



MEDIA RELEASE

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FRUIT GROWING INDUSTRY NEEDS DISCIPLINE AND CONSOLIDATION

Fruit Growers Victoria Ltd and its growers are urging marketers and retailers/wholesalers to stop devaluing apples and pears and pay a fair price for new seasons fruit.

Current market prices of pears, and some apples, of as low as \$1 a kilogram are crippling grower businesses in Victoria and Australia.

FGV Grower Services Manager, Michael Crisera said the current pear market was in oversupply due to a number of factors including declining cannery demand, increased productivity and the difficulty of adjusting orchard output to changing demands.

“Growers know they need to correct oversupply” he said. “But with the current new season varieties commencing harvest, and on the back of last season’s poor prices, growers are seeking retailer support by purchasing quality apples and pears for a fair price instead of ridiculously low prices.”

Low market prices for both pears and apples over the past 18 months have resulted in growers and packers supplying apples and pears to retailers and wholesalers at below cost of production prices.

Mr Crisera said it cost growers in excess of \$2.00 to grow and pack a kilogram of pears and apples. Whilst costs varied significantly across varieties and between growers, all fruit commodities required significant financial growing inputs to maintain a quality product for retailers, wholesalers and consumers.

Mr Crisera said growers worked hard to supply good quality fruit and were calling on retailers and wholesalers to price fairly, thereby providing a sustainable income to growers to ensure they were around to supply the fruit next year.

He said while the industry conceded that some removal of oversupplied varieties was needed, that was no reason to supply markets at below cost of production prices. More needs to be done to grow demand by promoting the quality of Australian fruit that makes Class 1 grade for wholesalers and retailers.

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