

# AUSTRALIAN MANGOES



## Experiences Accompanying First Australian Mango Shipment to the US

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# United States – market

- 319 m people
- >350,000 tonnes / year and growing, mainly from Mexico
- Consumers looking for flavour and ripe / ready to eat
- Retailers want mangoes that are ripe & ready to sell



# United States – market access

- Opened in Jan 2015 for Australian mangoes after 16 years of work
- Two initial shipments, total  $\approx$  5 tonnes, were made in Feb 2015





# United States – grower requirements

- Register blocks and packing shed
- Use endorsed pest scout to monitor US pests of concern and record in approved format
- Pesticide use compliant with US MRLs
- Comply with Operational Work Plan
- Use USDA approved pest secure packaging
- Register with US FDA for prior notice of food importation
- GlobalGAP



# US pathway – pest secure package

- USDA approved
- Mesh over vent holes (  $\leq 0.6 \times 0.6\text{mm}$  or  $\leq 0.8 \text{ mm}$  on the hypotenuse)
- Mod 12, 5 kg carton
- 11 and 13 counts
- Comply with US FDA labelling requirements



# US pathway - inspection

- Inspection in Brisbane prior to treatment
- Inspect > 150 fruit per lot (block)
- Cut >30 fruit per lot through the seed
- $\approx$  nil tolerance for live insects
- Hitchhiker pests intercepted at both inspections





# US pathway - treatment

- Irradiation treatment
- Takes about an hour
- >300 Gy min dose for fruit flies and MSW
- Both shipments treated >400 Gy for hitchhiker pests



# US pathway - airfreight

- 13 hours BNE - LAX
- Total time about 24 hours
- Air freight (incl docs and handling) about \$13.50 / tray equivalent
- 4.5 tonnes on the airline pallet





# US pathway – US CPB inspection

- Check paperwork for compliance
- Check package for compliance
- Inspect fruit for insects and other pests



# US pathway – cleared!

- First ever Australian mangoes in the US
- Calypso from Bundaberg
- At importer's DC for unloading



# US importer's DC, LAX

- Airline ULD unloaded, fruit palletised and into cool room
- 24 x 7, fruit and vegetables from all over the world
- Quality checked
- Transported by truck to customer in Texas





# US - sales and marketing

- Importers sent samples to produce buyers at their key retail and food service customers throughout the US
- Importers also undertook social media campaigns + word of mouth in the Los Angeles area



# US - sales and marketing

- Highly competitive market place
- Sales effort; 'romancing' the fruit with stories about the fruit is vital for market success



# US fruit sticker - example

- Prepared by the importer of shipment #2
- Has all the required consumer information
- Different interpretations of US FDA irradiation labelling requirements
- Different PLUs





# US retailer - DC

- San Antonio, TX, Tuesday, 5 days after landing
- HEB chain, 300 stores, only in Texas
- Sold in their nine high end *Central Market* stores in Dallas, Houston, Austin and San Antonio



# US supermarket

- Wednesday, 6 days after landing
- *Central Market* store, Dallas, \$3.99 / each
- Competition (Peru) selling for \$1.98 / each
- Fruit was ripe, very attractive and sold quickly





# US pathway – fruit quality

- Initial shipments – retail quality was very good, customers happy
- Relationship between harvesting handling x stage of ripeness x treatment = retail appearance
- It will be important to understand that relationship





# US market – 2<sup>nd</sup> shipment

- Keitt from Mareeba
- Distributed to supermarkets in Texas, Arizona, Missouri and New York



# Lessons and messages

- Compliance essential
- Customers want near ripe & ready to eat fruit
- Harvesting handling & stage of ripeness may be critical to retail quality
- Need to consistently deliver on the promise
- 'Australian-ness' resonates



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THANK YOU