

# NEWSLETTER

Volume 4, Issue 3

October 2002

*Special points of interest:*

- WHS Audits
- The Market Review
- Horticultural Corner
- Melbourne Avocado Committee

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## General News

**Graeme Thomas:** As you would be aware, Graeme Thomas resigned from the Board, so as to devote more time to his own farm and business.

Graeme has given generously of his time to NFC and his energy as a director will be sadly missed. We hope however to harness Graeme's talents in other ways; one of those will be his "Horticultural Corner" as a regular feature of this newsletter.

**Casual Board Vacancy:** As a result of Graeme's resignation, NFC has a vacancy on the Board. Your Board is considering its options in this matter, and hopes to have some news in the next month. In any event, the person who fills the casual vacancy would up for re-election at the next AGM

**Staff Changes:** Suzanne Lond resigned some eight weeks ago to follow the dream of all baby boomers—to travel around this great DRY land of ours. After all, surely it's better to spend our holiday dollars in Australia than overseas.

Suzanne's position, has been filled by Caroline Thompson, who comes to us with many years experience from GE Commercial (a large international finance group) and private hospitals. We welcome Caroline and know that she will be an excellent member of the team.

**It's a girl (13 October); congratulations to Shaun and Mandy Peters.**

**Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM):** A number of changes to the Company Constitution are soon to be proposed. Some of these were highlighted during the conversion process and some are new. The proposed changes are important to the well being of your Company so I urge you to attend, or if this is difficult (read impossible), send in a proxy form.

In any event, an EGM is to be called to consider the proposed resolution. At this stage the likely date is Thursday 5 October. A formal notice of meeting will be sent to shareholders by early November.

## Market Review

Whilst fruit volumes to the Nambour packhouse have been markedly down on last season, we have been able to maintain our key customer base through a very difficult season.

Our late season window of supply with Woolworths has proved extremely valuable, taking up the majority of our medium and large fruit at greater returns than have been

attainable from the central markets.

The markets have remained reasonably stable for the past 4-6 weeks, with the Brisbane market lifting returns in the last 2 weeks.

We are reliably informed the first of the New Zealand Hass is on the water, destined for the major supermarket ripeners. We are an-

*(Continued on page 3)*

# Workplace Health & Safety–Audits

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Audits being conducted by Queensland's Workplace Health and Safety (WHS) have started.

Information from Farmsafe Queensland suggest that the target areas include, but are not limited to:

- Heights & mezzanine floors
- Walkways & ladders
- Chemicals
- Electrical installations & safety
- Mobile & fixed plant

Approximately 230 properties are being targeted up till Christmas or early new year. However if you have not yet received a notice, it is highly unlikely that you will be on the hit list.

Comments from Farmsafe indicate that WHS have found little to complain about, but you should remain vigilant at all times.

Some useful websites to visit include:

- [www.farmsafe.com.au](http://www.farmsafe.com.au)
- [www.whs.qld.gov.au](http://www.whs.qld.gov.au)
- [www.eso.qld.gov.au](http://www.eso.qld.gov.au)
- [www.workcover.qld.gov.au](http://www.workcover.qld.gov.au)

## *New Email Addresses*

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Please note that NFC has changed its electronic "post office".

All email addresses now have the following form:

- Addressee's first initial followed by surname
- "@" sign
- [naturesfruit.com.au](http://naturesfruit.com.au)

So the new email addresses for staff are as follows:

Shaun

[speters@naturesfruit.com.au](mailto:speters@naturesfruit.com.au)

Mike

[mclements@naturesfruit.com.au](mailto:mclements@naturesfruit.com.au)

Caroline

[cthompson@naturesfruit.com.au](mailto:cthompson@naturesfruit.com.au)

Bryan

[braphael@naturesfruit.com.au](mailto:braphael@naturesfruit.com.au)

Kylie and Jenny can be reached on:

[admin@naturesfruit.com.au](mailto:admin@naturesfruit.com.au)

**Although old addresses will still be OK for a month or so, PLEASE UPDATE NOW.**

## New Shareholders, Lost Shareholders



Since the last Newsletter, a number of applications to join NFC have been received and accepted by the Board. We welcome the new shareholders listed below:

- G&P Briggs
- A&E Thompson
- J Williams
- Mildura Fruit Company
- Tony Potter

- Fountainhead Sustainable Farms

The following shareholders' address is unknown; please call the office if you know their whereabouts:

- Dackway P/L - A & C Haris
- LJ & ET McCartin

Six shareholders resigned prior to conversion as they were no longer avocado producers.

# Promotion & The Melbourne Show

This year, the Melbourne Avocado Committee, again spent some of your promotional dollars at the Melbourne Show, to encourage avocado consumption. The Committee held a stall in the Melbourne Market's "Fresh, Fresh, Fresh" Pavilion with nine other fresh fruit stall holders. Over 15,000 people tasted fresh avocados.

As well as offering fresh slices of avocados and guacamole on sliced fresh bread, the Committee gave out a sample bag which included two avocados (ready for eating), two recipe leaflets, a runcible spoon and a competition entry form.

The competition enabled five lucky winners to receive the latest Ainsley Harriott Cookbook.

Some of the Committee's key objectives are:

- To increase avocado consumption in Victoria
- To create awareness of the versatility and uses of avocados in cuisine
- To create a positive attitude of the health benefits of regularly eating avocados

The Committee has also advertised in The Age "Epicure", and, in May, took part in the "Winter Wonderland" exhibition on Collins Street.

Meetings of the Committee are held every few weeks to discuss ideas and plans. If you have any ideas, please send them to Mike or Bryan so they can be forwarded on to Melbourne.

## HORTICULTURAL CORNER

*Tips  
from  
Graeme  
Thomas  
Horticultural  
Guru*

## Market Review (Continued)

*(Continued from page 1)*

anticipating some increase in activity from growers in order to get as much fruit to market before the New Zealand fruit impacts on supply, demand and of course returns.

The supplementing of our marketing program with fruit from Mildura Fruit Company has been met with enthusiasm from all quarters. We are receiving an excellent product packed in our own boxes, which has enabled us to maintain

continuity of supply to our valued customers as our own fruit intake declines.

**NEW OPPORTUNITIES:** If you produce any fruit such as lychee, mango etc we need to talk to you urgently regarding marketing of you upcoming season fruit Please contact Mike or Shaun as soon as possible.



**The Fruit Company Limited  
t/a Natures Fruit Company**

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Nambour Qld 4560

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Fax: +61 7 5441 3688  
Email: [admin@naturesfruit.com.au](mailto:admin@naturesfruit.com.au)

Now on the web at:  
[www.naturesfruit.com.au](http://www.naturesfruit.com.au)

*Australia's Best Avocados*



*"The Fruit Company Limited will strive to continue to be a successful, respected Australian agribusiness through close customer/supplier contacts and consistent production of competitive products and service to the avocado industry"*

**Corporate Directory**

George Green, Chairman	+61 7 4157 7127
Nola Stumm, Director	+61 7 6550 4021
Rod Dalton, Director	+61 7 5466 1316
Rod Kippen, Director	+61 7 4159 9142
Bryan Raphael, CEO	+61 7 5441 3699 0438 713 580
Mike Clements, Marketing	+61 7 5441 3699 0408 076 783
Shaun Peters, Production	+61 7 5441 3699 0438 710 194
Caroline Thompson, Accounting	+61 7 5441 3699

**DIARY NOTE**

As previously advised elsewhere in this newsletter, an Extraordinary General Meeting is likely to be held at the Nambour packhouse on Thursday 5 December at 5pm. Please keep the afternoon free. Formal notice will be forthcoming.

## Production

**Nambour Production**

July has been a particularly busy period for the Nambour Pack Shed with product being sourced from the Bundaberg, Sunshine Coast and Toowoomba/Blackbutt areas respectively.

The quality of fruit emanating out of the Nambour Pack Shed has been exceptional with a large percentage of fruit being packed as Premium.

Production Staff packed an average of 2500 units per day for the last 5 weeks at an average production efficiency of 21.5 units per hour. Well done to all the floor staff for a great effort!

**Other crops**

All members who have previously supplied NFC with crops other than avocado are urged to get in touch with Shaun or Mike at the Nambour office so we can ascertain the potential for

THROUGHPUT		
Period ending 30 June 02		
SHED	Month Actual	YTD Actual
BFA	6900	13932
HWNS	1706	6240
NFC	27146	126056
NQld	496	50335
<b>Consolidated</b>	<b>36248</b>	<b>196563</b>

NFC to contract pack and or market this fruit.

Crops that NFC has previously handled include, but are definitely not limited to - Lychees/ Longans, Citrus, Custard Apples, Pineapples, Persimmons (Fuji Fruit) and Mangoes.

If the volume and demand is out there we would be very keen to talk to any interested parties.