



# Apple & Pear World News

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## Australia

### Increased fertilizer costs 'tip of the iceberg'

*West Australian, 27 May 2008, p5*

Prices for fertiliser have more than double since December and are adding to increased fuel and labour costs to squeeze returns, according to WA fruit and vegetable growers. Julian Baker, owner of fertiliser and chemical supplier Growers Rural said that wholesale prices for standard nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium compound fertiliser had doubled to about \$1,400/tonne in five months. Other top grade fertilisers common to hydroponics had trebled. WA Fruit Growers Association's Diane Fry said that costs are driving down the State's fruit production and unless farm gate prices improved, more growers would leave the industry.

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### Add fruit to children's breakfast cereal

*Canberra Times, 27 May 2008, p6*

Researcher Therese O'Sullivan from the Telethon Institute for Child Health Research in Perth said that a survey of more than 800 14 year old students found that only one in four ate a high quality breakfast containing three or more of the five food groups. For every extra food type added, students showed less anxiety or behaviour problems. The researcher said that students needed to add something different, like a banana (ed. or other fruit?) to their cereal to make that meal more compete with vitamins and minerals.

### Honey producers lament falling prices

*Riverine Herald, Echuca, Victoria, 26 May 2008, p3*

A crisis meeting of beekeepers held last week in NSW and attended by 200 people, highlighted the crisis in the industry with honey prices dropping and costs escalating. Greg Roberts, Australian Honey Bee Industry Council representative, said that international honey prices are steadily increasing bit Australian prices are actually dropping.

Echuca producer Craig Scott said that despite a shortages, prices have gone down and anyone who is 100 per cent reliant on honey production can't do it. While Australia is the only commercial honey producing country in the world that is free of the Varroa mite, when it comes it will shake the industry to its foundations.

## **Apple dispute heads to Geneva**

*AAP Newswire, Canberra, 26 May 2008*

Craig Burns, acting deputy secretary of DAFF, said that talks have failed to resolve the trans-Tasman row over apple imports from New Zealand. He told a Senate estimates hearing today that the "(NZ authorities) seem to want to have their day in court". The case will be heard before the WTO in Geneva in September. The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade is running the case for Australia. Any outcome is not expected for 12 to 18 months.

Labor senator Nick Sherry, representing the Federal Minister for Agriculture, denied claims by the industry that they were not being kept informed on the case. "Whether they are spewing or not, they are being kept informed", he said.

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## **Loss of feral bees will bear a high cost**

*West Australian, 24 May 2008, p73*

The honeybee mite parasite *Varroa destructor* will cripple WA agriculture and it is only a matter of time before it appears, according to beekeepers and scientists. An estimated \$1.7bn worth of crops in Australia rely on bees for pollination. Many are serviced by feral bee populations but the mite would wipe out these populations, increasing dependence on paid pollination services, said Dr Denis Anderson, principal CSIRO entomologist.

David Leyland, president of the WA Pollination Association said that there are between 50 and 100 commercial beekeepers in WA, but they would need hundreds if the feral bee population was lost. He said that beekeepers in the South West get about \$60 a hive for pollination services, while those near Kununurra, where feral bee populations are low, receive up to \$150 a hive.

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## **Tender process secures 35GL of water for Murray Darling Basin**

*Australian, 23 May 2008, p8*

Federal Water Minister Penny Wong has announced that 35GL of water will be returned to the Murray Darling system following a government buy back of water that cost \$50m. The Government has committed \$3.1bn to buying water in the Murray Darling Basin in order to improve environmental flows. The average price of \$1,428/ML was well within industry estimates of the cost to the taxpayer and includes purchase of general security and high security water. A stakeholder consultative committee has been appointed to review this first tender process to provide advice on future purchases and to help allay any concerns.

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## **Pink Lady™ exports under pressure**

*West Australian, 22 May 2008, p11*

Fellow Manjimup and Western Australia apple growers Harvey Giblett and Ann Lyster will be sending Pink Lady™ apples to the UK this year, despite the high value of the dollar and the strong prices in the domestic market. Both agreed that it is important to keep the UK market open.

Harvey Giblett said that it is important not to relinquish any more export markets, given the competition it was likely to face at home in the future. He is still willing to export 150t to the UK and Ann Lyster will export 50t.

Pink Lady Australia UK export coordinator Neil Offner said that about 1,000 tonnes of Pink Lady™ would be exported to the UK in the coming months. In 2000/01 nearly 7,000 tonnes were exported. Pink Lady™ domestic returns are \$2 to \$3 per kg compared with about \$2/kg for export, according to Harvey Giblett.

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## **PHA says more is needed to secure exotic disease responses**

*The Land, 22 May 2008, p30*

In a submission to the Federal Government's Quarantine and Biosecurity Review, Plant Health Australia warns of "alarming" gaps in Australia's preparedness and capacity to deal with pest and disease incursions. They have called for compulsory insurance for growers against losses from incursions by exotic pests and diseases that do not come under the Emergency Plant Pest Response Deed (EPPRD). Examples are loss of markets and impact on service providers. Also included in 32 recommendations in the submission is a request for more funding for training, surveillance, research and farmer education, particularly in on-farm biosecurity. Twenty five plant industries have signed up to the EPPRD and have identified 230 high priority pest species that if detected should be considered for eradication.

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## **Australia and Chile FTA**

*Press release, 17 May 2008*

Australia and Chile have signed a Free Trade Agreement. Trade Minister Simon Crean says two-way trade amounts to more than \$850 million a year and Australia invests \$US3 billion in Chile. He says the deal is expected to come into force in January. "It's an agreement of the highest quality. On goods, tariffs on all existing trade will be removed by 2015 and tariffs covering 97 per cent of trade in both directions will be eliminated from day one," he said.

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## **Retail promotion a key to success in initiatives by wholesale markets**

*National Marketplace News, May 2008, p3*

Fruit and vegetable markets around Australia are providing an important public service by assisting retailers to educate the public about produce, according to this NMN article. Melbourne Market Authority is currently running the "Just Add Fruit & Veg" program in a joint promotion with the Heart Foundation and Go For Your Life. About 650 retailers are registered with a Retail Development Program that provides promotional assistance for fruit and vegetables including availability and nutritional benefits of produce.

The Brisbane Produce Markets conduct the Fresh Tastes initiative that is jointly funded by Brisbane Markets Ltd and Brismark. There are 150 SE Queensland retailers currently participating in the program that provides a service to retailers including providing materials to teach the public about fruit and vegetables.

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## **Growcom looks ahead, by not responding to former Ausveg chairman claims**

*National Marketplace News, May 2008, p4*

Growcom ceo Jan Davis has issued a statement in response to comments by Mike Badcock that accuses Growcom of 'white-anting' the vegetable organisation and opposing the making of AUSVEG into a national representative body. Jan Davis refuses to be drawn in to the debate, saying that Growcom will not comment publicly on the points of error in former Ausveg chairman Mike Badcock's statement of the 28 April 2008. Growcom are members of, and provide financial support for PHA, HAC, Ausveg, APAL, ACG and the state body and QFF. They are working with other members of Ausveg for the future benefit of the national vegetable industry.

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## New Zealand

### Quality beats quantity for NZ grower/packer

*Fresh Produce Journal*, [www.freshinfo.com](http://www.freshinfo.com), 2 May 2008, p22

Paul Paynter of Yummy Fruit Co., Hawkes Bay, New Zealand, is interviewed by Fresh Produce Journal's Tommy Leighton. Paul Paynter said that their main export market is the US, as they like larger fruit and their customers can 'beat the likes of Wal-Mart on quality'. He said that some of the best retailers are the high street fruiterers who are prepared to 'pay a little bit extra for high quality fruit'. He condones those who 'drive down to the lowest price in tenders'.

He said that very good and poor growers all get the same price from supermarkets, driven by least cost of production to reach minimum standards. And the consumer wants a 'wow factor' from a purchase, not a cheap and nasty experience and such an experience will drive much stronger sales.

He said that they supply smaller groups around the world because the most important thing for a supplier is to be relevant, to make a difference to their customer's business and not be a commoditised supplier of apples. He hopes that the people who prosper in the future are those who 'nurture the passion'.

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### Genomics takes some of the guesswork out of plant breeding

*Fresh Produce Journal*, [www.freshinfo.com](http://www.freshinfo.com), 9 May 2008, p46

HortResearch, based in New Zealand, has three teams of genomic researchers and 80 molecular biologists, said Roger Hellens, science leader for genomics. Half of these are working with fruit production and half to capture and enhance health properties, flavours and fragrances with various plant types. Scientists are working to identify gene sequences and the genes that create the traits in plant characters. For example, plants might need 10 enzymes to make a colour, but one gene regulates it and decides whether it is red, blushed or striped. Genomics is taking some of the guesswork out of plant breeding.

Roger Hellens said that while the global apple industry relies on M9, there is also 'huge scope for rootstocks that are more tailored to specific cultivars and growing regions'. There is also great potential for rootstocks that give greater pest resistance. He anticipates that current research into apple dwarfing will one day change the way the New Zealand industry grows it's apples.

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### Progress all in the planning

*Hawkes Bay Today*, 22 May 2008, p18

Carla Emms said that quieter times in the next few weeks would be the ideal time for orchardists to review their season and decide on future strategies. A task is to summarise pest and disease control programs and determine what worked well and what did not. Look at performance targets in terms of yield and quality and revise or act on those accordingly. Review financial performance on a rainy day is another task, how did the year compare with last season and with others? Aim to set a budget for next year.

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## UK / Europe

### Competition Commission recommendations receive mixed views

*Fresh Produce Journal*, [www.freshinfo.com](http://www.freshinfo.com), 2 May 2008, p1

The UK Competition Commission final report out this week received mixed responses. National Farmers Union president Peter Kendall said that a strengthened mandatory code of practice backed by a proactive ombudsman is exactly what is required.

John Smith of Greyfriars, a Yorkshire based supermarket supplier, said he couldn't see why anyone else should be between a supplier and the supermarket. He described the idea of an ombudsman as 'unworkable, costly, cumbersome and unnecessary.....and will only end in tears for the taxpayer'. Another UK supplier said that calling in an ombudsman might find in your favour, but 'you might have won the battle...but be seen as a troublemaker (by your customer) and you will lose the war' [Return to Front Page](#)

### Tesco sets the pace on carbon labelling

*Fresh Produce Journal*, [www.freshinfo.com](http://www.freshinfo.com), 2 May 2008, p1

Carbon labelling of own branded products has started in Tesco with potatoes and orange juice carrying a Carbon Reduction Label. The aim is to enable customers to make more informed choices, based on the carbon footprint of produce. See the website [www.tesco.com/greenerliving](http://www.tesco.com/greenerliving) . [Return to Front Page](#)

### Apricots down, but other stone fruit crop forecasts remain up

*Fresh Produce Journal*, [www.freshinfo.com](http://www.freshinfo.com), 2 May 2008, p4

Apricot production is forecast to fall this summer in the main producing countries of France, Spain, Italy and Greece and will be down nine per cent on 2007 volumes and 40 per cent down on 2006. Apricot production in the four countries will total 423,612 tonnes, down from 467,969t last year and a five year average of 524,192t. Individual production will be Italy 177,580t, France 89,052t, Spain 78,710t and Greece 78,000t.

However, peach, nectarine and clingstone peach volumes across Europe are expected to reach 2.73 million tonnes, just one per cent down on last year and a negligible decline on the five-year average. Italy will produce 1.46mt, Spain 692,110t, Greece 347,000t and France 287,483t. [Return to Front Page](#)

### Jazz™ supply set to climb

*Fresh Produce Journal*, [www.freshinfo.com](http://www.freshinfo.com), 9 May 2008, p1

Worldwide Fruit (WWF) growers will produce 1,800 tonnes of Jazz™ apples in 2008/09, up from 600t last year. There are 216,000 trees planted by 20 growers across Kent, East Sussex, Suffolk and the West Midlands. WWF commercial manager Gary Harrison said that English Jazz™ has proved to be as good as imported Jazz™. WWF has the exclusive growing and marketing rights for Jazz™ in the UK and is able to provide year round supply with imports from France, New Zealand, the US and Chile. Northern Hemisphere Jazz™ made up 2,500t of sales in the UK in 2007/08 with 1,600t from France, 600t from the UK and 300t from the US. [Return to Front Page](#)

## **All to be said is on the website**

*Fresh Produce Journal*, [www.freshinfo.com](http://www.freshinfo.com), 9 May 2008, Full page back cover, p56

For more information on the apple variety Sweet Sensation go to [www.nextfruitgeneration.com](http://www.nextfruitgeneration.com)

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## **Tesco's provide supplier awards**

*Fresh Produce Journal*, [www.freshinfo.com](http://www.freshinfo.com), 16 May 2008, p4

English fruit grower Alan Firmin Ltd won the over 14ha award for the best of Tesco's apple and pear growers at the retailers conference held in Kent this week. Entrants were nominated by packhouses and the technical and commercial teams for each desk nominated one grower/packer each. Andrew Nicholas won the under 14ha class and Adrian Scripps Ltd won the grower/packer prize.

Alan Firmin Ltd has 75ha made up of Cox, Bramley, Conference, Egremont Russett and Braeburn. New orchards include Gala and Cameo. They have achieved 100% within the Assured Produce Scheme and been awarded Tesco's Gold Standard.

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## **All in the title, 'Ramsey Puts His F\*\*\* In It**

*Fresh Produce Journal*, [www.freshinfo.com](http://www.freshinfo.com), 16 May 2008, p8

In an interview with the BBC last week, foul mouthed UK chef Gordon Ramsey has suggested that British restaurants serve only 'in-season' UK grown produce and be fined if they do otherwise. Fresh Produce Consortium's Nigel Jenney described the proposition as preposterous, saying it would have been more constructive for Ramsey to champion the cause of a balanced diet for all. Meanwhile the NFU supported the desire by Ramsey to increase the consumption of in-season food. The FPJ article is titled 'Ramsey Puts His F\*\*\* In It.

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## **Environmentally friendly paper bags sell apples**

*Fresh Produce Journal*, [www.freshinfo.com](http://www.freshinfo.com), 16 May 2008, p8

Tesco's top fruit supplier Empire World Trade (EWT) has instigated environmentally friendly packaging for apples with brown paper bags made from 100% recycled paper with a transparent window made of corn. Tesco's senior buyer Martin de la Fuente said that they are achieving sales ahead of forecasts that will result in an accelerated roll out. He said that consumers instantly relate to the environmental benefits of renewable and recyclable materials in packaging. Julie Criddle of EWT said that loose apple sales have been going down with prepack sales increasing despite people saying that they don't want packaging. The brown paper bags are a response to their concerns and the packs have done really well. Four packs of Pink Lady™, Braeburn, Gala and Golden Delicious have been used with the packaging.

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## **Organic sustainability rests with the variety**

*Fresh Produce Journal*, [www.freshinfo.com](http://www.freshinfo.com), 16 May 2008, p8

WorldWide Fruit's long standing member C E Murch Ltd is converting the remaining 65% of its apple and pear orchard to organic after achieving profitability with the first 35 per cent, or 45 acres, that was converted in 1997. The remaining 10,000 trees are currently being grafted over to more suitable organic varieties such as Red Falstaff, Red Pippin, Jonagored and Regal Price, at the expense of Cox.

Director Charles Atkins said that Cox has been in the business for four generations, but they must ensure that they grow the varieties that produce sustainable returns. There are three grower suppliers who provide organic apples and pears to WWF. WWF has organic trials in progress that are assessing the suitability of new apples like Pinova, Dalinbel, Juliette and Zari.

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## North America

### **Internal browning theory needs more evidence**

*Good Fruit Grower, 1 May 2008, pp12/13*

Dr Mary Parker, researcher at the Institute of Food Research in Norwich, England, and her colleague Walter Guerva, found hair like growth, termed callus hairs, in the air pockets of the parenchyma cells in the outer 10mm of the flesh of organic Fuji apples. Light microscopy and scanning electron microscopy were able to reveal their full extent in 3 dimensional form. Dr Parker believes that they may restrict gas flow between the cells and impact on post harvest storage, resulting in internal browning. US postharvest physiologist Dr Jim Mattheis of the USDA in Wenatchee Washington, acknowledged the findings but will be looking for more evidence in the future to support the storage impact of the callus hairs. [Return to Front Page](#)

### **Housing development for seasonal workers**

*Good Fruit Grower, 1 May 2008, pp14/15*

A housing development for seasonal workers is about to commence, with 21 air conditioned and heated 400 square foot cabins each designed to accommodate 6 people, in Malaga, Washington, not far from the Stemilt Hill cherry growing district. The US\$3.2m project includes a US\$2m grant, a US\$500,000 30 year loan and private funding. Growers are being offered 15 year contracts to lease beds for workers. The cost per bed is US\$9 per night. It is expected that the charge should cover operating costs and repayment of the US\$500,000 loan.

The housing is expected to be occupied for 6 months of the year, from cherry harvest to apple harvest, but can remain open for 10 months and still qualify as seasonal housing. Washington Growers League e/d Mike Gemper said that the League deals exclusively with labour and employment and thanked the many 'just great people' who work really hard ...and keep coming here... to have this mutually beneficial relationship. [Return to Front Page](#)

### **Seasonal Canada program brings in much needed workers**

*Good Fruit Grower, 1 May 2008, pp16/17*

Okanagan, British Columbia, Canada, apple and pear grower Sam Di Maria has 82 acres of orchard and describes being on pins and needles in 2006 seeking labour, until most of his crop was hailed out. Now the Seasonal Agricultural Workers Program introduced in 2007 has enabled him to bring in 10 Mexican workers whom he describes as a 'breath of fresh air' and exuded praise on the attitude and capability of the workers who 'saved my bacon... and my farm'.

He will bring in 14 workers this year. All up, British Columbia expects about 3,000 Mexican workers this year, up from 2,200 in 2007. The orchardists provide the return air fare (US\$1,200), accommodation, health care insurance, minimum wages and transportation to amenities. [Return to Front Page](#)

## Organic apple and pear volume and price on an upward spiral

*Good Fruit Grower, 1 May 2008, pp20/23*

Certified organic apple acreage in Washington State is more than 8,000 acres with another 6,291 acres in transition. Average is expected to exceed 14,000 acres by 2009 with the potential to produce close to 10 million boxes, according to a report by Washington State University researchers David Granatstein and Elizabeth Kirby. Organic pear acreage is 1,418 acres with another 630 acres in transition.

Organic apple prices have climbed steadily since 2001/02-2002/03, from about US\$7 average fob price to US\$25/box in 2006/07. Except for a low crop year in 2004/05, volume has also increased from about 2.2m boxes to 4 million boxes in 2005/06 and 2006/07.

Average organic pear premiums were the lowest in 2001 at 17 per cent (US\$2.37/box fob) over conventional market prices. Premiums have rebounded since with average fob prices increasing from just a few dollars to US\$37 and US\$36 in 2005/06 and 2006/07. Volume shipped has increased from around 30,000 boxes to around 300,000 boxes in 2005/06 and 2006/07.

Turkey is the world's largest organic pear producer with about 6,000 acres. Italy has 3,500 acres and China is thought to have around 3,000 acres. Argentina is the largest Southern Hemisphere producer with 3,500 acres. In Europe in 2006, Germany had 6,669 acres of organic apples, Italy 5,898 acres and the UK 2,372 acres. Turkey has 6,700 acres and 3,794 acres in transition. China has 3,900 acres. [Return to Front Page](#)

## Los Angeles Market Report

LA wholesale on 26 May 2008 provided by: Fruit and Vegetable Market News, USDA.

Source	Variety	Pack	US \$ Min	US\$ Max	AU \$ Min	AU \$ Max
Washington	Red Del	18 kg	18.00	28.00	18.78	29.21
Washington	Golden Del	18 kg	19.00	31.00	19.82	32.34
Washington	Fuji	18 kg	18.00	34.00	18.78	35.46
Washington	G Smith	18 kg	16.00	32.00	16.69	33.38
Washington	Gala	18 kg	20.00	30.00	20.86	31.29
Washington	Pink Lady™	18 kg	22.00	28.00	22.95	29.21
Oregon	Anjou	20 kg	24.00	28.00	25.03	29.21
Chile	Bosc	18 kg	30.00	38.50	31.29	40.16
Chile	Packham	18 kg	28.00	38.50	29.21	40.16
California	Apricots	2 lyr tray	16.00	26.00	16.69	27.12
California	Cherries	6.8 kg	10.00	40.00	10.43	41.72
California	Nectarines	2 lyr tray	18.00	30.00	18.78	31.29
California	Peaches	2 lyr tray	18.00	28.00	18.78	29.21

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## UK Market Report

Fresh Produce Journal, 16 May 2008, pp 33/34. UK wholesale apple & pear prices:-

Source	Variety	Pack	Pence Min	Pence Max	AU \$ Min	AU \$ Max
Brazil	Braeburn	18.0kg		1500	0.00	30.91
Chile	Braeburn	13.0kg	1300	1350	26.79	27.82
France	Braeburn	13.0kg	1025	1200	21.12	24.73
UK	Bramley	Per kg	93	110	1.92	2.27
New Zealand	Cox	18.0kg	1350	2000	27.82	41.21
China	Fuji	10.0kg	900	1025	18.55	21.12
Uruguay	Fuji	18.0kg		1312	0.00	27.03
Chile	Gala	18.0kg		1800	0.00	37.09
Chile	G. Dels	18.0kg		1375	0.00	28.33
France	G. Dels	13.0kg	950	1025	19.58	21.12
Sth Africa	G. Dels	12.5kg	1025	1200	21.12	24.73
Argentina	G. Smith	18.0kg		1596	0.00	32.89
Chile	G. Smith	18.0kg	1300	1400	26.79	28.85
Sth Africa	G. Smith	12.5kg	1050	1400	21.64	28.85
Uruguay	G. Smith	18.0kg		1395	0.00	28.75
Netherlands	Jonagold	13.0kg		1040	0.00	21.43
Canada	McInt'sh Red	18.0kg		1600	0.00	32.97
USA	McInt'sh Red	18/19k		1465	0.00	30.19
France	Pink Lady	13.0kg	1625	1650	33.48	34.00
Chile	Red Chief	18.0kg		1380	0.00	28.44
France	Red Chief	18.0kg		1175	0.00	24.21
Chile	Red Dels	12.5kg		1300	0.00	26.79
Chile	R. Gala	13.0kg	1100	1175	22.67	24.21
New Zealand	R. Gala	18.0kg	1450	2000	29.88	41.21
Sth Africa	R. Gala	12.5kg	1150	1450	23.70	29.88
Belgium	Conference	12.0kg	1140	1325	23.49	27.30
Netherlands	Conference	12.0kg	1197	1320	24.67	27.20
Sth Africa	Forelle	7.0kg		1100	0.00	22.67
Argentina	Packham	18.0kg		1450	0.00	29.88
Chile	Packham	15.0kg		1425	0.00	29.36
Sth Africa	Packham	12.5kg	1125	1260	23.18	25.96

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## Information About APWN and Disclaimer

This bulletin is prepared weekly to bring you up to date with the latest information about apples and pears with some reference to other commodities. Information is sourced from weekly and monthly publications and the electronic media and is used in the next issue of the bulletin after it is received. All sources are referenced.

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The editor is Stuart Gray and his e-mail address is [stuartgray@apal.org.au](mailto:stuartgray@apal.org.au)