

# MANGO MATTERS



OCTOBER 2019 / VOLUME THIRTY-SEVEN

## Getting consumers to grab a mango this season

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Biosecurity—mango malformation disease

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Growers trial high density mango systems

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Noel Sammon remembered

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## Engaging at Asia Fruit Logistica a big success

The annual event provided an excellent platform for Australian Mangoes to engage with growers, exporters, importers and retailers who will collaborate on marketing campaigns during the 2019/2020 season.

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If you would like to submit pictures and story ideas to AMIA, or provide feedback, please contact the AMIA team via the details listed on this page.

# CEO'S REPORT



**Robert Gray**  
Chief Executive Officer, AMIA

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After a very widespread flowering event across all regions, conditions have remained cool resulting in delayed progression of fruit set and maturity and a slower start than first expected. In Queensland the cool nights have been so severe we've had reports of some growers being significantly impacted by frost and to top that the dry weather has increased the incidence of fires, with at least one of our growers losing an orchard and house to bush fires. We've also had reports of growers that have lost trees in the Northern Territory (NT). Our thoughts are with these growers.

In other sad news, we've received word of the passing of Noel Sammon. Noel was recognised at the 11th Australian Mangoes Conference (in Bowen), for his significant contribution to the mango industry, for his involvement with Honey Gold mangoes. We send our condolences to his family and friends.

**“We have an additional VHT plant being readied for operation in Brisbane this season and the additional irradiation site in Melbourne is nearing completion.”**

*- Robert Gray*

Over the past few months we have been busy holding our pre-season roadshows and have seen many of you on the road. Those who attended the NT and Kununurra roadshows would have met our new Industry Development Manager, Bryony Hackett, who has now commenced officially in the role. We hope that you will join us in welcoming her to Australian Mangoes.

In September, I joined Marketing Manager, Treena Welch at Asia Fruit Logistica. It was a fantastic opportunity to showcase our delicious and vibrant fruit to Asia and we had some great meetings with our export customers while we were there to discuss plans for the upcoming season. In addition, our Chairman, Ben Martin visited Japan and South Korea on a trade mission with the Federal Minister for Agriculture, the Hon. Bridget McKenzie. You can read more about this visit in his report. The growth in affluence and the potential for high quality Australian mangoes to be supplied to these markets continues to be an opportunity for our industry. Opening up these markets to more efficient trade through the improvement to our protocols and treatment options is a major focus of our team and we are pleased to see the support from the minister and her department in achieving this outcome.

Increasing the percentage of crop exported from 13% (currently) to over 20% is our target which I believe is very much in sight.

We heard at the NT roadshows of commitment being made to invest in vapour heat treatment (VHT) and export infrastructure for the 2020 season. We have an additional VHT plant being readied for operation in Brisbane this season and the additional irradiation site in Melbourne is nearing completion. The investment we are making with research and development (R&D) funds to develop the data package which confirms that our mangoes are not a host for fruit fly's when harvested mature green will build on our suite of options to make our export aspirations a reality.

As reiterated again across the roadshows, play your part in making our crop forecast as accurate as possible and align all your activities to deliver the two key moments of truth; great looking retail displays and fantastic eating experiences for our consumers.

Keep your eyes posted on our newsletter for dates for the next pre-season roadshows and I look forward to seeing you there. I wish the industry a great season ahead.

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# CHAIRMAN'S REPORT



**Ben Martin**  
Chairman, AMIA

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*Ben Martin joined key importers, retailers and government officials at Austrade's office in South Korea.*

It is on a sad note that I start this board report off with the news that growers in Queensland and the Northern Territory have lost a significant number of trees and buildings in recent fires. Our thoughts go out to these growers and it is a timely reminder to be extremely vigilant and well prepared during this dry season. With the amount of dry weather, we have been having it is extremely important to ensure your soil moisture levels are within acceptable levels to minimise tree stress.

Last month I had the honour of attending a trade mission with the Federal Minister for Agriculture, the Hon. Bridget McKenzie to Japan and South Korea. The opportunities that these countries pose for the mango industry is enormous. Throughout the tour we heard time and time again that

they wanted a good constant supply of Australian mangoes.

We also had a number of meetings with Australian Embassy staff that head up the on the ground negotiating for market access protocols. We discussed the industry's plan to grow exports to 20% of the total crop and the importance that these countries have in helping us achieve this goal in our strategic plan.

It was also good to meet with Austrade officials on the ground, especially in South Korea, where they are very supportive of the industry and the hard work that some of our larger growers have done over the years in developing this market. It is great to see that the minister is fully engaged with the mango industry on our priorities and challenges.

I also met with the Queensland Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries, the Hon. Mark Furner while the Queensland Parliament held a Regional Sitting in Townsville. Minister Furner is a great supporter of the mango industry and we had a discussion on some of the issues our industry faces once again. It is going to take all levels of government and industry to work together to ensure that our industry is a sustainable and profitable one into the future and I look forward to working with both levels of government to ensure that this happens for all growers in the industry.



*Attending dinner at the Australian Embassy in Tokyo, Japan.*



*Touring the Ota Fruit and Vegetable Markets in Tokyo, Japan.*

# DIRECTOR REPORTS

Editor's note – Director reports were received before recent weather events.

## NORTHERN TERRITORY & NORTHERN WESTERN AUSTRALIA



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2019 mango season has kicked off in the Northern Territory (NT) with NT ripe mangoes hitting the shelves from the beginning of July. At the same time, other farms in the region have just had their first flower of the year—there have been multiple flowering events in the Darwin region. Multiple flowerings may mean that we will see some Darwin Kensington Prides (KPs) hitting the market in November 2019, which may be an issue for some growers. As we speak there are also a number of quality issues for mangoes in the marketplace.

I call on NT growers (and indeed the Australian industry) to ensure your mangoes meet Australian Mangoes recommended maturity standards, so consumers come back for a second or seventh time this season.

Dry season was in full swing this year very early on in April. This year has been called one of the driest, longest and coldest on record. We got down to 8°C on Friday, 30 August, which is very unusual for that time of year, this will delay some mango maturity.

Water is another hot topic in the NT, with some of the underground levels being the lowest on record. I ask growers to be water wise if possible until we get a decent wet season.

The Magpie Geese Project, funded by Hort Innovation, and run by Amelie Corriveau, Hamish Campbell and the team at RIEL, CDU has come to an end, this was a three year project.

There was a pamphlet with recommendations being given out at the pre-season roadshow in Darwin in August, with suggestions on how to reduce the damage caused by geese on mango crops. I would like to thank Amelie and Hamish for their tireless effort in trying to find a solution to this problem.

As previously stated above, Australian Mangoes held the pre-season roadshow at Darwin River Tavern in August, it was well attended by mango growers and scientists, we heard from BOM, NT Quarantine and Micronised Minerals to name a few.

I wish all the growers a good mango season ahead and see you all on the other side.



**Geoff Warnock**  
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**KUNUNURRA:** I am pleased to report this region has experienced its' strongest flowering for a number of seasons.

Continual flowering (not stop-start flowering like we have had during the past three to four seasons) has resulted in a great fruit set; with most trees carrying fruit ranging from golf ball to pea size. This is an encouraging outcome for growers after a very poor wet season.

Looking forward we will be faced with a drawn-out season with numerous pickings. If September performs to tradition and produces three or four 40-degree days, a lot of the smaller fruit will be eliminated (dropped). Despite potential fruit drop the region should still see a much larger crop than has been seen for a while.

With the expected increase in volume of fruit, this in turn may exacerbate issues with finding sufficient transport, to move the produce to the market.



However, if negotiations are started early, this should enable the matter to be resolved. Accurate forecasting is paramount to ensuring there is enough transport and I would encourage growers to keep their forecasts up to date with Industry Development Officer, Sarah Hain ([sarah@mangoes.net.au](mailto:sarah@mangoes.net.au)).



**Joe Perry**  
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As I write this report the Katherine region has experienced a large flowering across all varieties with fruit starting to set. Early indications are for a large crop load from this flowering event; with most farms still in the process of fruit set and no drop as of yet.

The weather is looking stunning with the forecast for the day temperatures to start to increase and the night time temperatures rising as well. The long-range forecast is indicating a late start to the wet season, which should work well with crop timing in the region, for most varieties.

*Continued page 7*

**“I call on NT growers (and indeed the Australian industry) to ensure your mangoes meet Australian Mangoes recommended maturity standards, so consumers come back for a second or seventh time this season.”**

*- Han Shiong Siah*



**John Nardi**  
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Firstly, I would like to say thank you to all my fellow board members who recently welcomed me to the AMIA board. I look forward to working with the AMIA team, fellow directors, growers and all involved in the industry to keep driving for a strong and rewarding future for Australian mangoes.

I recently attended the pre-season roadshows in Darwin and Mareeba and it was good to catch up with most that attended. Once again, the presentations were well received and informative and it was good to see the work the AMIA team is doing and the results they have achieved. It was also pleasing to see that the roles Sarah and Marine are doing have been well received and supported by growers. They are both having a positive impact on the industry. On a personal note, I would like to congratulate Marine on her recent wedding and we look forward to seeing her back on farms shortly.

Flowering in the region is slow in some areas, but is looking strong around Dimbulah and Mutchilba, with some farms/blocks flowering later. However, most farms have reported consistent and even flowering. Some farms closer to Mareeba are further behind the Dimbulah/Mutchilba areas.

Despite extended cold mornings it looks like the potential is there for a reasonable overall crop pending the outcome of fruit drop. The cool weather could result in a larger fruit drop than normal depending on how quickly the warmer weather sets in and the daily temperatures we hit. At this stage growers are indicating the flowering is approximately two weeks behind last season. Let's hope it all pans out to a favourable season for all.

*Continued page 8*

## **FAR NORTH QUEENSLAND & NORTH QUEENSLAND**



**John Nucifora**  
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It's that time of year again where the next season is starting. The Mareeba/Dimbulah area has had good strong flowering with some reports of slight frost damage. We have experienced a cool winter and the cold mornings are still lingering however growing conditions are very good.

Australian Mangoes just conducted our annual pre-season roadshow and we had good attendance. It was great to see many of you there.

It's still too early to predict total volumes, but from what I am hearing the region will be up on supply compared to last year. I urge all growers to accurately forecast crop volumes and remember to update their crop forecast throughout the season—particularly if there are any unforeseen changes. This will assist retailers and wholesalers in planning marketing and in-turn increase sales for all of us.

I wish all my growers well in the up and coming season.

*Continued from page 6*

Thanks to the AMIA team for putting on a successful run of roadshows for the Northern Territory (NT) growers. With a wide range of presenters and cross section of industry representation; there was a good flow of information to come out of the sessions. I would encourage all industry stakeholders to attend a roadshow in the future, as they are an opportunity to get a broader view of the challenges and opportunities for the upcoming season, as well as a chance to liaise with the AMIA team and your industry board representatives.

One of the presentations of note from the NT roadshows was on the development of a regional freight hub from Darwin Airport with the proposal for freight forwarding services and a VHT plant to service our export destinations from the closest port of loading to the growing regions. This is an exciting development for the region, and we look forward to further updates on the development as they come to light.

Also, in attendance at the roadshows was Bryony Hackett who has joined the AMIA team in the role of Industry Development Manager (IDM).

I would like to welcome Bryony to the team and am sure that her wealth of produce industry experience will shine through as she embraces the new role.

# DIRECTOR REPORTS

## (cont'd)

### SOUTHERN QUEENSLAND & NEW SOUTH WALES



**Karl Gygar**  
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At the time of writing, the south east region is in full flower, with many growers reporting good flowering across their orchards. Continued dry weather is starting to bite, for some, with dam and river levels very low. Although we do not want a lot of rain during the growing period, it would be great to get some relief from the dry and settle the dust.

Many of you have already attended the AMIA pre-season roadshows in your area. If the roadshow has not visited your region yet, please make sure you keep an eye out for dates in the weekly newsletter *My Mango* and mark the event in your diary. These events are a great chance for you to hear industry news and catch up with other growers in your region.

Forecasting information is being collected from most regions. Please ensure you are completing and returning your forecasting forms. This information allows industry to communicate with our retail and wholesale partners about volumes and drives promotional activity. I would also strongly recommend that growers share their forecast with their supply chain partners. Wholesalers and trucking companies as well as consumable suppliers (box manufacturers, stickers providers etc.) need your forecasting information to make the best decisions for ensuring you're properly serviced.



The more warning you can give your supply chain partners about what might be coming the better it is for everyone.

Finally, I would like to wish everyone the best of luck with their season. Please stay safe in what we all know is a hectic period.

### SOUTHERN WESTERN AUSTRALIA



**David Morcombe**  
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I'd like to welcome our new Industry Development Manager Bryony. It is great to have a person in the team with such a strong background in the horticulture industry.

In the Gingin area we are expecting a strong year after modest crop load last season, and the eagerness of the trees to flower may be an indicator they are well rested and ready to work. Another harvest has started in the north and in the south, we are now seeing flowering which is a bit earlier than desired. If the flowering occurs earlier than the start of warmer weather, successful pollination may be a worry. Let's hope for a warm spring.

In Carnarvon the flowering appears to be a little late. This timing could work well with supply for Chinese New Year at the end of January next year, which keeps demand buoyant.

It is a credit to Ben Martin to be able to participate in an overseas trade mission with federal ministers. The key target was Japanese market access but being able to communicate industry matters at such a high level is excellent for our industry. The progress being made on market access in overseas markets is great, even if most growers may not be directly involved in export, it is important to everyone that some of the crop load is shifted out of the domestic market.

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# AMIA & INDUSTRY NEWS

## Pre-season roadshows kick off

Our pre-season roadshows for the 2019/20 season have begun, and we have visited industry stakeholders in Kununurra, Darwin, Katherine, Bowen, Ayr and Mareeba/Dimbulah.

Topics presented at the roadshows included the best practice resource, new varieties, research and development, pest and disease updates and many others. Attendees enjoyed an interactive survey at some of the roadshows.

The events also provided a great opportunity for industry stakeholders to meet and catch-up. Those who attended the NT and Kununurra roadshows would have met our new Industry Development Manager, Bryony Hackett, who has now commenced officially in the role.

Special thanks to our Industry Development Officers, Sarah Hain and Marine Empson who organised these roadshows, as well as all of our industry partners who hosted, presented, attended and assisted with the organisation of these meetings.

Details for other roadshows will be published soon in our weekly newsletter *My Mango*. Stay tuned!



## Mareeba Chamber of Commerce business luncheon

Australian Mangoes CEO Robert Gray joined Jim Kochi (Avocados Australia), and Jim Pekin (Australian Bananas Growers Council) as they discussed the horticulture industries in Mareeba, in August.

The event offered attendees a great opportunity to hear from horticulture industry leaders on the value of these industries to the Mareeba region.



Photo credit: Sherri Soncin.

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## Rural R&D For Profit Program Phase 2 announced

A grant worth more than \$5 million dollars has been awarded to Hort Innovation to continue work in optimising the management of Australian tree crop industries through innovative mapping and monitoring tools.

Awarded under Round 4 of the Federal Government's Rural R&D for Profit Program, the grant will fund Phase 2 of the project involving commercial banana, mango, macadamia, olive and citrus orchards.

Australian Mangoes is thrilled to be working with project partners on this program.

For further details [click here](#).

**Hort  
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## Leadership development scholarships now available: women in horticulture

Funding grants of up to \$10,941 per person are currently available to women who work in the horticulture sector to support their participation in a leadership development program.

The grants have been allocated as part of a joint funding arrangement between Women & Leadership Australia and Hort Innovation and provide access to one of three part-time practical courses.

Participants will network with peers from a variety of industries, and cover such topics as reinforcing resilience and wellbeing, rewiring your networks, evolving strategic change, team dynamics and supporting leadership performance.

### Expressions of Interest

Find out more and register your interest by completing the Expression of Interest form prior to 15 November at:

[www.wla.edu.au/horticulture](http://www.wla.edu.au/horticulture).



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**LADY JANE**  
— MANGOES —

# PR & MARKETING

## Getting consumers to grab a mango this season

The 2019/20 mango season is underway! As the weather warms up, the markets are fast becoming excited about the upcoming mango season as are consumers.

The consumer marketing activities will this season continue to educate shoppers on the fruit's seasonality, benefits and repertoire of recipes. Ultimately, we aim to drive excitement for the season and get more people, buying more mangoes, more regularly.

Our media program will again, this year, be centred around a hashtag—[#200daysofmangoes](#). As there are approximately 200 days in the peak mango season, this hashtag will feature at every possible touchpoint across the press office, social media and the Mess-tival event, prompting acknowledgement of the mango season and the endless possibilities that the mango brings. Every time the consumer sees a piece of content, our goal is for them to also see the hashtag, providing an instant dual-meaning key message and a trackable result.



**The media campaign will continue to focus on the following activities:**

## 1. PUBLIC RELATIONS

Last season, our first ever brand partnership with Budgie Smugglers helped to secure coverage in TV and newspapers. After that success of last year, we'll once again be working with Budgie Smugglers to amplify the mango message in key media.

Other parts of the PR campaign mix will include grower profiling, some brand new recipes, media familiarisations on grower farms, reacting to topical news, sharing statistics from the season and promoting mangoes in key calendar dates or events.

The last piece of PR promotion will be working with social media influencers, who enable us to reach more consumers with recipes and great mango ideas, like how to pack a mango filled lunchbox!

## 2. EVENTS

### Mango Auction

For many, the Mango Auction signifies the official start of the mango season.

The event was held earlier this year at Brisbane Markets on 19 September. Alexandra Catalano of Yuen's Farmers Market in Underwood and Waterford, and Discount Fruit Barn in Harbour Town and Helensvale, took home the season's first tray of mangoes and the coveted title of 2019 Mango Monarch thanks to a generous \$25,000 winning bid.

### Mango Mess-tival

Mango Mess-tival—our showcase event of the season—will have all the favourites including grower stalls, sampling, mango cheeks on the BBQ, the famous fruit carver and lots of music and fun with our DJ and MC. Also, keep an eye out in *My Mango* for news of a special activation happening this year!

This year's Mess-tival will take place between 8am-12pm on Sunday, 1 December at North Bondi Surf Lifesaving Club. With the fantastic opportunity for people to meet the growers, sample the different mango varieties, and participate in some messy mango-eating competitions, we highly recommend growers come to Sydney with us for a spectacular day of mango mad fun.

## 3. SOCIAL MEDIA

As research into our target consumers shows social media plays a key part in consumer's purchasing decisions. Our social media campaign on Facebook and Instagram will be 'always on' throughout the season. Using our #200daysofmangoes in beautiful content, we'll be running competitions, sharing recipes, highlighting the varieties and the growing regions and, of course, sharing summery memories of messy mangoes.



*Alexandra Catalano, the 2019 Mango Queen displays her \$25,000 tray of mangoes.*



*Mango Mess-tival will take place on Sunday, 1 December, this year.*



*Our social media campaign will be 'always on' throughout the season.*

# 2019 Australian Mangoes Grower Market Tour

Get your seat on the bus for the 2019 Australian Mangoes Market Tour!

The Australian Mango Industry will be hosting the 2019 Grower Market Tour in Sydney from **Friday, 29 November to Monday, 2 December**.

This event is a highlight in every mango season and growers from across the country, all regions and all varieties are encouraged to attend.

The tour, now in its sixth year will provide growers with a deep understanding of the industry marketing plan and just what it takes to create an insatiable appetite for Australian mangoes.

The three-day event will cover all aspects of the supply chain and promises to be full of learnings and rich with insights—as well as providing enormous networking opportunities.

The tour will give you the opportunity to see and hear things you wouldn't normally be exposed to; to go behind doors you wouldn't ordinarily walk through and to share in conversations you wouldn't otherwise have. It promises to give you a much greater understanding of just what it takes to market a great mango experience.

You'll visit the Sydney Markets, and meet with wholesalers and exporters, be guided through the distribution centres of major retailers, 'shop' for mangoes across the full range of retail formats including; ALDI, Coles, Costco, Harris Farm Markets, IGA, Woolworths and independent green grocers and experience all the energy and excitement of the Mango Mess-tival.

Now in its eighth year, Mess-tival is the industry's signature event, held on the first Sunday in summer on Australia's iconic Bondi Beach. The day is an upbeat festival of all things mango, a fun-filled event where growers get to share their passion and tell their stories whilst introducing consumers to the taste of their varieties.

You'll be amazed as thousands of Aussies flock to Bondi with togs and towels, eager to have their first 'official' taste of summer—your deliciously sweet and juicy Aussie mangoes. Don't miss this extraordinary opportunity.

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## Contacts

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# Engaging at Asia Fruit Logistica a big success

From 4 September to 6 September, Australian Mangoes representatives Robert Gray and Treena Welch attended Asia Fruit Logistica in Hong Kong. The annual event provided an excellent platform for Australian Mangoes to engage with growers, exporters, importers and retailers who will collaborate on marketing campaigns during the 2019/2020 season.

The event defied difficult circumstances in Hong Kong to deliver a show characterised by high-quality visitors and exceptional business opportunities. Attendance was inevitably impacted somewhat by recent unrest in Hong Kong, but visitor numbers exceeded expectations, reaching 90 per cent of 2018 levels. More than 12,000 trade professionals from all over the world including fruit and vegetable producers, importers and exporters, wholesalers and retailers, packaging and handling specialists, transport and logistic specialists gathered to make the most of the opportunities to meet and do business with over 800 exhibitors from more than 40 countries.

The Australian Mangoes booth was extremely well attended, with pre-planned meetings scheduled across the three days, along with new relationships established with importer and retailer representatives from countries that will be key to future industry development including Japan and China.

Stakeholder aspirations and plans for the coming season were discussed and this content will inform our specific export activities, timing and budgets. Planning will continue over the next month with all campaigns in place to support peak export volume across November, December and January.

Continued page 17



The team from AGRIFresh, Western Australia with the Australian Mangoes team.



This sweet cheek gets a thumbs up for maturity.

**Stakeholder aspirations and plans for the coming season were discussed and this content will inform our specific export activities, timing and budgets.**



From left: Jay Han from Jinwon (South Korean Importer); Monica Lee from Austrade; Bridget Ip from Trade and Investment Queensland and Treena Welch from Australian Mangoes.



Malaysian Importer Chop Tong Guan (CTG)—Chloe Kiat and associate.





Soo Lee from Jinwon tests a mango and taste tests reveal the flavour is so good.



Felix Instruments demonstrates NIR technology.



The visual beauty and aroma of Australian mangoes always brings a happy smile.

Continued from page 16

Based on the industry export plan, results of the McKinna report and the selection criteria outlined below the following export markets have been identified for promotional investment in the coming season; Hong Kong, Singapore, South Korea, New Zealand and the USA.

Markets for investment are selected based on the following criteria:

- Mix of protocol and non-protocol markets
- Mix of established and emerging markets
- A robust supply chain/consistent quality capability before any marketing investment
- Partner with chosen retailers that target affluent consumers, who are prepared to pay a premium for a great quality mango.

In addition, campaigns are supported, and investment is made where there is a healthy collaborative approach and stakeholders across the supply chain have 'skin in the game'.

**For more information on our export plans contact Australian Mangoes Marketing Manager Treena Welch: [marketing@mangoes.net.au](mailto:marketing@mangoes.net.au), or +61 (0)417 001 253.**



Vincent Huang of Sam's Club (China) gives Australian Mangoes the 'thumbs up' for flavour.



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# BIOSECURITY, RESEARCH & POLICY

## Biosecurity—mango malformation disease

As part of our commitment to represent the biosecurity interests of the Australian mango industry, Australian Mangoes (AMIA) will bring you more regular information about pests and diseases to look out for on farm. We will now provide you with an article in each edition of *Mango Matters*.

This edition is about mango malformation disease (MMD), which is important to be on the lookout for.

We welcome feedback on any particular pests or diseases you would like more information about. Get in touch with any of our team at: [industry.mangoes.net.au/contact-amia](http://industry.mangoes.net.au/contact-amia) to suggest a topic.

This edition's article has been supplied from Plant Health Australia. For further information visit: [planthealthaustralia.com.au/industries/mangoes/](http://planthealthaustralia.com.au/industries/mangoes/).

### THE SIGNS OF MANGO MALFORMATION DISEASE

Mango malformation disease (MMD) is a fungal disease of mango, particularly their flowers. The disease was first observed in India in 1891 and has since spread to many mango-production regions around the world.

MMD causes abnormal development of flowers, leaves and shoots which leads to reduced plant growth and fruit yield. It has been associated with a number of fungal species of the genus *Fusarium*. The most well understood cause of MMD, *Fusarium mangiferae*, was detected in Australia in 2007, it has been eradicated from Queensland but is known to occur in the Northern Territory.

### SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

Young trees in nurseries are most vulnerable to MMD. While the disease can also occur in mature trees, the symptoms are more serious for young plants as they become severely stunted.

#### Shoots and leaves

Growing points such as leaf and stem buds on plants affected by the disease produce misshapen shoots which grow narrow and brittle leaves. Internodes (the spaces between the leaves) are also shorter than normal.

Affected leaves are smaller and tend to curve back towards the stem giving the growth a squat and bunched top like appearance.

Galls (abnormal swellings) may also form in the axils (the meeting point between the stem and a leaf).



Mango malformation disease. Photo credits: Barry Conde, Department of Primary Industry and Resources Northern Territory.

The symptoms of MMD on leaves and stems can look like the malformation caused by bud mites (*Aceria mangiferae*). However, unlike MMD, bud mites do not affect floral tissue and tend to impact older trees.

#### Flowers

Mango plants affected by MMD will produce enlarged, sterile flowers. The stems that the flowers grow from are also thicker than normal.

Inflorescences (the clusters that mango flowers grow in) also become shorter, thicker and highly branched. They typically contain three times the number of flowers found in clusters on healthy plants.

Specifically, the disease increases the number of male and hermaphrodite flowers that are produced. These flowers are either sterile or if fertilised, eventually abort, leading to reduced fruit yield.

### STOPPING THE SPREAD

As the disease can be spread long distances on propagating material it is important to source certified plant material from clean accredited supplies.

Another way to protect your crop is to ensure that only clean equipment is used on your property as the disease can be carried long distances on pruning equipment. Cleaning pruning equipment between trees can also prevent the spread of disease through your orchard.

There is also circumstantial evidence that mango bud mite may spread MMD within orchards as the injuries to the plant from the mites may aid fungal infection.

**Finally, it is important to regularly monitor your mangoes for unusual symptoms. If you find anything unusual report it to the Exotic Plant Pest Hotline on 1800 084 881.**

## Sunburn trial

Preliminary data has shown that NMBP-1243 is more susceptible to sunburn than the other NMBP varieties. Yield data collected in 2018 indicated that up to 24% of fruit was unmarketable because of sunburn.

A trial to reduce the impact of sunburn will be conducted at the Frank Wise Institute of Tropical Agriculture over the next two years. The product used to reduce sunburn will be a blend of dicarboxylic acids.

**Article provided by Tara Slaven from WA DPIRD, for further details contact Tara Slaven E: [tara.slaven@dpird.wa.gov.au](mailto:tara.slaven@dpird.wa.gov.au).**



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# Growers trial high density mango systems

Australian mango growers in partnership with the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries (DAF) and Australian Mangoes, have planted new, high density mango blocks as semi-commercial trials on three properties in Queensland and the Northern Territory this year.

The trials are key components of the three-year project 'Transforming Mango Futures' funded through the Cooperative Research Centre for Developing Northern Australia (CRCNA). This project aims to facilitate increased mango grower adoption of next-generation, intensive mango systems to help improve the productivity and profitability of the Australian mango industry.

Project lead Dr Geoff Dickinson from DAF at Mareeba, Queensland said, "These systems have shown great promise to significantly increase the quantity and quality of mango fruit yields within DAFs on-going 'Small Tree High Productivity Initiative'. Added benefits from these systems include adaptation to automation and robotics, improved input efficiencies and greater cyclone resilience."

The three trials comprise a variety of four 'best-bet', intensive mango orchard systems including high-density and trellis designs, planted using the current commercial mango varieties Kensington Pride (KP) and R2E2, and two new mango varieties NMBP1243 and NMBP4069. Each trial is 0.5 hectares in size.

Two of these trials were established with Manbulloo Ltd, one of Australia's largest growers and exporters of KP and R2E2 mangoes, on their properties at Mareeba and Katherine.



Katherine planting crew.

The third trial was established with Marto's Mangoes, a large R2E2 mango grower and exporter, at their Bowen property.

The trees were planted at a spacing of 3m between trees and at either 5 or 6m between rows, to suit existing farm machinery access. This gives a tree density of between 555-666 trees/hectare. The infrastructure for the trellis treatments involved 15cm diameter H5 Koppers Logs established 12m apart and supporting five trellis wires spaced 60cm apart up to a height of 3.1m. Trellis treatments will be managed using espalier or palmate branch training/pruning techniques.

The non-trellis treatments will be managed using conventional (open vase) or single leader branch training/pruning techniques. All trees will be maintained to a maximum height of 3.5m.

The Mareeba and Bowen sites were planted in February and March, with the Katherine site established in April. At each site the trellis posts and wire were constructed after tree planting.

"The trees were topped at 65cm after planting, to allow the development of the first whorl of branches for training," said Dr Dickinson.

*Continued page 21*



Industry stakeholders inspect the Mareeba Manbulloo trial site prior to the 2019 pre-season roadshow.



Manbulloo and DAF planting crew at the new Mareeba site.

Continued from page 20

“These trees began re-shooting after three months, and we have started training these new shoots onto the trellis wires using rubber ties.”

Project communication activities are being co-ordinated by DAF and Australian Mangoes. New hard-copy and video training packages will identify scaling-up and transition issues, backed by an economic analysis to aid orchard transition. Mango growers had a first-hand opportunity to visit the Manbulloo Mareeba site at the August pre-season roadshow event.

This CRCNA project will create impact for national industry growth in northern Australia, driving productivity improvements, industry resilience and enabling the growth of existing and new domestic and export markets.

**For more information contact DAF Development Horticulturists; Geoff Dickinson [geoff.dickinson@daf.qld.gov.au](mailto:geoff.dickinson@daf.qld.gov.au) or Ebony Faichney [ebony.faichney@daf.qld.gov.au](mailto:ebony.faichney@daf.qld.gov.au).**



The Martin family, with DAF's Ebony Faichney and Geoff Dickinson (centre) planting the first tree at the Bowen site.

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# Industry provides feedback on their mango information needs

The Hort Innovation project ‘Building Best Management Practice for the Australian Mango Industry’ (MG17000) is now well underway, providing the resources and capacity building over the next three years to maintain and improve the Australian mango industry’s sustainability.

The project led by Australian Mangoes has partnerships with the Queensland, Northern Territory and West Australian state agriculture departments, Central Queensland University and NT Farmers.

A key output from the project will be the delivery of improved best practice resources for key production and post-harvest activities that will assist stakeholders to lift the profitability and sustainability of their businesses. These resources will become progressively available through a revision of the Australian Mangoes website ([www.industry.mangoes.net.au](http://www.industry.mangoes.net.au)). Project direction is facilitated by a Best Practice Resource Management Team; the three areas that this team identified are; orchard management, decision to pick and supply chain temperature management.

Australian Mangoes and their partners will be conducting a best practice survey of 40 growers in Queensland and the Northern Territory over the remainder of 2019. This survey will collect information about how growers learn, source information and what growers are currently doing when it comes to the three priority areas.

In the meantime, mango industry stakeholders have also had an opportunity to provide feedback on their future mango information needs at the Australian Mangoes 2019 pre-season roadshows in Bowen, Ayr and Mareeba. A similar exercise is planned for the two central Queensland roadshows later this year. Stay tuned for activities planned in other regions.

The roadshow survey was designed and implemented by the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries (DAF) to identify the information needs of individual mango stakeholders across 15 key orchard management and harvest practices. The audience was asked “What is your information need?” for each of the 15 practices. The possible responses were (3) high need, (2) some need and (1) no need. Each individual at the roadshows were given a keypad survey remote, which enabled them to respond in real time, anonymously, with the results for each question presented graphically during the session. A total of 91 stakeholders participated in the survey from across the three roadshows (Bowen 27, Ayr 22, Mareeba 42).

*Continued page 23*



*Ebony Faichney (DAF) discussing the project to mango growers and industry stakeholders at the 2019 Bowen pre-season roadshow.*

**TABLE 1**

PRACTICE DESCRIPTION	“WHAT IS YOUR INFORMATION NEED?”		
	(3) HIGH NEED	(2) SOME NEED	(1) NO NEED
Disease management	75%	21%	4%
Nutrition	74%	17%	9%
Insect management	72%	20%	8%
Soil health	71%	21%	8%
Maturity/timing of harvest	70%	23%	7%
Harvest practices and picking	65%	30%	5%
Canopy and flower management/induction	65%	19%	16%
Yield forecasting	63%	32%	5%
Economics of growing and management	63%	28%	9%
Spray application/calibration	58%	32%	10%
Irrigation	53%	36%	11%
Pruning and hedging	43%	38%	19%
Tree spacing for planting	37%	39%	24%
New mango varieties	36%	56%	8%
Orchard design and planting	33%	37%	30%


Continued from page 22

The stakeholder representation was 46 growers, 21 commercial businesses, and 24 support organisations. The results from the survey are presented in Table 1.

The information from this survey along with the best practice survey will assist the Best Practice Resource Management Team in preparing and delivering information resources to build and improve best management practices for greater sustainability and profitability of the Australian mango industry.

**For more information about the project contact Australian Mangoes Industry Development Officers; Marine Empson [marine@mangoes.net.au](mailto:marine@mangoes.net.au) or Sarah Hain [sarah@mangoes.net.au](mailto:sarah@mangoes.net.au).**

**For more information about the pre-season roadshow contact DAF Development Horticulturists; Geoff Dickinson [geoff.dickinson@daf.qld.gov.au](mailto:geoff.dickinson@daf.qld.gov.au) or Ebony Faichney [ebony.faichney@daf.qld.gov.au](mailto:ebony.faichney@daf.qld.gov.au).**



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# PEOPLE & EVENTS

## Noel Sammon remembered

The man who bought the Australian market Honey Gold mangoes, Noel Sammon, has been remembered by industry colleague and friend, Nick Macleod (General Manager, Crop and Food Science, at Agri-Science Queensland, Department of Agriculture and Fisheries).

I first met Noel in the early 90's in relation to the mango farm that he purchased at Alton Downs. I was based in Rockhampton at the time in DPI. One day he came into the office showing off this bright orange mango asking what I thought about it. That was the start of a fascinating journey.

What is now known as Honey Gold, was an off type tree within his Kensington Pride mango farm at Alton Downs. He discovered it through his lifelong inquisitiveness in looking at nature. One October in the mid 90's, as he was whipper snipping along the rows of trees he observed that under one tree there were masses of small orange fruit that had naturally dropped to the ground. All the other trees had the equivalent fruit on the ground but were grey/green in colour. He noted in his head to check out the fruit on that tree in January when the remaining fruit on the tree were mature. At harvest time, it ripened differently to other trees. It was golden yellow, with a good shelf life, maturing later than Kensington Pride and excellent eating. We agreed that it had potential. However, we all know that there is a big gap between potential and gold! Noel always enjoyed a challenge.

Anyway, he thought it had potential as a new variety so sought preliminary protection under the Plant Breeder's Rights Act. This involved a detailed trial to prove that "his variety" was distinct from any other varieties before being granted full protection. Being a perfectionist, this was just another challenge that he embraced. This was a three year process collecting data.

He was convinced of its potential and top worked/grafted all 2,000 trees on the property to his new variety. During this period of trial work to establish protection, he showed some of the fruit to key wholesalers in the market as well as selected local growers. Like everything Noel did, he was keen that the right people were involved on the journey i.e. good growers with the right attitude. Eventually in December 1999 he was granted full protection of the variety under the Plant Breeder's Rights Act and he named it Honey Gold.

Now that he had protection, he was keen to licence growers to grow the variety. He developed a grower agreement and invited targeted growers to grow a minimum of 1,000 trees. He was fortunate that there were a number of excellent growers locally at Yeppoon and Benaraby who were keen to give it a shot.



Noel was recognised at the 11th Australian Mangoes Conference (in Bowen), for his significant contribution to the mango industry, for his involvement with Honey Gold mangoes.

**Noel created history through his vision, powers of observation, ability to do the hard work with the right growers and provided the consumers of Australia and the world with a great eating mango.**

After about four years of getting growers on board and with established licenced wholesalers in the capital cities, he felt the next step required someone to take it to the next level with a bigger picture marketing program and ability to provide support to the increasing number of growers. He identified a major pineapple and strawberry family business from Wamuran who had the focus on providing consumers with a good eating experience. This led to the Scurr family (Piñata Farms) buying the Alton Downs farm and Honey Gold variety in 2002. It has since gone ahead in leaps and bounds.


Noel created history through his vision, powers of observation, ability to do the hard work with the right growers and provided the consumers of Australia and the world with a great eating mango. How many other private individuals have bred or selected a new fruit tree variety? Not many.





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