strategic direction of the MVCB since the re-organisation in 1990, has addressed the need for varietal adjustment away from heavy reliance on fruit processing, to become more internationally competitive and focussed on fresh fruit exports. The MVCB projects and programs are aimed at facilitating citrus production at "world best practice" levels under a number of priority programs, which are reviewed and updated annually under the MVCB's four year plan of operations.

Many of these 'industry development' and R&D projects are undertaken in co-operation with industry partners such as HAL, CSIRO, NSW DPI and DPI Victoria, enabling considerable advantages from cost sharing and/or leveraging of funds. Annually, the MVCB has typically attracted more than 35% of its budget from sources other than compulsory charges on Murray Valley growers.

Examples of these projects are the Citrus Information Technology Transfer Groups (CITTgroups) with a national network of regional co-ordinators in all the major citrus growing areas. Since their inception in 1995, an average of 15 CITTgroup activities have been held in the Murray Valley annually. Their objective is to convey knowledge to improve on-farm practices in an informal way, by utilising experts in their fields from Australia and overseas. These events included farm walks, workshops and/or meetings and have been well attended by growers with very positive responses.

Recent CITTgroup topics have included:

- Oleocellosis Prediction Tools and their use in the Field
- Pruning and Hedging Strategies for Drought Conditions

- Managing a Citrus Business when the River Dries Up
- Drought Assistance (Federal and State) Workshop
- Crop Manipulation for Fruit Size - Corasil Application, Chemical and Mechanical Thinning.

### PROPOSED PROGRAMS/PROJECTS FOR 2008/09

These have been prepared to outline a proposed direction for a new four year term from 1 July, 2008.

The plan of operations has been prepared taking into consideration the crop forecast figures for the 2008/09 season. The forecast indicates a crop of 104,778 tonnes, a reduction of 23% from that forecast for 2007/08 (134,610). This has resulted in the MVCB levy income being reduced by approximately \$190,000.

With the above in mind, the MVCB's strategic direction for 2008/09 has been developed in close collaboration with the regional citrus organizations and will follow on from the work undertaken in previous years.



Neil Eagle

# Notes

## From Neil Eagle

At the time of writing, the long awaited autumn break has not eventuated and the weather forecasters are talking down the prospects until possibly the spring of this year.

Fortunately, the water in storage is slightly ahead of last year at this time and essential water for towns, stock and domestic is in store. Thus, the inflows should be available more quickly as allocation than was the case last year.

In regard to the Industry Restructure Proposal to be put forward immediately following the ACG Annual Meeting on 29 May, 2008:

- The proposals are driven by the desire to maximize the benefits to growers of the

expenditure of their levy contributions by streamlining the peak body ACG, and to eliminate any duplication of efforts by closer cohesion with our regional bodies, both grower and statutory.

- I urge growers to actively participate in these ongoing discussions so that decisions are made that are widely endorsed by growers.

Finally, I would like to thank all members of the outgoing Murray Valley Citrus Board, chaired by Robert Mansell, for their

considerable efforts on our behalf over a number of years. I thank the nominees of the incoming Board for having nominated and wish them all the best. I trust that their endeavours on our behalf will be rewarding to them and beneficial to our growers.

**Neil Eagle** Chairman,  
Mid-Murray Citrus Growers Inc



## Ms Marian Tobin Retires

A relaxed and thoroughly enjoyable occasion was held on Friday, 14 March 2008 to mark the retirement of Ms Marian Tobin, Personal Assistant to the CEO, from the MVCB.

Marian has completed nine years of dedicated service to the organization and the evening reflected the high regard in which she is held by the Board, her work and business colleagues, friends and the community at large.

Chairman, MVCB, Robert Mansell acknowledged that Marian was the consummate professional and her commitment and sense of occasion had earned the respect of all. These sentiments were further echoed by Mr Kevin Cock, Mr John Braniff, Mr John Tesoriero, Mr Peter Crisp, MLA, Member for Mildura and other contributors.

In her response, Marian Tobin expressed her appreciation to the Board and those she had worked closely with over the years. This vote

of thanks included fellow staff members (past and present) growers and the relevant sectors within the citrus industry. She also reminisced in an enjoyable way of her varied employment opportunities leading to her appointment at the MVCB.

Clearly, Marian set high personal and professional standards in her attitude to work. Her depth of practical experience and common sense approach underpinned her comments and observations.

At this stage, Marian will continue to maintain some contact with the MVCB by remaining responsible for compiling the Board Minutes.

Marian Tobin's constructive involvement in the preparation of the Citrep magazine

was invaluable. As compiler, I commend her efficiency, courtesy and attention to detail and remain indebted to her for the accumulated knowledge of the citrus industry and the key roles of the MVCB that she always had at her fingertips.

Every best wish is extended to Marian and her husband Des for a long, relaxing and healthy retirement. The hope is that they will now have time to do some of the things they want to do.

In all, the retirement occasion was a genuine and deserved acknowledgement of a job very well done in the interests of the citrus industry.

**E. Warhurst** Compiler

# Robert

Robert Mansell, Chairman, MVCB, was initially reluctant to agree to my request to be interviewed for a major Citrep article.

This response was typical of the man, as I have come to know him. Robert was there to work, not to seek personal publicity.

Robert has had 19 years involvement with the MVCB. This means that he has played a significant part in its history and such an outstanding commitment deserves to be formally recognised.

'I became involved in the Citrus Industry Organisations in my early twenties. At that time we had the ACGF (Australian Citrus Growers Federation) as the peak body. The Sunraysia and Districts Citrus Co-operative Society Ltd (SDCCS) was our regional branch (forerunner of SCG) at the time.

In the 1970's, the Nangiloc Branch was one of the most active branches and my father suggested it was time I became involved in industry matters. The Nangiloc region was a relatively new horticultural area, so there were a lot of vegetables still being grown and growers were using the Melbourne Wholesale Market growers section to sell their vegetables and citrus.

Sadly, the Branches don't exist any longer, as they were a good training ground for understanding the issues and how industry politics work.'

Robert became Secretary of the Nangiloc Branch and later was nominated as a member of the Advisory Central Council (ACC) advising the Directors of SDCCS. He was the secretary for some time and describes it as 'real agri-political'.

'When the Murray Valley Citrus Marketing Act, 1989 was passed to enable the two State Boards to be enacted, I was approached to nominate for a position as a Board member on the Murray Valley Citrus Marketing Board. I have to say that I didn't believe I had any of the skills required to be a Board member, believing that was for older people with a better education than I had. However, I was convinced to at least have a go and when I was asked to attend an interview with the 5 member selection

panel I didn't feel very comfortable. The interview was the toughest thing I had ever done.'

During my discussions with Robert, his comments and observations reflected a depth of knowledge, extensive networks and experience of all sectors of the industry. He considered that he was helped in his role by being a packer as well as a grower. He stated that an organization like the MVCB is necessary to represent grower interests by being a conduit to State and Federal Governments.

'A key to the success of the citrus industry is the ability of the MVCB to collect accurate data in an aggregated form and use it when negotiating or advising governments on important issues such as water requirements for citrus and pest issues that affect market access in particular.'





# Mansell

## An Outstanding Industry Contributor



Left - Right:  
 1 Robert and Julie Mansell.  
 2 Robert turning over the engine of his 1944 McCormick/Deering W4 Tractor.  
 3 Robert at the World Agricultural Fair in California.  
 4 Robert checking the low water level of Lake Albert at Meningie SA.

Robert highlights that the MVCB leverages its statutory levies against other organizations on research programs (i.e. DPI, CSIRO, HAL etc). Such research programs embrace FRW, fruit rind quality, leadership, floral indexing and promotion.

'The MVCB has always worked well with other organizations whether it be grower organizations, statutory authorities, government departments or other horticultural groups.

The capacity to work effectively with other relevant organizations and authorities gives more credibility and weight to the arguments advanced in the debate on contemporary issues.

Occasionally, we have been able to hold less structured meetings with politicians on the paddleboat Impulse. This has enabled informal discussions in an atmosphere that may have involved a cruise and a meal,

whether breakfast or a catered meal on board as appropriate. All have proven to be worthwhile in getting our message across.'

As Chairman, Robert Mansell acknowledges that it is difficult for the Board to put a succession plan in place with any real surety.

'Every four years there is a spill of the Board and there is no guarantee that existing Board members will apply and be appointed. That decision is made by a selection panel.

However, in saying that, the current Board has successfully organized two Young Leadership training courses that have seen 15 to 20 very talented and committed younger industry people complete the course.

Hopefully, programs and success rates like that will ensure that the citrus industry has a pool of people that will provide its leaders in the future.'

Robert Mansell is a fifth generation Sunraysia resident. He knows the district well. He is also proud to be a fourth generation horticulturalist with a long family history of achievements and contributions to the district.

His great grandfather, Steven Mansell, leased then purchased the Mildura half of the Mildura Pre-emptive Right where he eventually grew dried fruit.

'My father bought a small property in Buronga and developed it with citrus and vines. Dad then worked with his father and brother Russell transforming a wheat paddock at Colignan to horticulture. Initially, they grew vegetables while the permanent plantings came into production.

## Robert Mansell *Cont'd...*

In the late 1970's, Russell sold his share to my father, my brother Ken and myself and our wives. Our family partnership then built a packing shed and started marketing our citrus in Sydney.

In this context it is fair to say the rest is history.'

Robert readily acknowledges the valued support of his family members.

'The benefit of a family partnership is that we can cover for each other when pursuing off-farm interests. Being the Chairman of the MVCB has involved a fair bit of time and my father Ian, brother Ken and wife Julie have all filled in for me while I have been a member of the Board.

I express my appreciation to them for keeping the place going while I've been 'on call', attending industry meetings or on the road.

In keeping with the demands of being the Chairman, I withdrew from all other positions of responsibility I held so that I could give the job my first priority.'

Robert stated that being a Board member had been very rewarding; he felt privileged to have served with so many professional people. There were two very good Chairmen before me in Neville Harris from Nyah and Kevin Cock from Buronga. When Kevin planned to retire from the MVCMB to take up a position with ACG in 1999, I was nominated for Chairman and have been there ever since.'

Robert made considered reference to some of the important things that have happened while he has been on the Board.

- Setting a minimum price for juice, which was very contentious at the time.
- Getting the planting statistics up-and-running and agreeing to put funds into the aerial fly over coordinated by Sunlis.
- Seeing the crop forecasting continue to change enabling more accurate forecasting, including some guidance on fruit quality.
- Having an updated plantings database; creating the ability for growers to be able to update their stats on line. This remains a work in progress.
- Legislative change to have the word Marketing taken out of our title, as we could no longer market under the National Competition Policy guidelines.
- Legislative change to enable the Board to operate under one State Regulation.

- Water issues have been very time-consuming for the Board in the last couple of years with a lot of dialogue with State and Federal members and bureaucrats, e.g. negotiating critical water needs for NSW growers.
- Being involved in joint meetings with the other two Statutory Boards, Riverina Citrus and the South Australian Citrus Industry Development Board. Working together on common ground to avoid duplication.
- In conjunction with the Table Grape and Stone Fruit Associations, the Greater Sunraysia Pest Free Area is now in operation. On this issue, which has been a fairly protracted exercise, the Vic and NSW Governments are once again working together.
- The Board has also been active in the issues surrounding the restructure of the industry.

Robert believes that the incoming MVCB will need to continue dealing with issues similar to those that currently exist.

'However, there is the potential for many other situations to crop-up in the future. The biggest one will be the reduction in plantings. This will mean a reduced levy income that is required to provide the Board's programs and services to growers.

'When things are tough, the industry demands more from organizations like the MVCB. This means additional resources are required to deal with the changing and diverse issues that arise.'

When asked to identify the biggest issues currently facing the industry, Robert made the following observations:

- Water availability, price and the ability to be able to produce the quality volumes that are required to keep current markets supplied loom as significant challenges. Market access is an on-going battle. When you think you are kicking goals, the goal posts move and you end up out-of-bounds on the full and have to start again. This has been the most frustrating part. Having to deal with bureaucrats who don't have a forward gear above deep reduction, and whose secure livelihood is not directly linked to the decisions they make or the work ethic they advance. This is of great concern. In that context, the Board has had to initiate programs and kick start them so that governments will, hopefully, see the merit and come on-board.

- Robert also emphasizes that keeping the region free of pests and diseases is a great challenge and the industry cannot afford to be complacent.

Robert Mansell is a man of many parts who has a true sense of local and regional history. In this regard, his involvement has been extensive including preserving the history of the Murray River Trade.

*'I was a founding member and secretary of the Rivers and Riverboat Historical and Preservation Society and have a practical interest in Murray River paddleboat building and restoration.'*

As such, Robert has been involved in organizing a number of trips for paddleboats and associated river craft. He towed the TP barge to Goolwa and back in 1991, also towing the Argo barge from Swan Hill for the Renmark Shire Council.

Further involvement included retrieving the remains of the PS Success from Ned's Corner and raising the A11 barge. Robert was also involved in raising the Canally hull at Boundary Bend and towing it to Mildura.

'I was a member of the organizing committee to build replicas of the first two steamers on the Murray and transport them to South Australia to assemble and steam them back in the 150th Celebration trip of Murray River Trade. The boats were steamed from Goolwa to Echuca and back to Mildura in a fleet of about a dozen paddleboats.

In all, it was an experience to remember and achieved due recognition and publicity for the important part paddle steamers played in the development of regions along the Murray River.'

There are many industry and community based individuals and groups who are in a position to make favourable comment on Robert Mansell's extensive contribution over the years.

Mr Neil Eagle, Chairman Mid-Murray Citrus Growers Inc has worked closely with Robert over the years and his comments reflect the sentiments of many in the citrus industry.

'Robert Mansell's grandfather, father and uncle were early pioneers of horticulture in the Sunraysia district. They were highly successful, both as farmers and as contributors to the development of their districts.

# Murray Valley Citrus Board Product Price List

Available through the Murray Valley Citrus Board office.

Item Name	Grower Price
<b>PUBLICATIONS</b>	
Citrus Disease and Disorders	\$26.00
Citrus Growing Manual	\$22.00
Citrus Pests & Their Natural Enemies	\$85.50
Citrus Field Guide - Citrus Pests and their Natural Enemies	\$35.00
Drip Irrigation Book	\$25.00
Physiology Notes 04/2003	\$18.00
Good Bug Book	\$44.50
Citrus Disease & Defects found in the marketplace	\$118.75
CD Citrus Pests & Their Natural Enemies	\$45.00
<b>PRODUCTS</b>	
Citrus Peelers - Complete	\$1.00
Cranston Gauge	\$39.00
Hand Lens	\$8.50
Plastic Juicer	\$3.50
Sizing Ring America (Yellow)	\$22.00
Penetrometer 011	\$274.00
Phenolphthalein PH Indicator	\$44.00
Refractometer REF103 Brix	\$340.00
TDS Solid Tester pocket (PH WATER TESTER)	\$125.00
<b>NET BAG SALES</b>	
Grapefruit 3 kg net bags - per 1000	\$178.75
Imperial 1.5 kg net bags - per 500	\$89.38
Navel 3 kg net bags - per 1000	\$178.75
Navel 1.5 kg net bags - per 1000	\$139.00
Valencia 3 kg net bags - per 1000	\$178.75
<b>MEETING ROOM FACILITIES</b>	
Half day Board Room hire	\$55.00
Full day Board Room hire	\$110.00
Half day Projector Multimedia hire	\$110.00
Full day Projector Multimedia hire	\$220.00
Coffee Tea Biscuits (per head) - Board Room hire	\$1.50
<b>CITREP NEWSLETTER ADVERTISING</b>	
<i>Black &amp; White</i>	
1/9 PAGE Portrait (60 mm x 85 mm)	\$35.00
2/9 PAGE Landscape (125 mm x 85 mm)	\$70.00
2/9 PAGE Portrait (60 mm x 175 mm)	\$70.00
4/9 PAGE Portrait (125 mm x 175 mm)	\$140.00
1/3 PAGE Landscape (190 mm x 85 mm)	\$110.00
2/3 PAGE Landscape (190 mm x 175 mm)	\$200.00
FULL PAGE (190 mm x 265 mm)	\$275.00
<i>Colour</i>	
1/9 PAGE Portrait (60 mm x 85 mm)	\$80.00
2/9 PAGE Landscape (125 mm x 85 mm)	\$160.00
2/9 PAGE Portrait (60 mm x 175 mm)	\$160.00
4/9 PAGE Portrait (125 mm x 175 mm)	\$310.00
1/3 PAGE Landscape (190 mm x 85 mm)	\$240.00
2/3 PAGE Landscape (190 mm x 175 mm)	\$500.00
FULL PAGE (190 mm x 265 mm)	\$610.00
FLYER - 1 PAGE INSERT	\$300.00

Robert has followed on in a similar vein. He is also a very successful horticulturalist, as well as making a major contribution to the citrus industry in the Murray Valley. He has freely given his time as a member of the combined NSW and Victorian MVCB since its inception 19 years ago.

For the last six years, Robert has been Chairman of the MVCB. He has been an articulate, forceful advocate for our industry, focusing his efforts on the things that improve the bottom line for growers.

All growers in the Murray Valley and in the wider Australian Citrus Industry are deeply indebted to Robert for his invaluable contribution over the many years.'

Robert Mansell concludes by saying 'I have had the privilege to work with very professional people and the immediate past Board members and staff have really had to step up to the mark with new challenges almost daily. They have been very supportive and decisive in decision-making.

I have gained a lot of friends Australia wide and I have great pride in our industry. I look forward to going to the annual conferences each year and catching up with other Citrus growers. You never stop learning, and there is always something to take home from a visit to another region.

I would like to thank all of the people who helped me during my time on the Board, particularly our Chief Executive, John Tesoriero for his support.

I now hope to have a bit more time playing with and restoring old International tractors and trucks and finishing off all the boats that I have on the property.'

Dedicated contributors like Robert Mansell are rare in this day and age. Clearly, he will be sadly missed and for all the right reasons. We genuinely wish him and his family well, and trust that he will not be totally lost to the industry in the future.

**E. Warhurst Compiler**



Anne Mansell

## Sunraysia Citrus Growers Report

Sunraysia Citrus Growers (SCG) would like to welcome Ms Deb Scott as our new Office Administrator. Deb has been working very hard since she commenced in February and has a good understanding of the daily issues we are dealing with. Please introduce yourselves to her when you call in to the office.

We also have a new Vice-President, with Vince Demaria being elected at our meeting held on 28 April, 2008. I would like to congratulate Vince on taking up this position and I know he will provide great support and encourage SCG to pursue some good strategic directions.

I would like to offer my very sincere appreciation to Kevin Cock as he steps down from the Vice-Presidency of SCG. Kevin is a stalwart of the citrus industry and his knowledge base is second to none. I have appreciated his support over the last 18 months. I am happy to say that Kevin remains a Director of SCG.

### Current Issues

#### 1 Water

This is still the fundamental issue challenging growers across our two States. Federal Minister for Water, Penny Wong visited Mildura on 3 April, 2008 and met with commodity groups for approx 45 minutes. SCG provided her with a written submission, which we presented verbally on the day. The main thrust of the submission was to make the Minister aware of the critical times when citrus requires water and the length of time citrus takes to reach full production. The submission also addressed the need for water reliability and the immediate need for minimisation of system losses. The Minister could not offer any new information on the proposed Murray Darling Basin Authority or the new cap that would be put into place. With the \$50 million water buy back scheme, the Minister believed that many of the expressions of interest were above the going market rate and the Government would purchase at a fair market price only. She also informed commodity groups that there would be \$300 million available to purchase water over the next 10 years.

SCG, in conjunction with the MVCB and Mildura Rural City Council, will continue to lobby the Victorian State Minister for Water, Tim Holding, on providing information on water allocations from early in the season, rather than providing increments across the season. We will also continue to lobby on the need to qualify water rights, which the Minister can do under the existing Water Act.

#### 2 ACG Restructure

The AGM of Australian Citrus Growers was held on 29 May at the Mildura Golf

Club Resort. As part of the day there was a Citrus Industry Restructure Information Session held from 2pm. **Growers were encouraged to go and hear the proposals being considered, as it was important that all growers have input into the make-up of their industry representation.**

Trevor Radloff and myself were appointed delegates to the AGM of ACG. There was also a representative from Mid-Murray Citrus Growers as the third delegate from the Murray Valley region.

#### 3 Citrus Gall Wasp

Kevin Cock, Trevor Radloff and myself visited Dareton on 17 March in conjunction with the MVCB to look at the issue surrounding Citrus Gall Wasp. Member for Murray Darling, John Williams was invited by the growers to attend and represent their concerns to the NSW Minister for Agriculture. As yet, there has been no response by the Minister, but the MVCB Industry Development Officer continues to work on this issue so that the spread can be halted.

SCG Directors are also investigating what can be done to ensure that infested plant material is not brought into the area via large retail chains.

#### 4 ACCC Inquiries

SCG has responded to the latest in ACCC Inquiries, firstly through the VFF on the 'Inquiry into the Competitiveness of Retail Prices for Standard Groceries' where we offered information to the VFF as part of their overall submission. Hearings into this Inquiry will be taking place in Melbourne in May, particularly in regard to the supermarkets.

We have also responded to the ACCC Water Market Rules Issues Paper. This has come about with the Water Act 2007 creating new functions for the ACCC, including draft water market rules and water charge rules for consideration by the Minister, and also advising the new Murray Darling Authority on water trading rules. Many thanks to our Directors, in particular Vince Demaria, for contributing invaluable information to this process.

#### 5 Murray Valley Citrus Board Poll

SCG has written to the Minister in support of the Industry Development Order for the Board being remade, in light of the ongoing information transfer and support the Board offers to growers across the Murray Valley region. Voting packs were forwarded to growers to enable them to cast their vote prior to 15 June 2008.

#### 6 Fruit Fly

This continues to be a growing issue across the State of Victoria, although so far the Sunraysia Pest Free area has remained firm. On 17 May we achieved 12 months without a fruit fly detection and this should enhance our chances for Area Freedom. The Department of Primary Industry has held a meeting with all major commodity groups affected by fruit fly, to determine further actions in line with the National Plan, and also to continue to provide protection to areas such as ours. Please contact the office if you require any further information on any of the above, or if you have any issues you would like us to assist you with.

Anne Mansell President, SCG

## Profile – Colin Nankivell Vice Chairman, MVCB



Colin Nankivell's pragmatic and forthright approach, together with his keen sense of humour, is reflected throughout his comments in this profile. They also indicate a true empathy with the land and a determination to make a success of his chosen lifestyle.

Colin was educated at the Buronga and Mildura West Primary Schools, then Mildura High School, completing HSC in 1973. He gained entry into Economics and Politics at Monash University in 1974; however, he states that he did not complete the course due to very poor discipline! (I can only assume Colin is referring to the poor discipline of Monash, not his lack of!)

He worked on the family farm in 1976/77. He then purchased a small farm at Mourquong in 1979, growing avocados and operating a small avocado nursery while continuing to work on the family farm.

In 1988, he purchased a 20 Ha property in Mourquong producing citrus, table grapes and avocados.

Initially, the need for an income generated Colin's practical involvement in horticulture. 'However over time I found a niche where I could (I was going to say excel, but that would be a little presumptuous) be productive.'

I wanted to be self-employed in a progressive industry at a time of considerable change. The lifestyle choice and successes have compensated for the difficult times and periods of self-doubt. 30 odd years on, I am still learning.'

Colin married his wife Sue in 1978 and they have two fine sons. Shannon is currently studying Chemical Engineering and Law at Adelaide University and Kris is still living at home and doing his VCE at Mildura Senior College.

Colin joined the MVCB in 2002. He was also a member of the Sunraysia Avocado Growers Association and had a stint on the SAGA executive as treasurer.

'I played tennis until the joints gave out and golf until the complete lack of ability to chip and putt broke my heart. Nowadays, my sporting endeavour is limited to following Kris around baseball diamonds.'

Colin describes his time on the Board as 'rather challenging' and cites such issues as amalgamation, trying to learn the politics 'and not being all that good at it'; market access (or lack of it); drought and water problems - managing reasonable success in NSW, but not in Victoria; frustration at the constraints applied by legislation and 'the need/requirement not to offend anybody.'

He sees the work on fruit fly issues and especially the advancement of Pest Free Area status in the Murray Valley as significant. He acknowledges the support of 'a great staff' at the MVCB and states that he has developed greater appreciation of the effort and commitment 'that drives bodies such as ours.'

When asked where he believed the citrus industry was now, he replied with the following words:

*'I believe that due to the various stresses of the current drought and water shortages, combined with adverse terms of trade, we face a whole new set of dynamics. The regions will need to hang tough on issues such as declining markets; reductions in some areas of production and over supply in others; global pressures; resource availability and government indifference. The issues of free trade (a contradiction in terms), the use of*

*'phyto' measures as trade barriers by various countries; as well as politics; seem to grow more difficult day by day.'*

***'At all costs we need to protect our industry bodies as they are, and make them even more effective.'***

Overall, Colin Nankivell values his time spent on the MVCB. 'I have gained real satisfaction in the successes of the current Board. I believe that exposure to the drive, expectations and vision of others has helped my development in these facets. I am more aware of the need for establishing aims and plans and perhaps even my level of tolerance has improved, as has my ability to think through the issues that confront our industry. However, on the down side, intrusion into work and personal time can still cause resentment. Perhaps time is my enemy?'

In balance, Colin is positive regarding the future of the industry, and his recent acquisition of additional land supports this optimism. However, there remains the researched pragmatist when he states 'We are going to need to be on our toes.'

His contribution to the MVCB and the industry is acknowledged with appreciation.

**E. Warhurst Compiler**

## Harvest Picnic at Hanging Rock

As part of their annual promotional activities, the MVCB attended the Harvest Picnic at Hanging Rock to help raise the profile of the Murray Valley citrus industry. Over 20 thousand people turned up to enjoy an epicurean feast and to be entertained by the likes of Joe Camilleri. It was obvious from the start that this was a crowd eager to taste fresh produce and willing to try something a little different.



Left: David Goldup (grower from Nangiloc) talking to the public on citrus varieties. Right: Robert Grant (grower from Nangiloc) encouraging people to taste Ruby Grapefruit.

Tony Bothroyd and I were helped by an energetic group of local Sunraysia growers, eager to encourage the large crowd to sample the fruits of their labour. We were kept very busy all day slicing up Ruby Grapefruit and Valencias for tasting and selling freshly squeezed orange juice and orange juice granitas.

The proficiency of Barb Goldup and Jenny Grant in using the citrus peelers was a real bonus. Both ladies demonstrated this skill throughout the day, attracting large crowds with their amazing expertise. David Goldup, Robert Grant, Nicole Radloff and Alesha Bothroyd were magnets for the public keen to rejuvenate their palettes with the tangy, fresh taste of Ruby Grapefruit.

Nicole Radloff was asked her opinion on how she thought the day went. Her response was **'What a great day'**, even though the weather was not in our favour at the start of the day. (If we were selling soup we would have been very busy.) However, the afternoon was sunny and we were kept very busy talking with the crowd about

citrus. It was interesting to find so many people really enjoyed the Ruby Grapefruit, with many commenting that they buy it frequently. It was great for the growers to interact with the crowd and see their delight at the revitalising taste of the fruit we produce.

The crowd had plenty of questions, which were handled expertly by our team. Some of the questions astounded us, making us wonder from where they got their information. It was surprising to see how many people would not buy Valencias, as they thought the green skin indicated they were not ripe. They were very surprised at how juicy and sweet our Sunraysia Valencias are.

The crowd loved the freshly squeezed orange juice, with many commenting on how refreshing it tasted. Unfortunately, the Harvest Picnic is in February, and there is not a wide variety of citrus available at that time of year for the public to sample. However, it was a great day and from the feedback we received, it is important to be out there to get the right information across.

These promotional activities are a fantastic opportunity for growers to interact with consumers and answer the many and diverse questions on all things citrus. Thanks to Tony Bothroyd, Robert and Jenny Grant, Barb and David Goldup, Alesha Bothroyd and Nicole Radloff for helping make the day a fabulously successful citrus promotion.

**Mary Cannard IDO**

# SunRISE 21 Mapping – June 2008

SunRISE 21 Incorporated has been mapping irrigated horticulture in the Lower Murray Darling (LMD) region of Victoria and New South Wales for over ten years.

The mapping uses orthophoto imagery (scale accurate aerial photography) to ground truth and obtain accurate areas of crops. With the aerial photography updated every three years, SunRISE 21 has compiled comprehensive mapping and information on changes and trends in the region's irrigated horticulture from 1997 to 2006. This information is presented in SunRISE 21's 2006 Crop Report, with details including changes in crop types, irrigation methods and grape produce. An update to this information is being planned, in particular to better assess impacts of the current drought, based on aerial photography to be flown in February 2009.

### 2006 Crop Report

The 2006 Crop Report is currently available as a draft final report from the SunRISE 21 web site. It provides information on 94,450 hectares of irrigated horticulture in the LMD from Nyah to South Australia along the Murray River, and from Menindee to Wentworth along the Darling River.

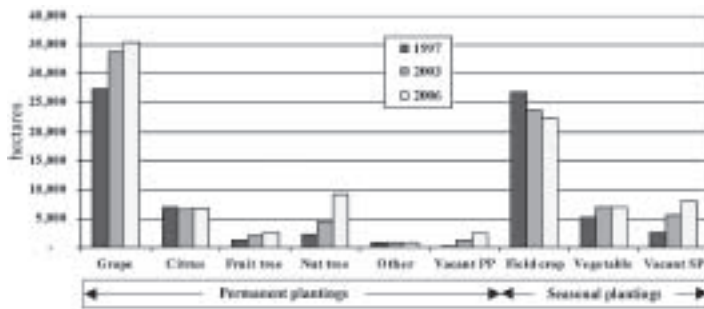
From 1997 to 2006, the irrigated area (permanent and seasonal plantings) increased by 21,045 hectares. This development was dominated by 6,470 hectares of grapevines (predominantly wine grape varieties) planted between 1997 and 2003, and then 4,890 hectares of nut trees (predominantly almond trees) planted between 2003 and 2006.

### Change in Crop Types

Furrow irrigation declined by 12,645 hectares (a 34% decline) between 1997 and 2006; changing the region's dominant irrigation method from furrow in 1997 to drip irrigation in 2006.

The Mallee Catchment Management Authority and Murray-Darling Basin Commission were major sponsors of the report.

Change in Crop Types



### Citrus Mapping

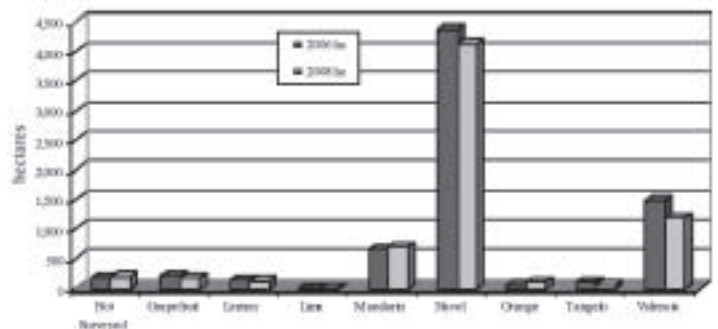
Horticulture Australia Limited recently engaged SunRISE 21 to compile an update of citrus planting statistics across the major citrus growing regions of Australia. The first national citrus mapping was undertaken by SunRISE 21, representing 29,780 hectares in 2003. The 2008 update is anticipated to reflect considerable change. It will provide Australian Citrus Growers and industry stakeholders

with plantings statistics essential for informed decision making in regard to planting decisions and marketing strategies.

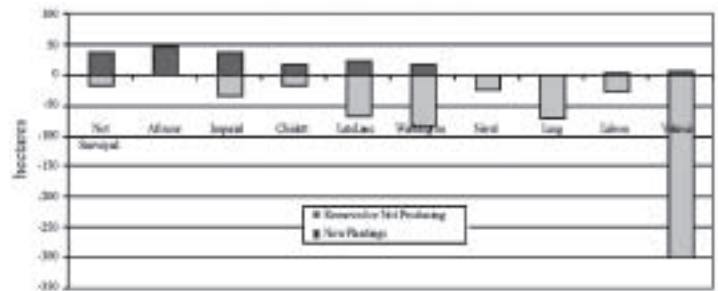
For the Murray Valley region, citrus mapping is maintained by SunRISE 21 as a part of the regional crop mapping which is kept consistent across the region's different irrigated crop types. Citrus details are updated annually in collaboration with the Murray Valley Citrus Board (MVCB) and its registered citrus growers. The process provides growers with maps of their properties and enables the MVCB to have up-to-date planting statistics; fundamental to crop forecasting and industry planning and management.

The 2008 mapping of Murray Valley citrus has been completed from grower survey returns and is showing a 550 hectare decline in plantings since 2006. Whilst this represents an 8% decline across the Murray Valley; the rate is higher (13%) in the pumped irrigation districts where drought impact on citrus was measured at 170 hectares as described in the following section.

Murray Valley Change Between 2006 and 2008 by Citrus Category



Changes Between 2006 and 2008 of the Dominant Citrus Varieties



### Drought Impact in the Pumped Irrigation Districts

Drought continues to impact on the regions irrigation industry and the crop mapping is being used to measure some aspects of this impact. In November 2007, the Mallee Catchment Management Authority funded SunRISE 21 to determine areas that were not being irrigated in the 2007-08 season.

## SunRISE 21 Mapping – June 2008 *Cont'd...*

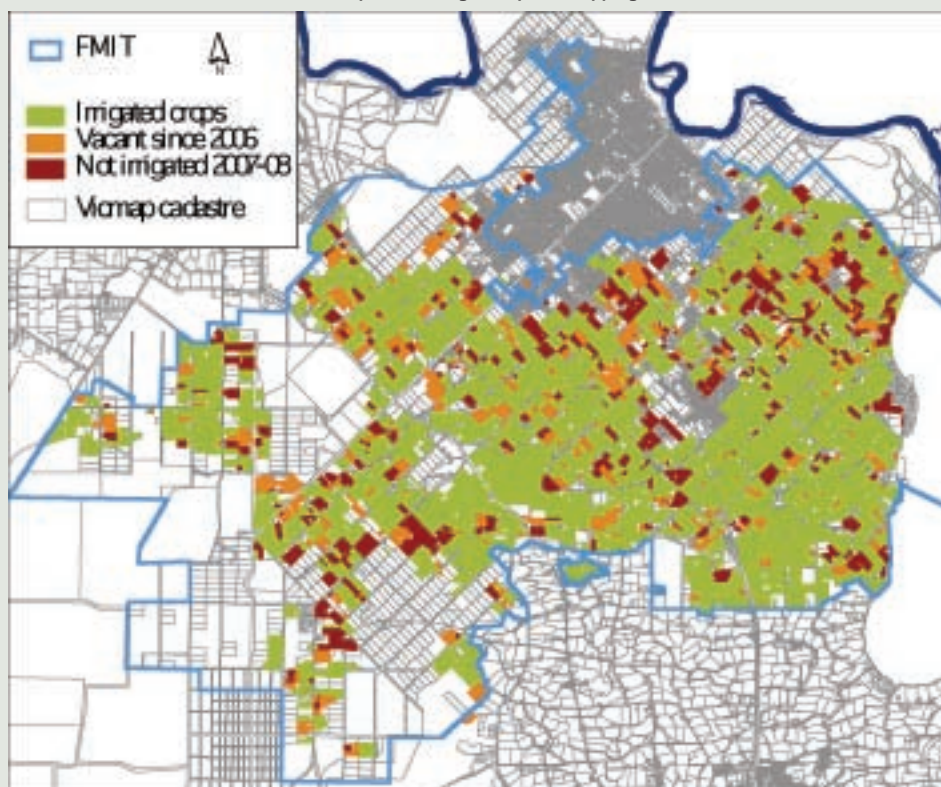
These areas were mapped in December 2007 with the support of the First Mildura Irrigation Trust and Lower Murray Water. The study was initially undertaken for the pumped irrigation districts of Robinvale, Red Cliffs, Merbein and Mildura (FMIT) and then extended with Western Murray Irrigation participation to include Buronga, Coomealla and Curlwaa.

Overall, some 4,000 hectares (20% of the 2006 irrigated area of 20,150 hectares) were not being irrigated, with Merbein and Curlwaa being the most effected districts. Areas not being irrigated comprised nearly 2,000 hectares of grapevines, 240 hectares of seasonal cropping (field crops and vegetables), 170 hectares of citrus, 50 hectares of other crops and 1,540 hectares that had remained vacant since 2006. These vacant areas are likely a result of poor commodity prices experienced by wine grape, dried fruit and citrus growers for the 2006 harvest and earlier; an economic impact that was then exacerbated by drought. Of the grapevines not being irrigated, it was estimated that 46% were for dried fruit, 41% for wine and 13% table grapes.

Property numbers in the study districts was estimated to be 2,170 with 580 of these (27%) having ceased to irrigate over half of their normal cropping area.

These figures represent only one aspect of drought impact at a particular point in time; December 2007. They do not include impacts on crops outside the pumped irrigation districts, impacts on crop production from reduced or minimal watering, or the result of management decisions that growers had to make as the irrigation season continued with small increases in water allocations and large increases in water prices.

Sample of Drought Impact Mapping



Monitoring of impacts on the regions irrigated horticulture will continue, with new aerial photography planned for February 2009 to provide a map base across the regions pumped districts and private diverter areas.

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