Managing Hail Damage to Affected Crops

Fruit Growers Victoria Ltd.

Horticulture Centre of Excellence – Tatura
15/10/2015
Objective of the Meeting

• Why are we here? - TF
• Overview of the event in terms of weather – RD
• First results assessments - VF
• What are the priorities for the grower to consider?
  • Pest and diseases (on-farm & off-farm) – PB
  • Assessment method on farm - PB
  • Market tolerance of affected fruit - TF
  • Viability of the remaining fruit - TF
  • Decisions on fruit receipts vs direct expenses for rest of season - ?
  • Financial considerations and support for business survival – CH
• Post meeting – what to do and when?
  • Decide if variation in market specifications justified
  • Next assessment for industry quality and volumes
  • Marketing plan in place well in advance.
  • Who is going to be engaged to do this?
  • Stakeholder commitment
First Results Of Assessments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Apples</th>
<th>Pears</th>
<th>Stone Fruits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Severity</td>
<td>2.4/4</td>
<td>3/4</td>
<td>3.6/4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% fruit damaged</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Info 15/10/2015 - 315 ha orchards - 8 growers affected answers
# First Results of assessments (source: SPC)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Apple</th>
<th>Pear</th>
<th>Nectarine</th>
<th>Peach</th>
<th>Apricot</th>
<th>Plum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ardmona</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5,696</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>291</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(North Pikes Rd)</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>22.59%</td>
<td>1.34%</td>
<td>20.04%</td>
<td>1.40%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shepp 3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1,926</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>217</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Mid Hwy-Ndookie Rd)</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>13.28%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>15.34%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shepp 4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>9,069</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1,025</td>
<td>874</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(North Dookie Rd)</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>53.97%</td>
<td>3.63%</td>
<td>49.35%</td>
<td>31.38%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G+MValley</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>16,691</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>1,533</td>
<td>907</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>12.47%</td>
<td>0.05%</td>
<td>13.28%</td>
<td>4.86%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Why Worry About the Remaining Fruit?

• Percentage of fruit already knocked off...so less to work with.
• Thin to current specs may end up taking more off and left with too few to grow.
• Taking too much crop off will cause the remaining fruit to grow too large – adjust inputs to suit.
• So the more you can leave on the tree the better...its all in the packout!
• Directing to canning and juice can be an option providing the returns stay viable.
Market Tolerances of Affected Fruit

• Need to find out what your packer, cannery or juicer will tolerate
• Find out a ball park figure for returns back to the grower
• Some examples

*Grower return prices are only generalised for examples and can only be used as indicative only
Viability Of The Remaining Fruit

• What is it that we see now?
• What will it be worth?

Is it still 1\textsuperscript{st} grade or will it be 2\textsuperscript{nd} grade?
Will it stay that way till harvest?
And could it go into the bottom end of 1\textsuperscript{st} grade
Field Assessments Now to Harvest

• Need to be based on gathering the percentage of fruit under class 1 & 2 and juice.
• Calculate the numbers of fruit still left on the tree and do a “mock packout”
• Find out how much remaining will be:
  • 1st grade
  • 2nd grade
  • If canning is an option
  • Juice grade
• If viable...... decide if and when to time the appropriate thinning process
## Decision On Fruit Value by Packout

### Potential Packout of Crop Estimate Returns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Return $/kg</th>
<th>Volume in Bins</th>
<th>% Packout</th>
<th>Gross Returns $/Ha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class 1</td>
<td>$2.00</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>$12,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class 2</td>
<td>$1.00</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>$9,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juice</td>
<td>$0.12</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>$1,800.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<tr>
<th>Volume in Bins</th>
<th>% Packout</th>
<th>Gross Returns $/Ha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>$15,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>$10,500.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>$1,440.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Gross Returns: $22,800.00

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<td>25</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>$20,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class 2</td>
<td>$1.00</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>$14,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juice</td>
<td>$0.12</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>$1,920.00</td>
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<td>20%</td>
<td>$16,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>$12,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>$2,400.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Gross Returns: $35,920.00
Decision On Fruit Value Expenses

- One Hand Tinning + Harvest Picking only = $12 – 15K / Ha
- Other costs $3 – 4K/ Ha
- More $$$$ ?
- Is this feasible????
- How many markets can we sell to that may take fruit that is blemished this way?
- Need to consider the physiological status of the trees when drastically thinning fruit off early to cut expenses
- Uncontrolled growth, flowering out of season, etc.
Decide If **Variation** In Market Specifications Justified

- What do we do as an industry next?
- Assessment for industry - quality and volumes
- Reassess the volumes and quality and how it may impact on markets
  - Is there a viable 2\textsuperscript{nd} grade export market for some of this fruit?
  - $AUD could be right for it!
- With all this information put the **MARKETING PLAN** in place well in advance.
- Who is going to be engaged to do this? Find a leader who will get other stakeholders to commit!
- Growers, Industry, Packers, Marketers, Supermarkets, etc.
Take Home Message

• Do the assessments
• Contact your packer, FGV, SPC, etc. get feedback and discuss options
• Do a business plan good to deal with banks.. Funding???
• Maintain the orchard and crop as close to normal as possible
• Remember – when it comes to hail we are all vulnerable and at anytime of the season.
Thank You

• Farming is a challenge and sometimes you do feel like this fella!