



JANUARY 2008 NEWSLETTER

Welcome to the first newsletter of 2008.

Introduction

The Pink Lady Australia (PLA) Board signed off on the 2008 Operating Plan at its meeting on 12 December 2007. This followed a series of meetings held in November 2007 in Donnybrook, Lenswood and Shepparton which provided very effective forums to discuss with growers, packers and exporters the opportunities and impediments to the sustainability of the export program to the UK.

The focus during December and January has been on identifying specific program needs, developing action plans and communicating with existing and new, Pink Lady™ growers, packers and exporters. There has also been communication with UK customers.

A major technical project is under development with the objective being to reduce the risk of exports for growers, packers and exporters. **This is set against the program target of 100 containers in 2008.**

The primary focus is to obtain wider commitment to the export program in 2008. It is widely acknowledged within the industry that pending apple imports (NZ, USA and China have been identified as potential sources of imports) are going to change the face of the domestic apple market. Australia can ill afford to lose the UK market against this background.

Visits: January and February 2008

Neil Offner and Andrew Dick visited SE Victorian growers and some exporters on 9-11 January. Neil is scheduled to visit Batlow on 18 January, Western Australia from 21-23 January and South Australia from 24-25 January.

The opportunity was taken at a face-to-face AFFCO Well Informed Grower meeting held in Shepparton on Tuesday 8 January for Andrew to discuss the export program and seek commitment from a number of Goulburn Valley growers. Neil will follow up with phone calls and another Shepparton meeting; most probably in the week of 28 January.

Andrew will meet with Stanthorpe growers in week commencing 28 January and with NE Victorian growers in week commencing 21 January.

PROUDLY MANAGED BY THE AUSTRALIAN FRESH FRUIT COMPANY

PO Box 363, Gisborne, Victoria 3437

Ph. 03 5420 7444 Fax 03 5420 7447 Email: andrewd@affco.com.au

All meetings are allowing good discussion on the importance of a wider Industry commitment to the Pink Lady™ export program. The response to date has been very good with some early commitment out of Victoria. This is appreciated.

Neil has already been in contact with UK importers by phone and will follow up with meetings at Fruit Logistica from 6-9 February in Berlin. Neil has asked importers to arrange meetings with the UK retail buyers.

The opportunity is also being taken to meet with the technical managers of two import companies in the UK on the preceding two days to discuss various matters including proposed bulk shipment trials in 2008.

PLA Technical Project Meetings – Melbourne 8-9 January 2008

With the assistance of HAL industry levy funding, a brainstorming workshop was convened by AFFCO in Melbourne on Tuesday 8 January. This brought together key post-harvest researchers, State Government apple experts and specialist consultants (e.g Des Muir and Colin Little). Horticulture Australia Ltd was well represented and Tony Russell attended on behalf of APAL.

The concept to bring the experts together in this way arose from the fact that 'technical issues' were identified as the main driver in risk perceptions of the program and therefore a major impediment to exports.

Participants in the workshop were Neil Offner (Chair), John Golding (NSW DPI), Kevin Bodnaruk (consultant), Ron Gordon (Batlow), Richard Bennett, Helen Sargent and Bradley Mills (HAL), Tony Russell (APAL), Colin Little (consultant), Robert Holmes (Vic DPI), Francisco Trujillo (CSIRO), Paul James (PIRSA), Tony Portman (WA Agriculture), Des Muir (consultant), Jane Lovell (Tasmanian Quality Assured) and David Loxley (EE Muir/IHD).

A large number of follow-up actions were generated, broadly covering the following areas:

- Technical transfer and communication
- Scientific tests and research
- Bulk shipment trials

Some of the specific actions will be covered by existing projects whilst other actions will require a combination of VC and levy funding.

A second meeting was held on Wednesday 9 January involving Neil Offner, Richard Bennett, Kevin Bodnaruk and Jane Lovell. This meeting focused on issues regarding UK retailer certification requirements and UK government and retailer chemical policies. The key actions arising from this meeting were:

- A perceived urgent need to assist new growers and packers in UK retailer system training and certification needs; and
- The proposed development of an interactive web based database that will enable restricted and controlled access to data on retailer policies and requirements, Australian packhouse certifications, chemical information, etc.

PROUDLY MANAGED BY THE AUSTRALIAN FRESH FRUIT COMPANY

PO Box 363, Gisborne, Victoria 3437

Ph. 03 5420 7444 Fax 03 5420 7447 Email: andrewd@affco.com.au

Season Update

- The season is shaping up well in Stanthorpe, Orange, Tasmania and parts of southern Victoria and WA
- In other areas sunburn (SA, Goulburn Valley, parts of southern Victoria, Batlow and WA) and hail (Batlow and some in parts of Manjimup and Adelaide Hills) have had a significant impact on crops
- Rain has fallen in many parts of the country which will assist crops
- No serious frost has been reported as was the case last season

GlobalGAP

The different UK retailers are requiring various certifications but GlobalGAP (formerly EurepGAP) is the most common systems' platform.

PLA will be identifying grower/packers needs in regard to GlobalGAP with the aim of providing assistance to those in need, prior to and during, the next harvest.

Over the last few years, Pink Lady Australia and AFFCO have been proactive in trying to assist growers, packers and exporters to be compliant with retailer and trade requirements with the aim that they not be a barrier to export. GlobalGAP project coordinator, Jane Lovell, presented an update on GlobalGAP and other retailer specific requirements at the series of Pink Lady™ workshops in November. Feedback suggested that compliance cost was an issue for growers.

Following the recent technical workshop it is intended to run workshops to assist growers and packers in this area. Please register your interest in assistance by responding to the commitment form

Commitment Faxback

As is indicated earlier in the newsletter a number of new growers and packers have indicated commitment towards the 100 container target. It was a commitment which Andy Macdonald indicated needs to be made on a year in / year out basis to satisfy the keen interest of retailers in the "Original and Best" Australian Pink Lady™.

Please could you complete the commitment form and fax back to the AFFCO on 03 5420 7447 by **28 January**.

If you have questions regarding any item in this newsletter, please contact Andrew Dick on 03 5420 7444 or andrewd@affco.com.au

Disclaimer: AFFCO and PLA Limited cannot be held responsible for the accuracy of this newsletter or the validity of technical or market comments. In many cases, the contents reflect individual comments on hookups. AFFCO and PLA Limited members need to make their own commercial decisions.

PROUDLY MANAGED BY THE AUSTRALIAN FRESH FRUIT COMPANY

PO Box 363, Gisborne, Victoria 3437

Ph. 03 5420 7444 Fax 03 5420 7447 Email: andrewd@affco.com.au



FAXBACK to 03 5420 7447 by 28 January 2008

Company name:

Address:

Phone/Mobile:

Email:.....

Fax:.....

My/our business has given serious thought to our intention to participate in the Pink Lady Australia export program and provide the following estimates of our intention to supply over the next 3 years. There is a mutual understanding that these figures are an estimate provided in good faith but do not constitute a contract or any form of firm agreement. We understand that the PLA Board and Coordinator may use these estimates as a basis of allocation in any future program – also taking into account past records and other selection/customer criteria.

2008: Estimate in packed 12kgs

2009:

2010:

Any other comments:

.....

.....

YES, I would like to be involved in the workshop regarding **GlobalGAP**

Signed:

Name: Position:.....

Date:

PROUDLY MANAGED BY THE AUSTRALIAN FRESH FRUIT COMPANY
PO Box 363, Gisborne, Victoria 3437
Ph. 03 5420 7444 Fax 03 5420 7447 Email: andrewd@affco.com.au