

## **National Cherry Industry Development Program**

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## **Method**

### *Participatory Research, Industry Participation and Knowledge Transfer*

Orchard and participation extension events will be conducted over a full day (ideally between May and July) with an additional round-table follow-up workshop day in September for each state in each year from 2014 onwards. The orchard and participation events will be primarily conducted by a consultant. The consultant will be selected following a tender process, coordinated by the lead agency and in consultation with the project team and the cherry industry R&D committee that provides recommendations to the IAC committee. A request for quotation (see attached) will be made at the commencement of the project for consultant participation in events from 2014 onwards. Consultants will be required to organise extension activities and discussions during an orchard visit, be flexible and responsive to state priorities, and work closely with the national program coordinator to ensure a high level of information and technology transfer. The focus of activities will be determined by the grower bodies (state associations) during the previous season (see timeline), with the aim being on developing skills that enhance fruit quality such that these skills will be adopted and support Industry development.

In addition to this, each extension event will include up to two presentations (by the consultant and/or by invited guest i.e. researcher, marketing or consumer expert, leading grower). These presentations seek to cement the knowledge gained during the orchard participation activity by explaining (depending on presentation)

- the need to improve quality from a marketing or commercial perspective,
- the quality required for export
- new challenges in management regulations
- the science behind the techniques
- new services or systems that can be accessed (e.g. climate forecasting)
- how to set priorities and make decisions quickly on a practical level
- how to conduct risk analyses to aid decision making
- practical outcomes of particular techniques in orchards

The aim of these presentations is to increase likelihood of adoption by highlighting need to change, developing decision making skills to support effective change, and showcase information that can be used to support improved management practices.

Grower participation on the day in discussion of results, outcomes and potential application will be encouraged and facilitated by the consultant and the national co-ordinator. The aim of this activity is to encourage all growers to think about the information presented during the day, how it is relevant to their own orchards and how that information can be incorporated into their own management regimes. The growers and other industry stakeholders present at each extension day will be required to complete a quick survey about the relevance of the information presented, and an indication of their intention to incorporate any knowledge gained. The national coordinator will follow up with an extension workshop in September with the same growers (others are welcome) to revisit key points and facilitate discussion around uptake of knowledge, barriers to change and any changes in management that have or will ensue. The outcome of this day is to share views and opinions on management practices and thus learn from peers in order to strengthen the Industry as a whole.

Participation of state associations and other stakeholders is a critical aspect in the success of this method. The relevance of specific technical information can change depending on circumstances for the region, (e.g. local climatic conditions, economic/market conditions) so the program for the extension events must be flexible and adaptive to State needs. Prior to events consultation with growers and others within industry as to the 'topic of the day' will occur (see timeline), and responses will be considered and catered for wherever possible. Participation by consultants would not occur until the second year of the program given that a tender process must be achieved. Should state associations or individual growers see a need for demonstration blocks to showcase recent research or novel orchard management trends, this can be housed within the national program via a 'user-pays' or voluntary contribution sub-project.

#### *State and National Roles*

In each state, the local regional coordinator is the first contact person for that state. The state-based regional coordinator will liaise between local industry members, their State association and other key industry/state department representatives. The role of the Regional Coordinator is two-fold:

- a) To nominate key industry priorities for their state based on discussions and feedback
- b) help facilitate the extension event for their state each year

Discerning the host region (where there is more than one major growing region in the state), locating venues, publicising the event, and coordinating attendance (catering, provision of factsheets, feedback and evaluation on the day) would be undertaken in consultation and with guidance from the national program coordinator.

Responsibilities of the national program coordinator include liaising with the state coordinators, the participating consultant, the Cherry Industry R&D committee, the lead agency contact (Dr Dugald Close or TIA – also a member of the cherry industry R&D committee) and the CGA. In consultation with the participating consultant, the national

program coordinator has the responsibility to guide the extension day activities each year based on feedback from all involved and ensuring both state and national industry priorities are represented by the consultant. It is also the National Program Coordinator's role to evaluate the development program.

#### *Road Show Program Development - Timeline*

It is important that these extension events occur at the same time each year to provide predictability and encourage the events to become entrenched in participants' calendars. The greatest benefit to the Industry will occur where the program is flexible, collaborative and can meet local and national needs. The extension events will have content with relevance to all major cherry-growing regions, as well as specialist content to address locally-driven topics. As the local issues are likely to change, this project describes a specific process for designing the program each year, but does not specify the topics to be presented. It is possible that an event could occur in late July 2013 given the preliminary discussions to date in the forming of this program proposal, and the positive approach of all project team members and others with whom discussions have occurred.

The process of organising the program will follow the following steps:

<b>Year</b>	<b>Month</b>	<b>Scheduled activity</b>
2013	July	Collate feedback from States - priorities
2013	July	Introduce the program schedule and undertake extension event (without consultant activity) in each State and distribute survey
2013	July	Commence tender process for consultant
2013	August	Regional coordinators to prompt survey responses
2013	Sept	Evaluation from individual growers/State Associations/regional coordinators to national coordinator
2013	Oct - Nov	National coordinator and state-based regional coordinators to review 1.Survey responses 2.List of future topics and presenters 3.Review of Tenders (2013)
2013	Nov	National coordinator to develop and submit milestone report
2013	Nov-Dec	Provide State Associations with a potential list of topics for the next extension event
2013 -2014	Nov - Jan	Regional coordinators liaise with industry members and State association regarding priorities
2014	Jan	Collate feedback from States
2014	March	Draft program developed in consultation with program team, consultant and R&D committee
2014	April	Finalise program and commence publicising
2014	April	National coordinator to develop and submit milestone report
2014	May-July	Extension activities (Orchard activity, presentations and discussions) undertaken in 5 states and distribute survey
2014	July	'On the day' evaluations of events from state reps forwarded to national coordinator
2014	August	Regional coordinators to prompt survey responses
2014	Sept	Evaluation from individual growers/State Associations /regional coordinators to national coordinator
2014	Sept	Round-table follow-up workshop with growers in each state
2014	Oct - Nov	National coordinator and state-based regional coordinators to review 1.Survey responses 2.Level of adoption anticipated 3. Planning cycle and progress of program to date 4.List of future topics and presenters
2014	Nov	National coordinator to develop and submit milestone report
2014	Nov-Dec	Provide State Associations with a potential list of topics for the next extension event
2014 -2015	Nov - Jan	Regional coordinators liaise with industry members and State association regarding priorities
2015	Jan- Dec	As per 2014, with continuous review and amendments made based on Industry feedback and needs
2016	Jan-Nov	As per 2014, with continuous review and amendments made based on Industry feedback and needs
2016	Dec	Review of program to date – decision regarding need for continuation of program or development of new program
2017	Jan-May	As per 2014, but activity if decided to be held in May only
2017	Jan-May	Development of guidelines for conducting extension to support Industry development Development of final report in consultation with program team members