



Friday June 24<sup>th</sup> 2005      EDITION 37



### Bird Damage Control

We are receiving a number of enquiries from growers seeking information on Bird Damage Control. The very dry wet season has left many waterholes and billabongs un-replenished, resulting in an increase in bird related problems on farm. John Tracey from Vertebrate Pest Research Unit, NSW Department of Primary Industries, Australasian Pest Bird Network has been conducting the national Bird Damage Control Survey to assist develop National Guidelines for Controlling Bird Damage. Although the draft guidelines have not been released John has provided a compilation of information on bird control. If you need info please do not hesitate to contact the office and we can email or post out.

**HAVE YOUR SAY!** You still have an opportunity to direct research and development into bird damage in horticulture and viticulture by completing the one-page survey. Only 12 of the 910 replies so far are from NT growers. These were mainly mango growers suffering damage from magpie geese. It would be great to increase representation from the NT. This is especially important as the suite of different species and crops involved (magpie geese, red-winged parrots, northern rosellas) are quite different to other states. The information you provide will allow targeted development on the aspects of pest bird management that you believe are most relevant. It will also enable government and industry organisations to more effectively allocate research resources to crops and regions most affected by birds. Importantly, this survey will provide an insight to the problems posed at a national level. Your observations are valuable in this process.

All information you provide will be kept strictly confidential and we urge that you answer questions frankly. Name and contact details are optional although if you do desire confidentiality we ask that you provide your post code. Results will be reported on a regional basis and specific information will be used for verifying results only. Forms are available from the NTHA, please contact the office and we can email, fax or post out. For more information contact John Tracey on 02 63913952, or [john.tracey@agric.nsw.gov.au](mailto:john.tracey@agric.nsw.gov.au).

### Enviro News

The NTHA / NTAgA Best Practice for Sustainable Land Use ( BPSLU ), project steering committee met on Monday to review the project schedule and outcomes to date. Concerns were raised about the perceived role of the EDO .The role of environmental project officer is very specific to the project and is not to be confused with and IDO. The baseline survey has been signed off and will be circulated in the next few weeks so please keep an eye-out for it. Tim West, BPSLU project officer, has been meeting with growers undertaking the Horticulture for Tomorrow (HFT) Guideline trials. Jane Lovell the coordinator for the HFT Guidelines has spent the week with Tim, work-shopping these draft guidelines in Darwin and Katherine. The input from the interested grower groups from the Darwin and Katherine regions was excellent which will enable the guidelines to be developed with more relevance to the Top End and in a context that is more users friendly.



Members of the NTHA Council, NTMIA Board, HPG, DBIRD Business and DBIRD Horticulture met with Jane Lovell, Manager of Tasmanian Quality Assured Inc (TQA) to discuss her experiences in establishing the TQA system involving producers from many different backgrounds. The system has been designed to meet the needs of customers and is grower-friendly and flexible. The TQA certified quality mark has been developed to identify and unite quality assured Tasmanian products.



### Learn about the Northern Territory's Largest Export Destination

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade presents an information session on Australia's trading relationship with the world's fastest growing economy, China. Mr Ric Wells is Australia's Lead Negotiator on the Free Trade Agreement with China. Ric will be in Darwin on 7 July to speak about prospects for increased trade with China, Australia's second largest export market and the NT's largest. This presentation forms part of the International Forum to be held at Crowne Plaza Hotel Ballroom, 32 Mitchell Street DARWIN on Thursday 7 July from 2 .00 pm Entry free. Afternoon tea provided. For further information on China call the Department's Northern Territory Office on tel 8982 4104 or log onto to the website: [www.dfat.gov.au](http://www.dfat.gov.au).



The NTHA is lobbying to address the current fees for Chemcert accreditation. Chemcert as a stand alone course is not eligible for Farmbi\$. The Northern Territory Chemcert delivery agent charges up to 33% more for full accreditation than other states and up to 42% more for renewals. The cost of the course in NSW is currently \$ 270.00 for full accreditation and \$ 170.00 for renewal. The NT is \$ 407.00 per student for both the full course and the ½ day refresher. This is becoming cost prohibitive to many primary producers. The NTHA is negotiating with training providers to deliver training to the NT at a more competitive rate. All spray operators using S7 chemicals should have a current ChemCert certificate. This will be a mandatory requirement for all S7 authorisations from Jan 1<sup>st</sup> 2006.



It is a Freshcare requirement that all staff involved in the supervision of the use of farm chemicals must have successfully completed a recognised farm chemical users course or equivalent and be able to demonstrate continued competency. (*Staff means all personnel working in the business, including family members & contractors working on the property or in the business.*) This is still a 'major' issue in the Freshcare checklist and growers unable to provide evidence of appropriate chemical user training will not be able to move to Certification. The change between the 1st and 2nd Edition of the Freshcare code , is that Freshcare no longer requires 'current accreditation', instead focusing on 'continued competency' - as assessed by the auditor through other elements of the Code of Practice e.g. chemical storage, handling, mixing, calibration, application and recording. Therefore a grower who achieves chemical user certification through Chemcert does not need to demonstrate re-certification after 5 years for Fresh care; however they may need to do so for other reasons including authorised use of schedule 7 chemicals. All members will be sent an expression of interest to undertake Chemcert accreditation / renewal, your responses will be critical in gauging numbers to assist with pricing negotiations.



Cheers

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