



Pink Lady® Australia Limited Newsletter

March 2009 Issue

Welcome

Welcome to the first newsletter of Pink Lady Australia Limited (PLA) for 2009, which will be issued quarterly.

In this edition, you will find the following:

- an update on arrangements for this season
- In market feedback
- Technical support program
- GLOBALGAP project
- Harvest reminder
- UK grower alert program
- International Pink Lady Alliance update
- Pink Lady® brand manual

We hope that you find this edition beneficial – if you require further information or have any queries please contact:

PLA Business – Andrew Dick (details below) or 0417 357 702

PLA Technical related queries – Neil Offner 0434 253 978

Peter Richardson/ Craig Mostyn prichardson@craigmostyn.com.au

Ben Centra/ Montague Fresh bcentra@montaguefresh.com.au

Pink Lady® Australia Limited (PLA) Board Update

Export Program

The PLA Board has previously formally announced a change to the Pink Lady® Export Program as of January 2009. The Board decided to trial a new export model by utilising licensed exporters to represent PLA growers with their export endeavours. This follows a "summit" meeting held in Donnybrook in November and reflects the overall export volume last year. Following an in depth "expression of interest" process we are pleased to announce the following licensees for the 2009 season, Craig Mostyn and Montague Fresh.

The newly appointed licensees, Jon Durham from APAL in addition to Neil Offner and Andrew Dick from AFFCO met in early March and then subsequently by tele-hookup to plan the 2009 program.

The exporters will continue to be supported by PLA in the following critical areas - technical support (grower alerts relating to MRL's, facilitation of research into rots etc), Global GAP certification, access of international information and market intelligence, development of promotional programs, on-going research into more efficient modes of shipping (bulk shipments) and general support/ communication to potential participants.

The licensees will be co-operating on the development of a program, which can positively build the market.

Pink Lady Australia Limited

ABN 51 111 532 480

PO Box 363, Gisborne, Victoria, 3437, Australia

Tel: +61 (0) 3 5420 7444 Fax: +61 (0) 3 5420 7447 www.affco.com.au



This replaces the former model, which utilised a National Export Coordinator to oversee all PLA exports. The PLA Board on behalf of all members would like to thank Neil Offner for all his hard work and dedication regarding the export program to date and are pleased to advise that Neil will remain involved with PLA through AFFCO addressing the roles outlined above.

AFFCO Agreement

PLA has continued its partnership with AFFCO to coordinate its many programs but will scale down its operations considerably for the time being. PLA remain committed to research and development and rebuilding its strong export reputation as leading producers of Pink Lady® apples.

2009 program

The 2009 program is in development against a background of difficult market conditions, particularly in the UK where the global recession has been felt. Pink Lady® sales are still tracking well but it remains to be seen whether the growth of the past two years will be maintained. The aim of this season's arrangements is to provide a point of difference to UK customers and build on this in subsequent years – particularly with 2009 expected to be a more challenging one (although it is still early days).

It is intended to work through very limited distribution channels with the aim of maximising the benefit to all parties. Currently a proposal and funding application has been made with the aim of having a promotional program, which really promotes Australian Pink Lady® apples at the time of sales.

The chart below shows the latest information from the UK on sales – this does show a slight decline in sales in the early part of the year. Current information suggests that the European crop should be sold out by May.

Indications from Southern Hemisphere countries are for slight increases on last year. As we all know – we will not know how it will really shape up until after picking. The gathering of the market intelligence from a range of sources will be critical to successfully marketing our crop this season.

COREGEO

10.03.09



YEAR TO DATE SALES UK - PINK LADY®

2009		** NEW WEIGHT CONVERSION - 12.5kg cartons**											
	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	TOTAL
EUROPE	153111	118551	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	271661
USA	66479	96827	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	163306
RSA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
AUSTRALIA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
NEW ZEALAND	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
CHILE	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
ARGENTINA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	219590	215377	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	434967
% Increase on 08	-12	-7											
QTR TOTAL	434967			0			0			0			

2008		** NEW WEIGHT CONVERSION - 12.5kg cartons**											
	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	TOTAL
EUROPE	206965	175828	176912	148542	115622	4743	0	0	0	2304	86451	146841	1064206
USA	41898	54903	67038	96854	84261	4944	13	0	0	0	0	12946	362856
RSA	0	0	0	0	15903	115942	145193	125384	106469	173326	76076	1276	759569
AUSTRALIA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8482	15080	10867	3015	37443
NEW ZEALAND	0	0	0	0	0	3837	45073	43457	67151	13641	2211	5	175376
CHILE	0	0	0	0	12713	139404	129468	138185	81155	13073	25	0	514024
ARGENTINA	0	0	0	0	5619	25946	6924	1072	2092	-403	0	0	41250
TOTAL	248863	230729	243950	245396	234118	294817	326671	308098	265350	217021	175630	164083	2954724
	723541			774331			900119			556733			

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Pink Lady® Technical support

PLA will (through AFFCO) continue to have an overall program coordination function and work across a number of critical technical projects.

In regard to Pink Lady® exports, Neil Offner remains contracted to AFFCO to address the following areas:

- International market intelligence
- Continued communication to the Industry on UK/EU government chemical policies (in association with Kevin Bodnaruk) and UK retailer chemical policies. A current example of this is an announcement by the UK retail chain Cooperatives to ban a number of pesticides which is being followed up with the respective import company technical manager
- Appropriate linkages with the national rot project and work on internal browning
- Stocktake and assessment of post-harvest treatments and identification of high priority areas
- Bulk shipment trials

Neil enjoyed working across a range of coordination functions in 2008 and will continue to maintain the focus in the above areas in 2009. The focus of these activities will be on areas, which have been identified as critical areas of need for exports. This may include visits to regions around harvest time.

For more information on this article please contact:
Neil Offner via email: neiloffner@ozemail.com.au or phone: 0434 253 978

Harvest reminder

The picking of Pink Lady® apples is drawing closer in all growing regions in Australia and this is a critical time for the export program in terms of fruit being picked at its optimum and allocated in storage for this purpose.

The basic principles of optimum picking would be well known to all growers and packers but are summarised below as a reminder:

Pink Lady® apples must be harvested when mature, but at an early stage of ripening. It is a generally accepted principle that to obtain maximum storage life, fruit must be harvested at, or close to, its pre-climacteric respiration minimum. Fruit at this stage may appear 'too green' but it has completed maturation and therefore contains its maximum carbohydrate reserve. Picking at optimum maturity minimises disorders and maximises storage life and post harvest quality. Fruit colour is not always a good indicator of maturity. Waiting for colour can significantly reduce storage potential. Maturity of fruit from any one variety varies between blocks even on the same orchard.

Best Management Practices

- Predict harvest dates
- Start measuring maturity prior to predicted harvest dates
- Use a range of parameters to determine maturity

Accepted maturity parameters

- Starch-Iodine test (measuring the degree to which starch has converted to sugars)
- Firmness (rule of thumb for export: 8-9 kg)
- Total Soluble Solids
- Ground colour
- Internal Ethylene

Acknowledgement: This general information and some of the wording has been extracted from training materials developed in South Australia by the Apple and Pear Growers Association of SA Inc and Rural Solutions, Department of Primary Industries, SA

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AFFCO Growers Alert: UK Chemical Regulations

Neil Offner is currently sourcing data from the UK on relevant government and retailer chemical policies that will apply for 2009. Once these are received, they will be reviewed and a PLA Chemical Alert issued as needed.

We expect that the 2008 chemical alerts, if followed, will address most circumstances but any new advice will be issued as soon as a review is completed. Obviously too late for most applications but will at least flag potential problem grower lines.

This is an ongoing PLA/AFFCO task and it remains critical to the export program.

For more information on this article please contact:
Neil Offner via email: neiloffner@ozemail.com.au or phone: 0434 253 978

GLOBALGAP project – Field to Fork & Certification offer

As part of this year's program, the intention is for Tundra Howe from TQA to visit WA and SA to carry out audits for M&S's Field to Fork program.

Again this year growers have the opportunity to contact AUS-QUAL Pty Ltd to investigate opportunities for savings on audits. [Last year some members benefited from the specials that were on offer.](#)

Contact Andrew Brown at AUS-QUAL on 07 3361 9233 or email andrew.brown@ausqual.com.au

"AUS-QUAL Pty Ltd and PLA – a collaborative approach to meeting market requirements

AUS-QUAL Pty Ltd is in a position to provide GLOBALGAP Certification at competitive rates to PLA members. AUS-QUAL Auditors are practical, experienced and "grower-friendly" and AUS-QUAL offers a professional and on time service. Certification to other programs (such as Freshcare) can be combined with the GLOBALGAP Certification at a discounted rate.

Other services offered include Certification to; BRC, SQF 1000, SQF 2000, Freshcare, Retail Quality Assurance Programs (WQA, Coles), HACCP, ISO 9001:2000 and ISO 22000.

Please contact AUS-QUAL on 1800 630 890 for pricing and other information."

International Pink Lady® Alliance (IPLA)

One of Pink Lady Australia Limited's key functions is to be a member of the International Pink Lady® Alliance.

The IPLA comprises most countries where Pink Lady® apples are produced. It acts as a forum for exchange of information for the benefit of the brand as well as providing strategic direction on Pink Lady® management.

Benefits of IPLA include:

- Technical exchange from around the world
- Sharing of production data and trends
- Development of a supply demand model to improve brand profitability
- Up to date and independent source of market information and intelligence
- Focus for brand management and co-ordination on issues such as essentially derived varieties

For more information on this article please contact:
Jon Durham via email: jdurham@apal.org.au or phone 0417 568 552

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Pink Lady® Brand Manual

As you would have read in the recent IPLA newsletter and other media resources, APAL have completed their brand manual for the Pink Lady® brand. The manual is a prize document and is so comprehensive that it was one reason that APAL won the NAB Agribusiness Awards for Excellence in late 2008 in the Agribusiness Value Adding section.

An extract from the Brand Manual reads:

“Our success requires a total commitment and passion to create a brand that will WOW the world. To be successful in achieving this and to ensure continued growth of a successful Pink Lady® global brand, it is essential that the Pink Lady® worldwide team adheres to the Pink Lady® Brand Guidelines. The team must also be dedicated to developing and promoting Pink Lady® product in a way that is always consistent with the Brand's bright, healthy image, fresh thinking approach and product excellence..”

You will notice that the Pink Lady® logo has changed slightly and now all Pink Lady® advertising and correspondence will be consistent pursuant to the requirements of the brand manual.

For more information on this article please contact:
Sally Piper via email: sallyp@affco.com.au or phone: 03 5420 7444

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.