

## **The Mandarin Effect comes to Australia**

The Citrus Australia National Conference held in Mildura has highlighted what variety managers, the Australian Nurserymen's Fruit Improvement Company (ANFIC) and Horticulture Fresh Australia (HFA) already knew: that patented citrus varieties are the way of the future in the Australian Citrus Industry, and seedless mandarins are leading the charge.

As one of the sponsors at the Citrus Australia National Conference with their commercial partners and marketers including Fresh Produce Group, CMS Marketing and Global Produce Solutions, it was an excellent opportunity to inform growers of what to expect in the future with new citrus varieties. It also presented the opportunity to showcase one of the later season varieties, Mandalate.

"Unlike other variety managers who have access to only one or two particular varieties, ANFIC and HFA have the luxury of offering growers a whole seedless mandarin program, with varieties ranging from the start of the season right through to the end of the season. Alkantara, C1867, Nectar, Mor and Mandalate are the varieties currently being commercialised with other varieties still undergoing evaluation. The varieties will be managed with our commercial partners through a Coordinated Marketing Group where everyone's best interest, including the grower, has equal value," said HFA Horticulture Marketing Coordinator, Craig Perring.

"Another advantage of our program is the fact that the varieties have been tested through the Citrus Australia National Trial Site in Dareton. Admittedly we have small trial sites in each growing region too, which gives us small amounts of information, but the majority of the information comes from the main trial site in the Sunraysia Region. We have encouraged growers to view fruit from this site and have sent fruit to growers throughout the season for their assessment so they can make informed decisions on our varieties and keep the whole decision-making process transparent," he added.

HFA believes that with so many new varieties being imported into Australia, and are now sitting in plant quarantine awaiting release, it is important that variety managers

utilise the national trial sites to provide growers with independent cultural and variety information to make informed decisions before planting a variety.

With some other variety managers trying to fast track the commercialisation process of particular citrus varieties, it can confuse growers about which variety is capable of performing well in Australia.

ANFIC CEO, Dr Gavin Porter said that the 25 years of experience that ANFIC has in commercialising various fruit varieties in Australia have taught them many lessons.

“Growers should be wary of variety managers without any track record in commercialising varieties, especially if the varieties have not been trialed adequately here in Australia. Citrus production is such long term venture as opposed to something like stone fruit, so there is less room for error when making a final decision on a variety,” he said.

“Our experience over the last 25 years has shown that variety managers come and go and the reason they go is because they try to rush varieties through to ultimately make a quick buck. Having an understanding of the growers needs first and foremost, as they take most of the risk, is paramount, hence why we have structured our Coordinated Marketing Group the way we have in working towards sustainable returns for all participants,” he added.

With patented varieties here to stay, ANFIC and HFA will continue to be at the forefront of managing and commercialising new fruit varieties in Australia.

For more information contact:  
Horticulture Fresh Australia, Craig Perring, Marketing Coordinator  
Ph: +612 9838 1909 E: [craigperring@anficc.com.au](mailto:craigperring@anficc.com.au)

ENDS

*Captions:*  
*New varieties: Citrus Australia Conference (L to R) Craig Perring (HFA), Miles Porteous, (Birdwood Nursery), Corey Jessup (Sunraysia Nurseries), John Messina (Sunraysia Nurseries), Dr Gavin Porter (ANFIC), Rory Cullinan (Birdwood Nursery)*

