Media Release
Chiefs of Staff, News Directors

Wednesday, 24 May 2017

Supporting growth of Tasmania’s fruit industry through research and development

The Tasmanian Institute of Agriculture (TIA) is a great supporter of Tasmania’s fruit industry and conducts research and development to support continued growth and sustainability.

TIA’s Deputy Director of Research, Associate Professor Dugald Close, said TIA researchers would present on industry-relevant research at the Fruit Growers Tasmania (FGT) conference this week.

“TIA’s perennial horticulture team undertakes a wide range of research, development and extension to help industry manage fruit crops more efficiently and enhance productivity,” Associate Professor Close said.

“At the Fruit Growers Tasmania conference we will be demonstrating the Cherry Rot Prediction Tool, which was developed by TIA’s Dr Karen Barry with funding from Horticulture Innovation Australia.

“The tool analyses local weather data to assess the risk of infection to cherry crops and was made available to industry in March. It will help orchard owners and managers to make informed decisions about tasks such as the timing of fungicide application.

“This is backed up by a set of practical fungi identification cards which are a great visual aid to give orchard managers confidence they are tackling the right fungus.

“We will also be presenting about research funded by AgriGrowth Tasmania to support the development of Tasmania’s boutique cider industry.”

TIA staff will present on a range of topics, including cider research, blackberry red drupelet disorder, predicting mould in tunnel-grown raspberries, cherry fruit set, nitrogen use by cherries and bumblebees for pollination.

TIA is a joint venture between the Tasmanian Government and the University of Tasmania.
Media opportunities:

What: Fruit Growers Tasmania Annual Conference;

When: Friday, 26 May 2017;

Where: Tailrace Centre, 1 Waterfront Drive, Riverside, Launceston;

TIA presenters:

- 1:30pm – Dr Steve Quarrell, TIA entomologist, presents on a bumblebee research project;
- 3:45pm – Dr Nigel Swarts, TIA Research Fellow, and Madeline Way, PhD candidate with TIA, present recent and future cider research and development;
- 4:15pm – Dr Nigel Swarts presents ‘Optimising nitrogen use for improved productivity and fruit qualities in cherries’;
- 4:45pm – Associate Professor Dugald Close, TIA Deputy Director of Research, presents ‘Cherry fruit set – what do we know and what can we do about it?’;
- 4:45pm – Dr Karen Barry, Senior Lecturer in Plant Pathology, presents ‘Mould in tunnel-grown raspberry – can it be predicted?’

What: Fruit Growers Tasmania Field Trips

When: Saturday, 27 May

- Max Edgley, PhD candidate with TIA, presents on blackberry red drupelet disorder.

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