



Fruit fly outbreak brings industry to standstill



One of Northern Tasmania's most popular tourist attractions has experienced its fair share of hard times in recent years.

The Berry Patch was only just recovering from the devastating 2016 floods which hit the region, impacting its crops considerably, when the recent outbreak of Queensland fruit fly larvae brought Northern Tasmania and its industry to a standstill.

"We were going along really well, having a bumper of a season. I was even talking to my son about the need for us to get in more packaging and then January 26 this year hit," Craig said.

Craig Morris operates The Berry Patch at Turners Beach on the North West Coast of Tasmania, and was one of a number of fruit growers and small operators affected by the recent outbreak of Queensland fruit fly larvae.

The pest was first detected in a backyard in Spreyton on Tasmania's North West Coast in January this year, which has led to a 15-kilometre control area being set up across Northern Tasmania (and Flinders Island).

According to Biosecurity Tasmania, 88.66 tonnes of fruit fly host produce was collected and destroyed in February alone.

The control area restricts the movement, transport and supply of fruit and vegetables outside of the exclusion zone.

"The first stage of the control implementation wasn't too bad for us, we could still trade and I was thinking, 'yes we could live with this,'" Craig said.

"But then the second implementation, the control area being set up, shut our fruit production side of the business down."

Turners Beach Berry Patch is a family-run business managing a 14 hectare berry farm with raspberries, tayberries, strawberries and blackberries.



Global exchange success
> page 4



SA operations strengthened
> page 6



Investment central to ongoing success
> page 8

continued on page 3



Editorial...

Ian Macleod
Managing Director

2018 marks the 10th anniversary of our highly successful Graduate Development Program.

Its inception was based on the need to help support and encourage graduates entering the industry, identifying opportunities which would further help develop their knowledge and skills.

It has provided enormous benefits to graduates, allowing them to network with fellow employees, undertake field trips, facilitate inter-office transfers and participate in development activities and practical exercises.

Graduates have flown across the country, and New Zealand too, to experience first-hand different regions the company operates in.

It has showcased the various career paths available with many graduates going on to pursue highly rewarding and fulfilling roles within the company.

While the program hosts a number of functions which provide helpful insights into key areas of the business, it also encourages mentor opportunities with senior members of staff which can be invaluable when beginning your career.

We have also recently hosted staff members from various Staphyt

European offices for an exchange program which you can read more about in this edition.

It was a very successful venture, with great feedback from all involved.

I have always been passionate in pursuing initiatives which help to showcase and encourage young people into following a career in science.

One forum I was involved in recently, Speed Careering, is run by the Beacon Foundation in North West Tasmania.

The day's format provided the opportunity for a number of different industries to present to a group of over 200 school students, who then followed up with smaller group consultations to learn more about a particular vocation which interested them.

These types of programs are crucial to attracting the next generation of scientists to the industry.

They help to broaden a young person's mind as to the various career paths available, and break down any preconceived notions of what a career in agriculture looks like.

There has, and will always, remain a need to be active in this recruitment space as the industry looks to the future and the challenges we have ahead of us. 



Participants from four different graduate intakes help celebrate the 10th birthday of the program.


Peracto
Knowledge through Experience
Part of Staphyt Global

www.peracto.com

MANAGING DIRECTOR

Ian Macleod

Telephone: +61 3 6423 2044

Email: imacleod@peracto.com

BUSINESS MANAGER

Andrew Woodcock

Telephone: +61 3 6423 2044

Email: awoodcock@peracto.com

GENERAL PROJECT ENQUIRIES

Phillip Frost

Mobile: 0409 841 692

Email: pfrost@peracto.com

RESIDUE PROJECTS

Bronwyn Haller

Mobile: 0420 520 582

Email: bhaller@peracto.com

NEW ZEALAND

Paul Munro

Telephone: +64 9 238 1102

Mobile: +64 2142 4466

Email: pmunro@peracto.co.nz

 **Staphyt**
Tomorrow happens together

www.staphyt.com

STAPHYT GLOBAL MANAGING DIRECTOR

Olivier Marchioro

Email: omarchioro@staphyt.com

Editorial: Anna Osborne

Design: Simon Schorn

Fruit fly outbreak brings industry to stand still

continued from page 1

The business offers on-site farm sales, where visitors can also access the farm to pick their own, as well as operating a café and shop selling farm goods including pre-picked berries and jam.

“We’ve had lots of local support where people are still frequenting the shop for food and coffee, we just haven’t been able to have fruit to sell,” Craig said.

While the business’ farm gate sales have taken a hit, so too has its intra-state trade.

“Our off-farm trade has been steadily growing over the years. Now, half of our business supplies to shops around Tasmania,” Craig said.

“This side of the business has really been impacted.”



The latest incident has come off the back of a tough couple of years for the business, which was affected by the 2016 floods through Northern Tasmania.

“The floods really affected us the year before where we lost a lot of plants,” Craig said.

“We were just recovering from that and enjoying a really bumper season then this happens.

“But there’s not a lot you can do really.

“We’ve been helped by a growers’ assistance package and the local support has also made a huge difference too. Just people visiting and really wanting to support us and what we do.

“Our season is coming to an end now, and we’re just focussed on next year which will be a bumper crop.” 🌿



FACT FILE

Queensland Fruit Fly

- The Queensland fruit fly can have a huge impact on fruit and vegetable crops
- Mature fruit fly larvae are 8-11mm in length and 1.2-1.5mm in width. They are usually easy to see in the flesh of the fruit
- A key sign of fruit fly is a series of stings visible on the outside of the fruit. A “sting” is a puncture mark caused when a female adult lays eggs into the fruit
- Detection and eradication programs include baiting, spraying, trapping, inspecting, monitoring and planning
- In Tasmania, the export of fruit fly host commodities for the 2015-16 season totalled more than \$50 million.

Information sourced from Biosecurity Tasmania, Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment, Tasmanian Government.



Christian checking some fruit in Tasmania with Suzanne Maier.

Global exchange success

Peracto in Australia and New Zealand have spent the past year hosting four Staphyt staff from Europe including France, Belgium, Germany and Italy.

The exchange provided visiting staff first-hand experience of operations across Australia and New Zealand, where they too gave international insights and know-how on the European industry.

Here, they talk about their experiences and the benefits of being a part of the international exchange program.

Christian Rettschlag, field agronomist, station Meringen, Germany

Christian worked as a technical officer with Peracto staff at Tasmania's Devonport Office where he looked forward to learning about conducting

field research in different crops; assessing and monitoring trials; and collating assessment data with colleagues.

He also was looking forward to help train Australian colleagues in the use of the new project management systems.

"It was a pleasure for me that I was given the chance to become part of this very good team during my time here," Christian said.

An experience he benefitted from involved the use of different coloured pegs in trials.

"Using different coloured pegs is really helpful at application and assessment because they are taller and colourful compared to the European ones, therefore helping to support the orientation within the trial much better," he said.

"We could master the trials with good to very good success in a very efficient way, mainly due to the great team spirit within the Tasmanian offices."

Tristan Delmotte, technician based at Staphyt headquarters, Inchy-en-Artois, France

Tristan spent time in both Australia and New Zealand for his exchange, which has left an ever-lasting impression.

"In 2017, I had the opportunity to work in the Melbourne office and also travel to Tasmania for an induction program," he said.

"When in Tasmania I discovered a totally different landscape and was told it was similar to New Zealand. From this instant I knew I wanted to go there.

"Six months later I was based at Peracto's Pukekohe Office and was not disappointed at all.

"I received a very warm welcome from the team who also helped me to settle in.



Sebastiano sampling apples in Victoria.



Tristan planting seedlings in Pukekohe, NZ.

“When on the office exchange I was keen to gain exposure to new crops and working techniques, but also to experience a different culture and to meet new people.

“On both office exchanges I was working on a wide range of crops that I was not familiar with in France including kiwifruit, citrus, almonds and forage brassica.

“My daily work included pegging trials, spraying, assessing and report writing (Melbourne).

“I have gained new knowledge about different types of crops, pests and diseases, as well as work methods that are different from France and will benefit me greatly in my future career.

“I also got the chance to work with a great team in New Zealand, improve my English skills and travel to see as much of the beautiful country as I could.”

Germain Mesieres, field agronomist, Perwez, Belgium

Germain spent time at Peracto's Bundaberg Office in Queensland, before visiting the Hastings Office in Hawke's Bay, New Zealand.

“I looked forward to discovering a new country, meeting new people and colleagues of another culture on the other side of the world and the chance to learn from them,” Germain said.

“In Hastings I mainly worked in orchards and vineyards, spraying and

assessing efficacy trials. I also helped across a number of tasks including pruning, ground preparation of a research block and maintenance of different crops.

“Some of the tasks were new for me, like apple pruning, which made the experience very interesting.

“It was also new for me to work in vineyards, and also my experience in orchards was limited so now I have new technical skills which I hope to use in Europe.”

Sebastiano Emmolo, station manager, Aprilia, Italy

Sebastiano spent his exchange in Melbourne with the experience going beyond his expectations.

“I have been working for Staphyt for over three years, and the idea of doing this experience in Australia was something I was looking forward to,” Sebastiano said.

“I immediately thought that doing such an experience would not only enrich me from a professional point-of-view, but also from a cultural point-of-view.

“I also thought that living and working in a country that is totally different from mine for five months would be an unforgettable experience.

“I can now say that all of my thoughts came true, and the reality has gone beyond my expectations.



Germain in Hawke's Bay, NZ.

“From a professional point-of-view I have learnt about new crops with different cultivation techniques and I have also gained interesting experimentation techniques from my Melbourne colleagues.

“I also taught the basic principles of the Staphyt system with not only my colleagues in Melbourne, but also in Devonport at the Peracto headquarters where I had the chance to meet and get to know many staff.

“Overall, it was a great experience that I would recommend to everyone.”



SA operations strengthened

Experienced agronomist and field researcher Orville Hildebrand has been welcomed to Peracto as the newly appointed Regional Manager for the company's South Australian operations.

Where has your career taken you?

After graduating from Agricultural Science in Adelaide I have held several roles in the agribusiness sector in South Australia and nationally. My early

career led me to positions that were research based involving field trials for registration purposes. I have also had roles in plant nutrition including Technical Manager for a natural fertiliser company, supporting sales and marketing. A highlight was touring China, Israel and Tunisia to inspect natural phosphate and potash deposits suitable for import into Australia. Later in my career, I have held several roles as Senior Agronomist working in broadacre, pasture and horticulture markets servicing clients on a local basis. In these roles, field trials were always conducted for local variety evaluation and new agchem products.

What led you to pursuing a role with Peracto?

I have always enjoyed the research side of agriculture and this position as Regional Manager was exactly what I was looking for in my career path. The reduced funding for government departments has created a growing need for private sector to meet the increasing research requirements of industry bodies. Combine this with the phasing out of many older pesticides, due to health and environment issues, a new wave of new chemistry will require evaluation.

What does your role entail?

As Regional Manager South Australia I am responsible for the management of projects conducted in the region by Peracto. Part of the role is to manage relationships with clients, industry bodies and external researchers at a regional level. To grow Peracto business in the region, my role will be to develop and maintain a strong network of co-operators and industry contacts to ensure projects are conducted to client expectations.

What are you most looking forward to in the role?

I am looking forward to renew relationships with industry personnel and growers to pursue common goals in product development and a more sustainable environment for food and fibre production. In the last 10 years the level of IPM (Integrated Pest Management) adoption has increased considerably in many crops grown in SA and I look forward to assist industry to pursue the IPM approach further.

What is unique about working in South Australia?

South Australia has a diverse range of crops with viticulture and broadacre farming leading the way in export dollars. This is complemented by large production areas of fruit and vegetables grown in different regions of the state. There is also a large glasshouse industry at Virginia producing food 12 months of the year. The main vegetable areas grow potatoes, onions and carrots with lettuce, cabbage, cauliflower and Brussels sprouts produced in local areas. As growers are very professional, South Australia is a great place to conduct field studies to complement their future production levels. 



Investment central to ongoing success



Tim Robinson taking weather readings.

Peracto recently secured a major achievement in its test facilities.

Since merging with Staphyt, one of Europe's fastest-growing agrosience businesses, the need to continue to invest in systems is central to ongoing success, both in local and global markets.

In October last year, Peracto New Zealand applied for Registration under the International Accreditation New Zealand (IANZ) Compliance monitoring Programme for GLP.

The application was successful, and the certification was registered in January this year.

This now means that Peracto New Zealand, located at Pukekohe on the North Island, is a recognised Test Facility for conducting GLP studies.

This is a major achievement for Peracto's operations, enabling both Peracto Australia and Peracto New

Zealand to participate in the Mutual Acceptance of Data (MAD) system.

Peracto Australia was reassessed for GLP Registration in March this year, marking 16 years of continual certification.

While conducting this reassessment NATA (National Association of Testing Authorities, Australia), provided Peracto with very positive feedback on the continuous development of its systems over the past 16 years.

Both Australian and New Zealand test facilities operate under the one Quality Management System with Study Directors located in both countries.

Test Facility management has placed a firm focus on the two countries remaining committed to interactions and communication so as to assure that the impact on management system requirements remains relevant, compliant and of value to the business and its staff. 



Paul Munro proudly displaying Peracto's new IANZ certificate.