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Media Release

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Tasmanian industry leader now Australian Farmer of the Year

High-profile Tasmanian businessman Tim Reid was named Kondinin Group-ABC Rural Australian Farmer of the Year at an awards ceremony in Melbourne last night.

Earlier in the evening Mr Reid, who is managing director of Reid Fruits, was also named Australian Rural Leader of the Year.

Kondinin Group general manager Stephanie Shepherdson described Mr Reid as the standout entrant in a high-quality field of nominations – both for his category win and then being crowned with the national title.

“Mr Reid has been a blue-ribbon nomination. His industry pedigree speaks for itself and the results he has been able to achieve with his family business while giving so much of himself to the wider industry and community are astonishing,” Ms Shepherdson said.

“There would be few people more qualified to fly the Tasmanian flag in the field of primary industry than Mr Reid and on behalf of Kondinin Group, ABC Rural, all the other sponsors and other entrants this evening I congratulate him.”

Mr Reid has been a pivotal player in the development of both the domestic and export horticulture markets and is one of the most successful figures in Australia’s drive to have a viable fruit industry – both domestically and on the world stage.

It has been a glittering career which began in Tasmanian orchards and packing sheds back in the 1960s and has evolved to industry and national honours.

When Mr Reid took the helm of the family business, which has been operating since 1856, he increased its size tenfold and turned it into a pioneer of the export market.

He has received international recognition for his achievements in market access trade negotiation on behalf of Australian horticulture and has extensive business experience in the fruit industry as a grower, exporter and industry representative.

Australian Farmer of the year Awards



He has also made a significant contribution to the community through his involvement in several key organisations including as a director of the Hobart Ports Corporation and 10-year term in local government.

As managing director of the family business SD Reid Holdings he has restructured it to the point it is the only southern hemisphere producer of Japanese variety cherries for export to Japan in its off-season and has become one of Australia's biggest cherry producers.

Mr Reid has been the longest-serving member of the former Tasmanian apple industry representative body. He was elected to the executive of the Tasmanian Apple and Pear Growers Association (TAPGA) in 1989, becoming president in 1991 for six years and continued as the industry's director for international development until 2004.

“Not only are we having success with our company, now Reid Fruits, in Japan it has also become one of Australia's biggest cherry producers,” Mr Reid said.

“But I have to say one of the highlights of my career was our six-year campaign, against intense commercial and political opposition, to gain quarantine access to the Japanese market for Tasmanian Fuji apples in 1998,” he said.

It was an industry success recognised internationally and described by Dr Ashton Calvert, the former Australian ambassador to Japan, as not just a major horticultural trade achievement but as “a highly symbolic breakthrough in the development of agricultural trade between Australia and Japan”.

In 2003 Mr Reid was appointed president of the Tasmanian Stonefruit Association and in 2004 instigated discussions between the apple and stonefruit industries to bring about their successful merger as Fruit Growers Tasmania (FGT).

Not surprisingly, Tim was elected its inaugural president and served as an executive member, vice president and a second term as president before retiring in 2011.

He also served seven years as a board member, vice president and president of the national cherry industry peak body Cherry Growers Australia before retiring in 2012.

Photo:

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/kondinin/9719216625/sizes/o/in/photostream/>



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Contact:

Tim Reid
Phone: 0418 125 178
Email: timreid@reidfruits.com.au

Andrew Mole
Kondinin Group
Phone: 0419 132 369
Email: andrew.mole@kondinin.com.au

