The national cherry industry development program arose from a collaborative process. With the cherry industry continuing to expand and develop, there was a need to provide opportunities for engagement with research to ensure that growers are at the ‘leading edge’ of technology and information, and be responsive to any need for change or expansion. This year’s aim is to support the industry to increase export-readiness, increase exports, and build greater capacity to fully seize opportunities as they arise.

The national development program (NDP) for the Australian cherry industry has a new member. Peter Morrison is now working with the NDP as a consultant, and will be visiting states over the coming months. Peter has been an agronomist in perennial horticulture for 19 years. He has worked on a production orchard for a few years, and before that completed a traineeship and trade certificate on a fruit tree nursery and orchard. Peter has provided agronomic services, training and extension to the cherry industry both in Australia and internationally. He has enhanced his knowledge by travelling to the U.S, Canada and New Zealand in the last 5 years to look at how other growers and agronomists grow their cherries and manage their problems with this crop. Peter believes it’s important to understand the issues faced in different regions, and get to know the systems used by each grower.

“I know I can make a difference for growers when it comes to relaying research findings to them in a way that they can understand and use the information.”

Peter is helping the program now to develop activities for states this year. Feedback from states (via a consultative process) has been predominantly focused around export readiness. Program members are now helping with the progression of the biosecurity management plan. Keeping up-to-date with progress on export market protocols will mean that export-ready activities will be relevant. Feedback also included requests for knowledge around fruit quality so the NDP will also explore the latest R&D on quality, especially fruit firmness, to include in activities.

In the meantime, should you have any queries or concerns about the NDP, please talk to your state NDP member, listed below. State members have been active and are making excellent contributions to your program. Please continue to provide your thoughts about what your industry needs and together help direct support and development. And look out for future updates and information!

State members;
Anne Mooney (NSW)
Alison Jones (VIC)
Phil Pyke (TAS)
Darren Graetz (SA)
Stephanie Faggetter (WA)
Penny Measham (co-ordinator)

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