



**Hazelnut Growers of Australia Ltd.**  
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## Hazelnut Newsletter Number 8 – September 2004

### **REMINDER - HGA AGM & SEMINAR 13<sup>th</sup> & 14<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER, HOBART, TASMANIA BOOK NOW**

#### **Recent Activities**

A well attended farm walk was held on the 6th March demonstrating a sweeper, a vacuum harvester, sorting and drying at Dennis & Margaret Bears property. A visit was also undertaken to the Trial Plot at Ovens to view the development of the trees and crop during nut fall. The hazelnut trees at Ovens continue to be the largest cropping trial plot and looked in very good condition.

#### **Board Activities**

After the farm walk on 6th March, the Board meet and discussed general issues and future research. Preliminary applications for research funding were prepared and forwarded to Horticulture Australia Ltd (HAL), the organisation which manages research funding for horticulture. The two projects proposed by HGA are outlined later in the Newsletter.

#### **Australian Nut Industry Council (ANIC)**

HGA representatives (Stewart Deans & Peter Wheelwright) attended an ANIC meeting in May and the recent ANIC Conference (7th September) held in conjunction with Fine Foods Exhibition in Melbourne. The ANIC conference was well attended by 84 delegates representing processors, importers/exporters, distributors, government/quasi government bodies. An update was given on the Nuts for Health Campaign. Surprisingly the campaign research shows that the majority of doctors think nuts are bad for you!

Presentations were given by representatives from HAL. Of interest was the fact that horticulture in Australia is valued at \$6bn, nuts represent 2% of this but get 7.2% of all HAL funding (so far, since 1993 the nut industry has received \$20 Million).

A presentation was given by Horticulture Australia Council (HAC). This is the political lobby arm of horticulture which is currently battling for

the rights of fresh horticulture sellers against the big supermarkets dominance and practices in purchasing horticulture products.

Plant Health Australia (PHA) and the Quarantine Inspection Service (QIS) also gave presentations on issues relating to disease and cost sharing plans to combat any future outbreak of a serious disease. Currently a draft plan is in place where the affected "industry" eg hazelnuts would put in 2% of the industries total farm gate value towards combating a disease outbreak, with the government paying the rest. Payment by the industry could be made over 10 years. The idea by PHA is to have an agreed formula for paying the cost to combat any outbreak so that immediate action could be undertaken rather than have arguments over who pays what cost and the disease spreads in the meantime.

The conference also covered food recalls, marketing, retail and supply relationships.

The ANIC Board meet on 8th September. Phil Montgomery from the Australian Macadamia Society Ltd was elected President. A presentation was given on the \$200,000 per annum campaign Nuts for Health.

#### **Research Projects**

As mentioned above HGA has applied to HAL for funding for two research projects. Any contribution from HAL is required to be matched by HGA.

The first project is to study *The Water Requirements of Hazelnuts*. Initial funding of \$5,000 for the year 2004/05 has been sought, with further funding required in later years to complete the study.

The second project is to study *Pest & Diseases in Hazelnuts* with the results being used for production of a useful handbook for growers.

Initial funding for year 2004/05 has been sought for \$10,000, with further funding to follow in later years.

Despite many requests for expressions of interest from researchers, it is unlikely that *The Water Requirements of Hazelnuts* project will start this year. A more detailed specification is required to be prepared on what HGA wants to achieve, before tenders can be called.

The second project on *Pests & Diseases in Hazelnuts* is proposed to be undertaken by Lester Snare, from N.S.W. Department of Primary Industries (Orange Agricultural Institute), who is currently preparing the funding submission.

A full discussion by members and the Board, on the merits or otherwise of these proposed projects will be undertaken at this year's AGM in Hobart.

#### Coming Events

**The AGM and Seminar** is being held in Tasmania this year. Responses to date have been disappointing – **PLEASE come along and have your say on research, get elected, get informed.**

Your attendance makes the HGA Seminar a useful place to meet other growers with problems similar to yours and to seek solutions to growing, harvesting and marketing hazelnuts.

Please contact the Secretary, Tom McInnes at [hazelnut@tpg.com.au](mailto:hazelnut@tpg.com.au) or phone 0500 829 357

#### Conclusion

This newsletter is intended to provide a means of communication between the Board and the HGA members. Comments on the newsletter and articles/information for inclusion are welcomed and should be addressed to The President, Peter Wheelwright, by phone on 03-5756 2052, or by email to [pwheelwright@bigpond.com](mailto:pwheelwright@bigpond.com)

## HGA AGM & Seminar

The weekend of November 13th & 14th represents an opportunity for current HGA members and prospective members, together with people interested in sharing in the growth of the Hazelnut Industry in

Australia, to participate in the development of the HGA.

The Seminar will also be held in Tasmania for the first time in recognition of the potential for development of the Hazelnut industry in that State and importantly it will lift the HGA profile in Tasmania.

Members will be given details of the results of the survey conducted to prepare a picture of the industry plantings and harvest results. They will be briefed on the crop yields and be able to provide guidance to the committee on their requirements for research in the industry.

New growers will learn about the intricacies of starting an orchard and developing it to its full potential.

On Sunday, members will be able to hear a summary of current research results and discuss these results with the researcher. They will also be briefed on the new orchard equipment being used overseas and the Tasmanian problems with Big Bud Mite.

The Saturday evening dinner presents an opportunity for growers both new and old to mix in a relaxed atmosphere and to meet old friends and make new contacts throughout the industry.

**The HGA is your  
organisation be part of it**