
HORTICULTURE
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NORTHERN VICTORIAN WOMEN IN HORTICULTURE MARKET VISIT TO SOUTH EAST ASIA

In November 1999 a Tomato Women's Group was formed. This group was formed to bring the women involved in processing tomato production together, providing not only time for them to network with each other, but also as an opportunity to meet the specific training needs of women involved in farming businesses. In November 2000 a stone fruit grower from Swan Hill was invited along to speak to the group on market development, and value adding. At the completion of the meeting it was decided that tomato women should also be aiming to target the South East Asian market with value added product.

The aim of a women's market trip to South East Asia would be to investigate what opportunities are available for the export of a predominately value added tomato product, but also to investigate the opportunities for the export of fresh fruit product. In addition it would provide an opportunity to investigate what markets may be available for crop products from suitable rotational crops that fit in with tomato production. To ensure that the maximum benefit was obtained from the market visit, it was thought that the tour should include a combination of both women involved in tomato production or stone fruit production. Two of the stone fruit growers have in the past visited South East Asia evaluating markets. This trip would enable them to follow

through on some of the links they have made in the past, but more importantly provide an opportunity to assist the other women to obtain the maximum benefit.

Participants from the processing tomato industry included: Geraldine Chirside and Marilyn Lanyon from Boort, Pat Kennedy from Corop, Katie Kirkham-Rathjen from Colbinabbin, and myself (LizMann), as the tour leader. The Market Visit was funded with matching dollars through Horticulture Australia

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Our first country to visit was Hong Kong, we arrived on Monday 7th May, the day before HOFEX was to begin. Our first appointment was to attend the HOFEX briefing for all Australian exhibitors and visitors. At this meeting we were introduced to the employees of the Victorian Government Business Office, based in Hong Kong. In addition to meeting the Victorian Government Business employees, we were able to meet the other Victorian exhibitors and visitors at a social dinner that evening. Over the next few days we attended HOFEX, meeting people involved in similar industries from countries across the world, learning how they promoted their products, and looking at different packaging ideas.

In addition to attending HOFEX we visited a number of supermarkets, including Park N Shop, CRC, City Super, SOGO, and Wellcome. Fruit quality in all supermarkets appeared to be very well present, with a lot of fresh fruit prepacked. Some supermarkets branded their produce with country of origin, although this branding did appear to be very sporadic even within individual supermarkets. The group also visited a few of the wholesale and wet markets around Hong Kong, these included the western Wholesale Market, Vegetable/Fruit Wholesale Market at Waterloo, and a Wholesale market selling produce from China. Generally fresh fruit and vegetable sold through these markets appeared to be of a good quality, with much of the produce being subject to random testing for pesticide residues.



Photo:
Tomatoes
from China,
arrive in Cane
Baskets.

Our visit to Hong Kong came to an end with us attending the HOFEX dinner, "Five Chefs Dinner and Victorian Wines". This dinner proved to be an excellent opportunity to network with the contacts we had made over the last five days, and

continued well into the night.

We arrived in Malaysia (Kuala Lumpur) early evening on the Sunday 13th May. This visit was to be very short (2 nights), but packed full with appointments. On the Monday morning we met with Austrade representatives, and were given an overview of the country and markets. The country appears to be relatively self sufficient in tropical fruit and vegetables, with many of the vegetables being grown in the Cameron Highlands. The most striking comment from the meeting with Austrade referred to the population. Malaysia has a current population growth of 2.7% p.a, with a policy aiming to increase the population from the current 23 million to 70 million by the year 2100. Other visits and meetings in Kuala Lumpur included meeting with a representative from Jaya Jusco Stores, Carrefour Hypermarket, and a visit to the Pudu Wet Market.



Photo: The group of women meeting with Mr. Lee Lian Eang , Merchandising Manager, Foodline Division Jaya Jusco Stores, Malaysia.

Our final visit was to Singapore. We began our visit to Singapore with a meeting with two representatives from Austrade. Once again we were given an overview of the country and markets. It was highlighted at this meeting that although Singapore may appear to be very westernized, the principles of performing well in business are very traditional. Singapore does not see agriculture as a business proposition, hence many opportunities exist for importing agricultural produce. Other meetings and visits in Singapore included meeting with representatives from NTUC, Shop N Save, Cold Storage, and a

(Continued on page 8)

Western Flower Thrips

Over the coming months many growers will be talking to nurseries to start to plan the production of their tomato transplants. It is very important to check that the nursery monitors for Western Flower Thrips (WFT). Please check that the nursery supplying you does monitor for these.

There are different levels of WFT monitoring.

- If the nursery has received Accreditation to Monitor for Western Flower Thrips, from Plant Standards, DNRE, then they are able to certify WFT host material for interstate transport, local trade, or for effective crop management purposes.
- Other nurseries may chose to conduct their own monitoring, submitting the sticky traps to an entomologist for identification. If this is the case yellow sticky traps should be replaced every 2-4 weeks, depending upon WFT risk.

In all cases it is important to check with your nursery, and ask see evidence of their accreditation for WFT, or the reports from their yellow sticky trap readings.

Other Nursery Guidelines, including the Assessment of Transplants check lists should also be followed and completed by your nursery. A copy of these guidelines are available from Liz Mann.

It is very important that WFT is kept out of the Processing Tomato growing area, as there is no cure for this pest. Prevention is the key!!

Example of a devastating epidemic of TSWV and WFT

A vegetable growing property with a devastating TSWV problem was found in the Perth metropolitan area. When visited in June 2000, the property has experienced substantial TSWV losses in tomato and capsicum and up to 10% TSWV infection in lettuce. Thrips samples were taken and identified as Western Flower Thrips (WFT). No remedial action was then taken apart from spraying with insecticide. When the same property

was visited again in February 2001, there was 90% TSWV infection in the tomatoes, 60% infection in capsicum and 5% in lettuce. Again, insecticides were the only control measure used following the visit. The property was revisited a third time in March 2001 when the situation was even worse. The capsicum crop had 100% infection and no produce could be sold so it was subsequently sprayed out with herbicide to remove the virus source. The infected tomato crop had been written off and removed, but in the interim had acted as a potent TSWV source of infection for spread of the virus to the adjacent lettuce crop resulting in 45% overall infection. The edge of the

lettuce crop closest to where the infected tomatoes were was 100% TSWV infected, so was also sprayed out with herbicide.

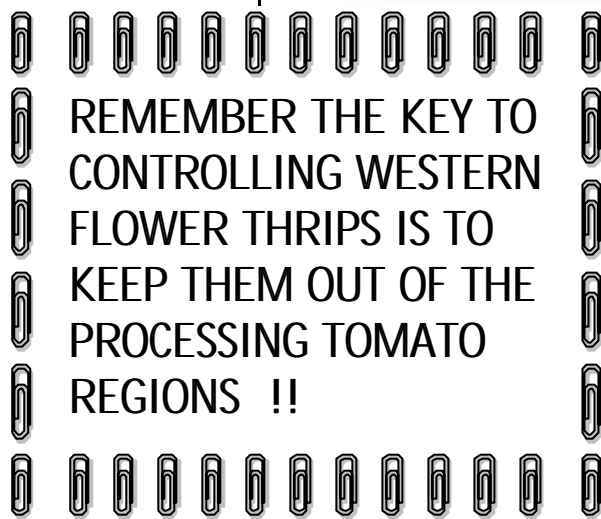
The property was relatively weed-free and the key factors creating the problem were related to the magnitude of build up of the TSWV source and the presence of WFT. The most important

factors were:

- Sequential, overlapping, side by side plantings of the TSWV susceptible crops.
- Old TSWV infected crops not being removed promptly.
- Plants showing TSWV symptoms not being rogued out.
- Same insecticide used rather than rotating different insecticide types.

If you wish to know more about WFT and TSWV, a workshop has been planned for the processing tomato growers on the 2nd August, 2001 (See Page 7 - Upcoming events). As part of this workshop growers will be entitled to a yellow sticky trap identification in January, to determine what thrips are currently present on your property. The workshop will also cover information on how to manage WFT and TSWV.

(Taken from the West Flower Thrips Newsletter No. 21 Editors: Alison Medhurst & Bernadette Swanson)



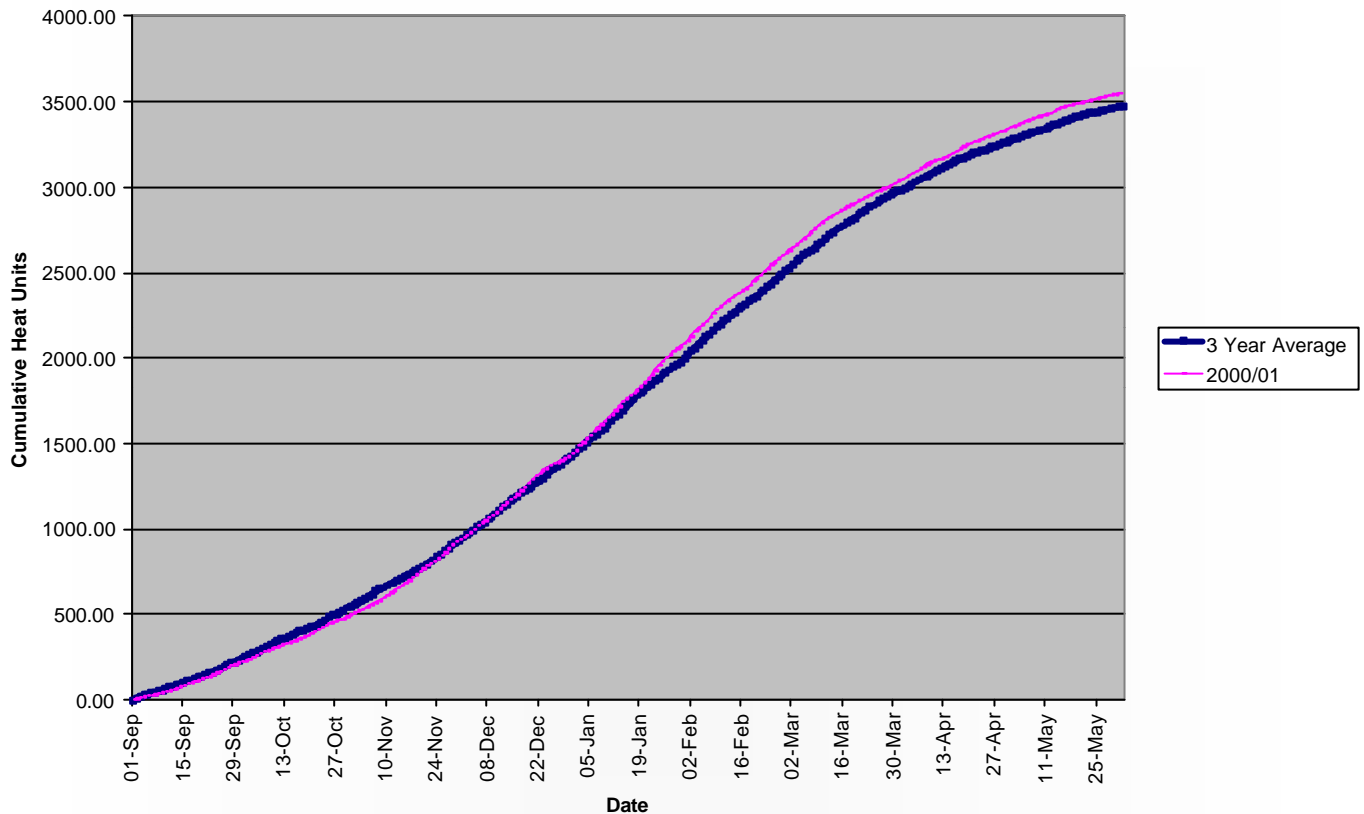
REMEMBER THE KEY TO CONTROLLING WESTERN FLOWER THRIPS IS TO KEEP THEM OUT OF THE PROCESSING TOMATO REGIONS !!

CUMULATIVE HEAT UNIT GRAPHS

Daily minimum and maximum temperatures have been obtained from the Kerang Post Office, Echuca Aerodrome, and the Shepparton Airport.

Degree-days (heat units) have been calculated using the Double Triangulation method, using an upper threshold of 44°C and a lower threshold of 6°C.

Cumulative Heat Units - Kerang



Do you employ contract workers?

A business and an individual contract worker who has an Australian Business Number can make a voluntary agreement to help the worker paying their income tax.

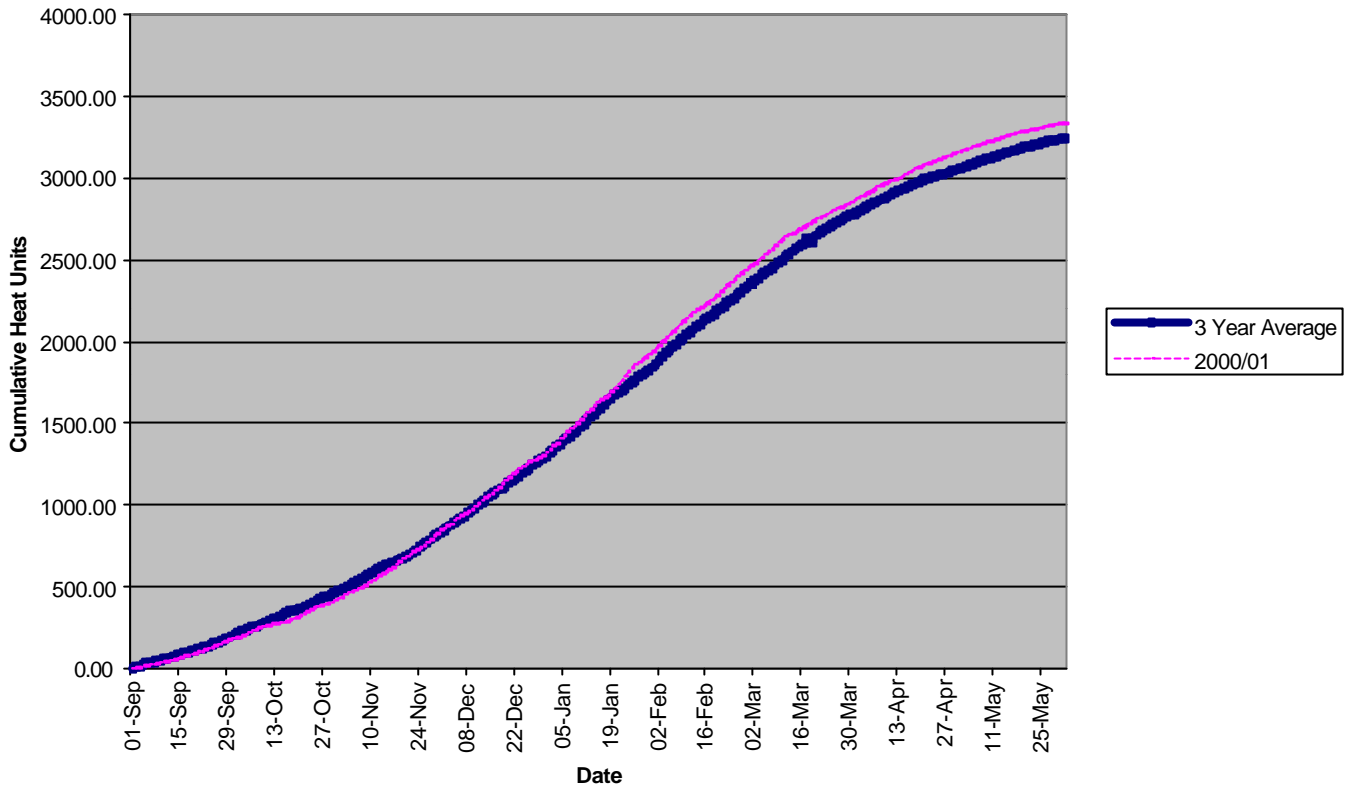
The voluntary agreement is a written agreement between the business (the payer) and the worker (the payee) to bring work payments into the Pay As You Go withholding system. However, these payments must not be subject to any other PAYG withholding.

If your business has made a voluntary agreement with a worker, you must withhold an amount from payments you make to the worker, based on the tax tables published by the ATO. You then send the amounts to the ATO and the worker will not need to pay PAYG installments for that income.

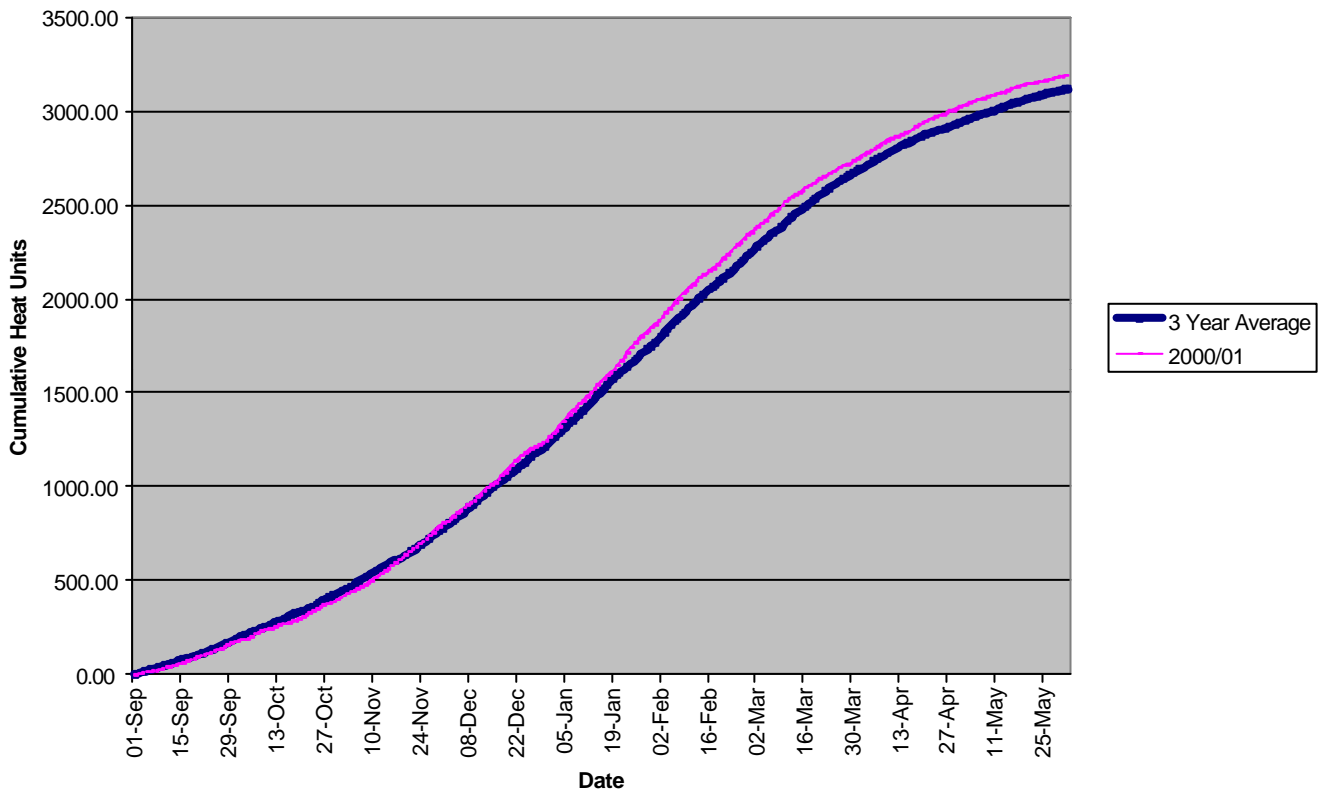
If the worker is registered for GST, they can claim input tax credits for any GST paid for goods or services bought and used in performing the work or services under the agreement. For more information, phone 132478 and request the fact sheet PAYG Voluntary Agreements or find it on: www.taxreform.ato.gov.au

This article was sourced from the ATO

Cumulative Heat Units - Echuca



Cumulative Heat Units - Shepparton



SUPERANNUATION GUARANTEE

All payers/employers in Australia are required to contribute 8% of total payroll towards superannuation support for their workers. The good news is that this percentage does not rise until 2002/2003 financial year.

In most cases, superannuation contributions are a tax deduction for the payer. However payers who do not provide the required minimum level of superannuation support are subject to the Superannuation Guarantee Charge (SGC), which is not a tax deduction for the employer.

This SGC is based on the shortfall in employer superannuation contributions and has to be paid to the Tax Office, along with an administrative charge and an amount representing lost superannuation fund earnings.

All superannuation contributions must be paid into a complying superannuation fund before 28th of July 2001.

Each quarter for Superannuation Guarantee purposes is considered a contribution period.

Therefore, employers should reconcile the superannuation contributions quarterly to establish whether the appropriate payments have been made. If a discrepancy is found in relation to contribution amounts, employers can make up the difference at the end of each quarter.

All superannuation contributions must be paid into a complying superannuation fund before 28th of July 2001. This will ensure that the employer avoids having to pay the SGC as a result of shortfall in contributions.

Free collection of unwanted and de-registered farm chemicals in north east Victoria

ChemCollect Victoria, the free and final collection of unwanted and de-registered farm chemicals, will be in **north east Victoria from late August to late October 2001.**

23rd August	—	Echuca
28th & 29th August	—	Shepparton
4th September	—	Elmore
12th September	—	Kyabram

The program offers farmers the opportunity to get rid of their unwanted and de-registered farm chemicals including organochlorine pesticides and arsenic based products. The collection covers all agricultural and veterinary chemicals.

Farmers are urged to check their sheds and participate in the program by bringing their unwanted chemicals to a 'drop-off' collection site. The dates, locations and times will be advertised in local papers and through other avenues once they are finalised.

Farmers should call 1800 020 190 for a drop-off appointment. Appointments are required for safety, to minimise waiting times and to make sure there is sufficient space available in the collection trucks for all the chemicals brought in for disposal.

The chemicals will be transported to Melbourne for treatment and safe disposal.

Farmers wanting more information about the program can call the information line, 1800 660 667 or visit the website www.chemcollect.vic.gov.au

The Environment Protection Authority is implementing the scheme in Victoria. The Victorian Government (through EPA) and the Commonwealth Government (through Environment Australia) jointly fund ChemCollect Victoria.

Manual Outlines: Best Irrigation Practice of Processing Tomatoes

NSW Agriculture have released the first of a series of publications on best irrigation management practices for vegetables.

The first publication *Best Management Guidelines for Irrigation of Processing Tomatoes* is now available.

The manual is intended as a reference for growers and others in the processing tomato industry, and highlights the steps required for successful drip or furrow irrigation. It combines not only the knowledge of researchers and consultants, but also includes the knowledge from experienced growers.

Topics covered in the manual include:

- Designing an irrigation system
- Paddock preparation,
- Irrigation scheduling,
- Soil moisture monitoring tools,
- Furrow irrigation management,
- Drip irrigation management,
- List of other resources.

Copies of the manual may be obtained from the APTRC Inc. for \$25 (includes P & H) Contact details are located on the last page of this newsletter.



UPCOMING EVENTS

Irrigation 2001 - Toowoomba, Qld

July 9th-10th, 2001 Fundamentals of Irrigation Design Training Course
 July 11th - 12th, 2001 Irrigation Conference and Exhibition
 Further information: <http://irrigation.org.au/irrigation2001.htm>
 Phone: 02 9746 0531

Approved Supplier Program Training (Accredited Course)

It is expected that all processors will expect their growers to attend one of the following sessions. Cost to be advised, Farm Bis funding available to eligible businesses.

Each session Time: 9:30 am - 2:45 pm.

Wednesday 25th July, 2001 Railway Hotel, Boort
 Thursday 26th July, 2001 Criterion Hotel, Rochester
 Friday 27th July, 2001 Colony Hotel, Jerilderie (for all NSW growers)
 Wednesday 5th September, 2001 Corboy Training Room, SPC Factory Sales Building

RSVP: To Liz Mann ph: (03) 5825 4633 or fax: (03) 5825 5029 By 20th July, stating which course you will be attending.

Tomato Women's Group Meeting

This will be an opportunity for the women that participated in the South East Asian Tour to talk about their experiences.

Drovers Bake House (Upstairs) - Echuca
 Friday 3rd August, 2001
 Time: 10:30 am - 2:30 pm

RSVP: To Liz Mann ph: (03) 5825 4633 or fax: (03) 5825 5029 By 27th July

Discussion Group Meetings

These discussion group meetings will include a training session on Sap Testing for Nutrients

Tuesday 14 th August, 2001	Boort	Time 7:30 pm
Wednesday 15 th August, 2001	Rochester	Time 7:30 pm
Thursday 16 th August, 2001	Jerilderie	Mid morning TBA

5th World Congress & 8th ISHS Symposium on the Processing Tomato

Istanbul, Turkey, 8th - 10th June, 2002

At this stage a grower tour is planned in conjunction with this, and is likely to also include a return visit to Israel, to follow up on the technology observed in 1999

Farm Chemical User Course - This is the full Victorian course, duration 2 days

To run this course a minimum of 10 people are required.

Dates: 31st July, 2001 and 7th August, 2001
 Location: Criterion Hotel, Rochester
 Cost: \$95

RSVP: To Liz Mann ph: (03) 5825 4633 or fax: (03) 5825 5029 By 27th July

Western Flower Thrips and Tomato Spotted Wilt Virus Training Course

Initial Training Session: 2nd August, 2001- Echuca,

with a follow up session on an individual basis in January, 2002.

Cost \$50, with Farm Bis funding available to eligible businesses.

RSVP: To Liz Mann ph: (03) 5825 4633 or fax: (03) 5825 5029 By 18th July, 2001

(Continued from page 2)

Wholesale market visit. NTUC will be opening an Australian Concept store in the coming months, this will create an excellent opportunity to promote Australian produce.

Outcomes and Benefits of the Tour

The expected outcomes of the tour were:

- The participants of the tour will have built a strong network amongst themselves, which is hoped to continue after their return.
- The participants will return with a list of market contacts, along with ideas of possible opportunities for value added product.
- The level of involvement that these women have in their farming businesses will be increased through renewed enthusiasm.

A follow up seminar was held on Sunday 17th June to further assess the outcomes and benefits of the South East Asian Tour. It was evident at this evaluation that the expected outcomes listed above had all been achieved, and perhaps to a greater extent than what could ever have been imagined. These women have also become more involved in their own business, and in the industry as a whole.

The group of 10 women developed a very strong

network during the tour of South East Asia. This network will continue in the future, and also provide opportunities for them to network with other farming women. These women have not only developed a very strong network, but have also been able to learn from each other.

A considerable amount of new market contacts have been made. The fruit growers in particular have benefit from the many meetings with buyers in each of the three countries. These contact that were made will be followed up over the next few months, with the possibility of fresh fruit being exported to some of these people in the coming season. The tomato growers have returned home with many new and exciting ideas about possibilities for value added tomato products. One tomato grower had already developed a value added product prior to the market visit, but had not promoted the product domestically. She has returned from this visit, and become very enthusiastic about promoting her new product, initially on the domestic market, but may consider exporting down the track. The new contacts she made during the tour, both locally and overseas have already been of assistance to her, to further develop her product, and business

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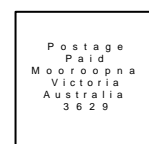
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