Hi everyone,

It’s a little too late for Happy New Year wishes but I sincerely hope on behalf of the HGA Committee that your 2014 has started out on a fantastic footing and remains that way throughout the entire year.

I’m sure everyone has been or is busy getting down to the harvesting of our wonderful nuts. Me, I’m still on the sidelines watching, breathing every breath with my grove but I’m sure in a few years, I’ll be able to share in the frustration, joy, exhaustion and excitement that this time of our year brings on.

I’m excited to bring you the Calendar of events for 2014 in this edition and I’m sure you’ll agree that our State Reps have been working hard over the first quarter to bring a wealth of information and opportunity to you all as members.

Each of the State Farm Walks planned will include the very important Bio-Security Workshop and I encourage you at attend these workshops. They will be led by our Communications Project Officer, Mr Trevor Ranford and you will be walked through, using a template, the development of your own On-Farm Bio-Security Program. This is a great opportunity to see what needs to be considered and ultimately achieved on-farm for the security of your crop. In Tasmania, Victoria and NSW these seminars will incorporate a wonderful farm walk and talk where you can mingle alongside, and ask questions of, your peers within our industry.

We have also begun planning for the 2014 Annual Conference to be held in South Australia. Even though we are in the planning phase, please put the dates of 18th and 19th October into your diary so that you can join us for this Conference—we are discussing some terrific visits to processors and nut farms just beyond Adelaide.

During the past month, I have chatted to a few members and the recurring subject of blanks has come up. Thanks to Lester Snare who supplied a research article out of Portugal on this subject—I have reproduced only some of the extensive research project— I found it interesting reading about blanks in hazelnuts. Bear in mind, it was written in 1996 and summarizes, by saying not much is known about blanks and their causes. The entire article is available for you to read via our website in the Members Only area. Bear in mind, the calendar and date references relate to Portuguese seasons.

During this oncoming quarter, our financial year comes to an end and we will be mailing out our membership renewal invoices (look out in your letterbox in mid May). With this invoice, will come the first in our series of Bulletins produced by Trevor, our Communication Project Officer on Bacterial Blight—it is terrific reading and a wonderful resource so keep your eye out for it and your membership renewal. With your renewal will also come the new password for the Members Only area of the website—new from 1 July, 2014.

The next in our series of information Bulletins will be on Suckers and we hope to have this to you once you renew your membership in early July.

I was invited to attend the latest Australian Nut Industry Council this month and, along with Darren, our ANIC Director, listened as the business such as Nuts For life and the International Nut Congress were discussed. ANIC enables small industries, compared to Macadamias and Almonds, to partake in the nut business of the day and our involvement brings valuable knowledge to us and enables us to stand alongside the bigger nut industries to our benefit.

We have also been involved with the HAL Review which is currently being undertaken. Horticulture Australia Limited assists industry but managing funds and projects within 43 industry groups. This review has been undertaken by DAFF and I look to provide an update on this review in the next newsletter.

Cheers for now,

Sallianne

New tank being moved into place!
Some experiences with low seasonal rainfall in Orange

Hazelnut harvest is probably underway in your orchard after what may have been a challenging summer season of low rainfall and high temperatures. Here in Orange we have had eight consecutive months of below average rainfall. To make up for the rainfall deficit we started irrigating the orchard in October. Initially this was supplementary irrigation but, as the season progressed into summer and evaporation rates rose, it became apparent that the soil moisture store was negligible. The trees were then totally dependent on the irrigation provided.

In January, I installed soil moisture monitoring equipment which comprised 3 gypsum block sensors placed at depths of 300 mm, 600 mm and 900 mm near a dripper in a block of mature Barcelona trees. The system was recording soil moisture at 2-hourly intervals. I turned the irrigation system off, temporarily, on 22 January to see what effect this would have. It was amazing how quickly moisture levels fell. Within eight days, the trees had removed most of the available moisture from the soil profile to 900 mm depth.

Average evaporation rates in January were about 7 mm per day (rainfall equivalent). Water was being applied at 12-hourly intervals for 2 hours with 4 x 4 L/hour emitters per tree. This equated to about 70 litres of water per tree per day. It is difficult to know exactly how much water the trees were using. The applied water appeared to be barely sufficient to meet the evapotranspiration loss from the trees. These were 20 year-old
Barcelona trees with a full canopy, planted at 4 x 5 m spacing. Subsequent plantings have been at 6 m between rows to enable easier access for machinery to the orchard.

Based on published co-efficient for evapotranspiration and a canopy area of 20 m$^2$ it was estimated that each tree could use up to 120 litres of water per day. It was not possible to apply more water as the whole system was at full capacity. The trees looked stressed on days of high evaporation when the temperature was in excess of 35ºC. However, trees recovered on overcast days and after rainfall. Hazelnuts trees give little warning of moisture stress as they do not wilt readily. When they have been stressed for several days, they lose their leaves and fruits. It is impossible to rectify this situation once this stage has been reached.

In early summer, the crop on these trees had looked to be potentially very heavy. However with the loss of some of the crop it now appears that there will still be a good, but more average yield. The nuts are now falling as they ripen and it will be interesting to see what the final yield and quality is like.

We plan to install an in-line drip system for next year so that there will be more emitters per tree to create a larger wetted area around the trees. We also plan to have more sensors installed throughout the orchard so that we have a better understanding of soil moisture.

Other observations were differences in varietal tolerance of the dry conditions; competition from windbreak trees; and uneven distribution of irrigation water, all resulting in stressed trees.

We look forward to sharing our experiences with other growers at the planned hazelnut field day in Orange in May.

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**Save The Date:**

**NSW FARM WALK & BIO-SECURITY WORKSHOP**

**SATURDAY 3 MAY**

*Bio- Security workshop presented in the morning then farm walk at Basil and Jean’s Hazelnut Grove.*

Members $10.00
Non-Members $20.00

Morning Workshop venue to be advised.

RSVP & enquiries; salliannef@optusnet.com.au
2014 Hazelnut Growers of Australia

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

So much to think about... here's a calendar of events for 2014. Perhaps pop them onto your calendar and stay tuned for more details as they come to hand

**APRIL**

6th  Truffle and Hazelnut Growers Seminars – Scarsdale, near Ballarat
12th  HGA Tasmanian Farm Walk and BioSecurity Seminar—Meander, near Deloraine
12th  Truffle and Hazelnut Growers Seminars —Gembrook

**MAY**

3rd  HGA NSW Farm Walk and BioSecurity Seminar—Orange
3rd  Truffle and Hazelnut Growers Seminars —Myrtleford DPI
14th  HGA Management Committee Meeting
17th  HGA VIC Farm Walk and BioSecurity Seminar—Gembrook— 10am—2pm
20-22nd  International Nut Congress—1000+ nut professional from over 55 countries heading to Melbourne.

**OCTOBER**

18th & 19th  HGA ANNUAL CONFERENCE—South Australia...save the date!
We’re working on a terrific line up of visits and speakers.

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Has anyone seen anything like this?

Any and all ideas and suggestions to be emailed to secretary@hazelnuts.org.au for publication in next Newsletter

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PLEASE LIKE US ON FACEBOOK—it’s just one way we can keep you informed
Simply type in Hazelnut Growers into the search bar once you are logged into Facebook

www.hazelnuts.org.au  |  supporting, informing, leading
BLANK FRUITS IN HAZELNUT cv. Butler: Characterisation and influence of Climate


Summary

Seedless nuts, or blanks, are a serious problem in many hazelnut cultivars and represent an important economic loss to the commercial grower. To evaluate the growth and fruit production of hazelnut in the northern region of Portugal, a trial with 11 cultivars was established in 1984. ‘Butler’ was the most productive cultivar and is well suited to the in-shell market, but in eight years it produced 8.4% blanks. Blanks could not be fully described according to current classifications and so we propose a new one in which ten types of blanks are defined according to the appearance, number and size of the ovules, aspect of funiculus, existence of internal fibre and shell appearance. To investigate the cause of blanks, blank fruit rates were correlated with climatic factors (temperature, sunshine, wind and relative humidity) in each year from April to July. The increase in solar radiation and the decrease of relative humidity in May and higher minimum temperatures in July were correlated with a reduction in blank rates in ‘Butler’.

The hazelnut (Corylus avellana) requires cross-pollination for nut development. For economical yields, production is linked to mild, humid winters and dry summers (Mehlenbacher, 1991a).

Trees bloom and are wind pollinated and fertilisation occurs 4-5 months after pollination. When this double fertilization is unsuccessful or embryos abort, a blank nut occurs (Barbeau, 1973, Lagerstedt, 1985, Romisondo, 1977).

The occurrence of blanks is universal in Corylus avellana. Several studies in many countries have shown great varietal differences in the frequency of blanks as well as important year-to-year variations that may be greater than 25% (Lagerstedt, 1977).

The exact causes of blanks are not yet known, but several possible explanations have been suggested; including genetic constitution of cultivar, alternate bearing habit, pollen source, water and mineral nutrition status of the tree and environmental conditions. Lagersted (1975) and Dimoulas (1979) suggested that low temperatures during the fertilization period are connected with a high number of blanks.

According to the findings of this research paper, the reproductive stages in hazelnuts are most susceptible in May (Portugal) and higher sunshine levels and low relative humidity associated with higher minimum temperatures during the hottest month, July (Portugal) contribute to a decrease in the number of blank fruits.

This complete document is available for reading via the HGA website through the members only area. Please email if you require the password.
HGA invites you to Hazelnut Field Day at Meander (near Deloraine)...

**WHEN:** Saturday 12 April starting at **10.30am**

**WHERE:** Starting at 32 Chestnut Road, Meander 16km south of Deloraine on Highland Lakes Highway (A5), heading toward Meander and from 12 noon at Meander Hall, Meander.

**Program:**

10.30am—12 noon—Farm walk and talk at farm of Wayne and Lisa Johnston, 32 Chestnut Road, Meander (Entry by gold coin donation).

A chance to inspect and discuss a commercially productive 1500 tree hazelnut orchard (planted between 2006 and 2009), part of a large diversified cropping and grazing farming operation. Also guest speakers will provide presentations on aspects of growing hazelnuts including; Irrigation Tasmania, DPIWWE—Wealth from Water program and SenseT—new generation sensing programs.

12.00noon to 1pm—Lunch at Meander Hall—Cost TBA

1.00-2.30pm—Hazelnut Bio-Security Training Workshop—led by Trevor Ranford—Cost HGA Members $10.00 and Non-Members $20.00

Utilising a template you will be taken through the development of your own On-Farm Biosecurity Program to assist with the management of exotic and endemic pests and diseases. Full set of handouts and draft manual will be available as part of the workshop session.

RSVP Greg Taylor gregorytaylor3@bigpond.com or 0448 912 781

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**BUY, SWAP AND SELL** aka Hazelnut ebay or Hazelnut tree

If you have anything you would like sell, buy or swap, email salliannef@optusnet.com.au

Enquiry 1; Good morning, my name is Aurelie from a chocolate factory. In order to meet our customers requirements I need some help. In order to prevent risk, my customer is looking for some roasted and diced hazelnuts packed under coloured contrasted bags. By any chance, do you know some hazelnut suppliers who are working with blue or coloured vacuum bags.

Contact secretary@hazelnuts.org.au for further information.
2013/14 Hazelnut Growers Of Australia Inc
Management Committee

President | Sallianne Faulkner 0419474623
Vice President & ANIC Director | Darren Baguley
Secretary | Mattia Ringe
Treasurer | Nathan Bracken
Chemicals Chair | Sam Perna
Communications Chair | Carol Bracken
Committee member | Peter Beggs

Thank you to this band of people who have volunteered their time and efforts for the 2013/14 year. We meet via teleconferencing bi-monthly at present so if you have anything you would like discussed please just let us know. We look forward to working together for the good of our industry and our growers.

Communication Project Officer | Trevor Ranford

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**NUTS FOR LIFE—Update on the Healthy Handful**

**Coverage to date**

Just over 20,000 saw the logo in their facebook feed and another 20,000 or so saw the logo on the website home page when we launched the new website.

A glass jar of mixed nuts was sent to a group of 20 media dieticians/journalists with many posting photos on social media. And our release has gone out to magazines as well so we anticipate seeing coverage in the coming months.

A NutENews blog is in production which also includes the healthy handful logo story.

Some of the comments received to date:

*Thanks for the fabulous nuts that arrived bang on time for the mid-afternoon munchies. So good (and so rare!) to receive a product I actually want to eat and in a container that’s re-usable instead of wasteful*

Paula Goodyer, Sydney Morning Herald columnist and blogger Chew on This

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**Job Opportunity**

**WALNUT INDUSTRY TECHNICAL COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER**

The Australian Walnut Industry Association (AWIA) represents growers, producers and processors across the walnut industry. The position is part time and reports to a project team including the President of AWIA and the Chair of the AWIA Research & Development Committee.

Enquiries and Position documentation –
Contact Carol Kunert, President on 03 57297647 or 0417565493