



NTHA WISHES ALL MEMBERS A VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS

Friday December 17th 2004 EDITION 13

Tom and I attended a forum to review the MASKargo freighter trial. Discussions from all stakeholders clearly highlighted where the trial was let down and offered the department some valuable feedback as to the best way forward. The NTHA will work closely with growers and DBIRD Business department to achieve the desired outcome of opening up export market opportunities to growers.

Coordination of Minor Use Permits for Horticulture

Before agricultural pesticides can be supplied, sold or used in Australia, the Australian Pesticides & Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) must register them. However, the information required to gain registration for pesticides is often financially unviable for minor industries and minor uses within larger industries. Australian horticultural crops currently have a significant problem with access to approved pesticide uses. Issues contributing to this situation include the loss of uses through chemical reviews, emerging crops, requirements of quality assurance programs, resistance and the disinclination of manufacturers to register minor uses. To overcome this shortcoming the APVMA has a National Permit Scheme, however, most horticultural industries do not have the resources or expertise to prepare Minor-Use Permit (MUP) submissions. Horticulture's access to approved pesticides through MUP is now coordinated and managed by the newly appointed consultant Peter Dal Santo of AgAware Consulting and horticulture will certainly benefit from this coordinated approach. If you have any requests for pesticides that you would like to be able to legally use for disease, insect or weed control, there is a "Wish List" form available at the NTHA office. Please note that all information provided will be treated in confidence. For a copy of the Chemical Wish List please contact the NTHA office and for more information on the project contact: Peter Dal Santo. Phone 03 5439 5916 email pds@agaware.com.au

APVMA HAS ISSUED THE FOLLOWING PERMITS

PER7815 - Imidacloprid - cucumber for Greenhouse Whitefly
Valid 2/12/04 to 30/11/07

Emergency permit to replace procymidone
PER8113 - Boscalid - green beans for Sclerotinia Valid 2/12/04 to 30/9/05
Brismark and the Australian Chamber have claimed that 96% of growers responding to a

survey distributed by the wholesalers have indicated they do not support a Mandatory Horticulture Business Code. We can only conclude that all the responses from the NT 'got lost in the mail!' They have also claimed that growers are not being accurately represented by grower associations. The NTHA has supported and is continuing to support, the introduction of a mandatory code. Following the release of the Review of the Retail Industry Grocery Code of Conduct the NTHA Council voted to support the introduction of the Horticulture Business Code. We believe that we are responding to the needs of our growers and the number of complaints we receive from growers supports this. All growers want is clarity in their business dealings to ensure:

- Wholesalers clearly disclosing whether they are acting as a merchant or an agent.
- Agents (people who sell produce on growers' behalf) fully disclosing who they sold the product to, for how much, what their commission was, the GST paid, as well as other information growers need to make informed business decisions.
- Merchants (people who buy the product from growers to sell on) taking ownership of the produce once they have purchased it and therefore meeting any losses incurred after purchase.
- Clear and definite trading terms which in turn allow clear market signals (ie untainted feedback about how growers' produce is performing in the marketplace)
- Clear description of ownership throughout the chain so that growers do not always bear the cost of returned produce due to over-ordering or mishandling of their purchasers.
- A better informed sector so that each party has, and understands, their clear roles, rights and responsibilities.
- A spirit of transparency, fairness and professionalism, supported by strong regulations, so that growers can feel comfortable airing legitimate grievances without fear of retribution.
- Better communication and professionalism, enabling growers to receive timely feedback about their produce and practices.

If you, as a grower feels that NTHA' s decision to fight for a mandatory code is not representing what you really want, please let us know. Our job is to represent you , your job is to tell us what you want.

The NTMIA Board met on Tuesday night. Agenda items discussed were:

AGM and Post Harvest Meeting Dates; Saturday 5th of February has been set for a post harvest meeting.

Venue: Berry Springs Reserve. Time TBA. A Meeting Notice will be distributed in the New Year.

Industry Forum to be held tentatively in April with all stakeholders in the supply chain being invited to attend. The aim is to get a synopsis of the season from a 'whole' of supply chain perspective. A detailed report from this forum will be a valuable bench marketing tool and will provide growers with an understanding of supply chain management issues and market capacity when large volumes of fruit enter the markets in a short window.

AMIA Board to meet in Darwin in March 2005 and meet with growers. (date to be advised)

NTMIA Projects Officer The NTMIA to meet on Monday to discuss a project submission for additional resources for NTMIA projects.

Other Items Raised were: Horticulture Business Code, Land Clearing Issues, Harvest Labour , NT Worksafe and Bio Security.

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This will be the last newsletter for the year. The office will be closed from Wednesday the 22nd of December and will re open on Monday January 10th 2005. I will be checking emails regularly so if you have any urgent items please email ntha@octa4.net.au or you can contact me on 0419 731 208.

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There are lots of people who have assisted me in my role with the NTHA and it is not possible to say thank you to all. But I would like to sincerely thank Tom Harris, Jan Hintze and the NTHA Council Members for their ongoing support. Julie Thomas, Christine Donahugh (DBIRD) and Jill Macmahon for the valuable assistance they have provided to me .I would also like to thank Peter Cavanagh for his valuable contributions to the association and the industry.

On behalf of the NTHA Council and Staff I would like to wish all members and their families a very Merry Christmas and a Safe and Prosperous New Year.

Tracey Leo
Northern Territory Horticultural Association