

## **Hort code kicks off with little confusion**

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Today's start to the Mandatory Code of Conduct for horticulture has been smooth for the most part, with only isolated incidents of confusion.

Wholesalers at the Brisbane Markets have told *Queensland Country Life* that for the most part it has been business as usual.

However, there have been some instances of consignments of fruit arriving without the correct paperwork, and of midnight phone calls to finalise prices with growers as required under the new regime.

And while today has gone relatively smoothly, the entrenched opposition between growers and wholesalers over the need and viability of the Code remains.

Wholesalers maintain that in the long run the new system will prove a failure.

Brisbane Markets chief executive Andrew Young has been citing a survey of growers conducted by Roy Morgan Research last month, which found only 28pc of growers were aware of all the core requirements of the Code, while 14pc were not aware of any of the core requirements.

"These figures should be of concern for the Government, with a substantial number of growers not particularly interested in more costly red tape of marginal benefit," Mr Young said.

However, Queensland's peak horticulture organisation, Growcom, continues to back the hard-fought for Code, congratulating the Federal Government on delivering Australia "a 21st century marketing system and a more level playing field".

"Everybody will be better off through easy to prepare contracts which define terms of trade between wholesalers and growers," Growcom chief advocate Mark Panitz said last week.

"Both the wholesaler and grower will be better informed and any risk will be shared."

SOURCE: *Queensland Country Life*, weekly rural newspaper, posting news updates daily on *FarmOnline*.