

# FRUIT GROWERS TASMANIA INC.

Annual Report  
*for the*  
2018/19 Financial Year



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Tasmania

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# FGT Executive Members

President	Nic Hansen
Vice President	Howard Hansen
Treasurer	John Evans
Pomefruit Representatives	Andrew Scott John Evans Scott Price Howard Hansen
Stonefruit Representatives	Nic Hansen Dane Griggs Ian Newnham Sam Riggall
Berry Representative	Dean Metcalf
Appointed Representative	Emma Sutherland

# Industry Representation



**Apple & Pear Australia Ltd.**  
Tasmanian Representative  
Scott Price

**State Association Representative**  
Ian Cover



**Cherry Growers Australia Inc.**  
CGA Board  
Nic Hansen

**CGA Export Working Group**  
Tim Reid

**CGA Finances & Admin Management**  
Doris Moles



**Summerfruit Australia Ltd.**  
Tasmanian Representative  
Ian Newnham



**Berries Australia Ltd.**  
Simon Dornauf



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# Industry Representation



**Strawberries Australia Inc.**

**President**

Simon Dornauf



**Raspberries and Blackberries Australia**

**Vice-President**

Simon Dornauf



**FGT Awards Selection Committee**

Ted Dominey

Carl Hansen

Scott Price

Danny Reardon



**Primary Employers Tasmania**

**Executive Committee**

Sam Riggall

Emma Sutherland



**Australian Government**

**Bureau of Meteorology**

**Primary Industry Consultative Committee**

Ian Cover



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# FGT Staff

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# President's Report

As Chair of Fruit Growers Tasmania, I am pleased to report that our grower organisation remains at the forefront of many issues, including biosecurity, export development and delivering value for growers.



Fruit production in Tasmania contributes \$160m-200m annually to the Tasmanian economy, and employs around 1500 Tasmanians on a full- or part-time basis. At peak times this workforce is supported by up to 6000 itinerant workers, pumping investment in regional Tasmania.

As an industry, we are continuing to grow and expand. With this success come new challenges, including securing seasonal labour, skills training, international market development, freight management, and investment. FGT provides industry representation to address these issues and deliver outcomes that benefit Tasmanian growers.

As a grower, I strongly encourage all growers to be a member; the small investment you make in becoming a member each year will be one of the best investments for your business. The low cost of membership brings with it a lot of benefits.

One of the most important services FGT provides is providing a united voice for Tasmanian Industry in a national and state context. FGT representatives on national bodies give Tassie fruit growers the opportunity to shape national industry discussions by serving on Hort Innovation's Strategic

# President's Report

Investment Advisory Panels, and representing the state on the boards of national industry peak bodies. This representation ensures Tasmanian growers remain front and centre in the minds of all levels of government when reviewing and setting regulations or responding to industry crises.

In addition to representation, FGT staff run workshops, conferences and other events aimed at bringing growers together and making sure growers have access to the latest information and services. In the last 12 months, FGT have run events looking at biosecurity, fruit production management, seasonal labour, ag technology, pollination, and food quality assurance. Growers interested in international trade opportunities can also take part in group study tours to major international markets, where they can learn about the market, connect with importers and wholesalers, and take part in leading international trade shows.

One of the highlights of FGT's calendar is the annual winter conference, which offers something for fruit producers of all types and sizes. As chairman it was great to be able to once again welcome everyone at FGT's annual conference. This year's conference focused on protected cropping and advanced production systems, with guest speakers coming from across Australia, New Zealand and the USA. In all it was a fantastic conference, and really showcased the importance and quality of speakers that the FGT conference attracts. Highlights from the conference included excellent presentations by Prof. Greg Lang and Dr Ken Breen, who shared the latest global research findings in tree architecture, pruning systems and protected cropping research in apples,

# President's Report

cherries and other stonefruit. These and other presentations are now available for our members from the FGT website.

FGT provides a number of no- or low-cost information resources and services for members aimed at making life simpler and easier for growers.

FGT staff can also help coordinate auditor-sharing amongst growers to reduce costs for growers, and can organise sample collection and processing for chemical or microbiological testing for growers' requiring this.

Growers interested in exporting fruit to China, Japan, Thailand or Vietnam can get help by FGT staff to complete the necessary registrations, biosecurity pest information and chemical residue requirements for these markets.

FGT staff can also provide up-to-date information on export requirements and regulations to major export markets, as well as government work-plans and government audit requirements.

FGT staff are also developing a range of biosecurity information resources useful for growers and their staff. These include a fruit fly incursion response manual for growers, waterproof pest ID cards, and information posters for packers, distributors & retailers. These resources will be rolled out over the next few months, and aim to make it simpler and easier for growers to manage on-farm biosecurity.

This has just been a snapshot of our organisation and our industry. In closing, I encourage your ongoing support of your industry body and I look forward to the industry continuing to grow into the future.

Nic Hansen, FGT President



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# Treasurer's Report

As the Treasurer of Fruit Growers Tasmania, I am proud to report that FGT is now in a stable financial operating position. This stability will ensure that the organisation can continue to provide services to industry for the next 3-5 years.

The three-year forecast is looking very positive. Most of FGT's cost centres have reported a surplus during the previous 12 months. The exception to this was FGT's international trade development activities, which reported a significant revenue deficit. This deficit reflects the delayed receipt of a \$110,000 milestone payment which was received outside the reporting period on 1 July 2019.

Due to these circumstances, I must report that FGT technically recorded a financial deficit of -\$43,895 for the 2018/19 reporting period. This deficit saw FGT's total equity position for the reporting period change from \$811,831 to \$767,939. However, after accounting for this delayed payment, FGT's net trading position for the 2018/19 financial was \$921,831, reflecting a surplus of +\$66,105, with another \$562,410 expected in the next few months.

It must be noted that this continued turnaround is due to the careful management and the dedicated work of myself, the FGT President and the Board of Management. Together, we have embedded strict budgeting guidelines into all FGT activities and making sure that any losses were kept to a minimum.

FGT has adapted to the new Horticulture Innovation Australia Ltd (Hort Innovation) funding structure and with experiences

# Treasurer's Report

gained delivering other national projects, our organisation has the capability to operate in this competitive funding environment.

The tireless work of FGT's President has also seen the Tasmanian Government recognize the value of our organisation. Going forwards, we will be working closely with the Department of State Growth, the Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment, and Skills Tasmania on collaborative projects which will benefit Tasmania's fruit industry.

2019 sees the conclusion of FGT's Asian Markets fund project, which is co-funded by FGT, the Tasmanian Government and Hort Innovation. This project sought to create export market linkages for Tasmanian fruit and vegetable growers by attending international tradeshows in Hong Kong, Dubai, Beijing and Tokyo.

FGT now has a number of externally-funded projects underway in the areas of fruit industry development, biosecurity, export development, and market improvement. These projects are on behalf of the Tasmanian and Commonwealth governments. Other collaborative projects are in the pipeline which aim to address issues within Tasmania's fruit industry. These include pest management, market access, skills and training.

A detailed report summarising Fruit Growers Tasmania financials for year ended 30 June 2019 is expected to be received from the auditors in coming days. Copies of this report will be available at the AGM, and will be forwarded in advance by contacting the FGT office.

John Evans, FGT Treasurer



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# CEO's Report

By the AGM I will have had my feet on the ground as CEO of FGT for just under 11 months. During this time I have been solely focused on delivering benefits to our core stakeholders, our exceptional growers. We have achieved a great deal during the last 11 months across a number of key areas. These include some new initiatives designed to broaden our engagement with growers, Government and the industry value chain more broadly.



FGT's online presence has been expanding in the past 12 months led by our e newsletter, Fruit eNews. Fruit eNews has grown from strength to strength since its inaugural edition went out on 30 October 2018. The initial subscription list had just 155 listed, which has now grown beyond 320 for edition 20 that went out on 24 July 2019. Fruit eNews is our regular fortnightly newsletter designed to share news stories from across Tasmania's fruit sectors, focusing on key topics affecting our industry. We have also been developing our broader social media platforms which are ultimately acting as an amplified version for our public conduit for much of our information generated in each edition of Fruit eNews.

Throughout the past 11 months the FGT team has conducted numerous industry gatherings including our 'Meet and Greet' and 'Ketchup' BBQs and other events in all key growing regions. These have been well supported and provided an excellent forum for industry to get together and discuss the latest and greatest issues. We will be developing a number of similar meeting opportunities over the next 12 months which will be

# CEO's Report

collated to form an annual FGT Calendar of Events. We encourage members and associates to take advantage of these gatherings.

We have worked with our members on delivering numerous programs across the year including trade development, biosecurity, targeted skills development and sector specific activities. In 2018 Minister Barnett launched our 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Edition of our FGT Seasonal Produce Guide which has again been a great success. Not only do we distribute 20,000 hard copies for direct dissemination to local and international tourists but also amplify its presence through a variety of social media platforms including support from Eat Well Tasmania. We are exploring opportunities to further improve this valuable program through more online based platforms.

Our international trade program continues to be a strong focus for the business with 2018/19 being no exception. We had a presence in four international trade shows including Asia Fruit Logistica (Hong Kong), Fruit and Vegetable Fair (Beijing), World of Perishables (Dubai) and Foodex Tokyo (Japan). These events offer excellent opportunities to promote the phenomenal premium produce that Tasmania is renowned for. Plans are currently well underway for a Tasmanian trade stand at 2019 Asia Fruit Logistica (Hong Kong) with accompanying Tasmanian Luxury Produce promotion through Galaxy Entertainment Group in Macau. Promoting and building the Tasmanian brand will be a key focus from 2019/20 onwards with an emphasis on opportunities to further build our 'ultra-premium' position in leading overseas markets.

# CEO's Report

FGT has partnered with the Department of State Growth in a 4 year Trade program which enables expansion of trade activities including various international trade events, inbound trade missions from key trading partners and export development workshops.

FGT has also partnered with Biosecurity Tasmania to develop information materials and launch a series of practical biosecurity activities and over the next 3 years. These activities are aimed at meeting the needs of pomefruit, stonefruit and berry growers, and will include an incursion-response manual, hands-on workshops, pest ID kits, and a practical on-farm biosecurity implementation guide.

We've also prepared a crisis management communications plan, which will be launched at the AGM. This plan aims to help growers, industry and government communicate clearly and effectively with each other and the public during a crisis.

FGT has also been providing advice to government on existing and proposed legislation and regulations with the potential to impact on Tasmanian fruit production, marketing and management. These include the Tasmanian Trade Strategy, Tasmanian Biosecurity Bill, Fruit Fly Response Independent Review, GMO Moratorium, Irrigation Electricity Tariff Review. Through this continued dialogue with government, we are committed to continuing to deliver benefits that make a real difference to our industry.

Stuart Burgess, FGT CEO



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