



Striving for good quality apples



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The WA Spring Future Orchard Walk was at Blue Moon Orchard in Mullalyup on 28 September and it was all about fruit quality. Ensuring quality and consistency of any product is crucial to ensuring consumer satisfaction and future purchasing decisions.

The morning started with guest speaker Brad Fankhauser from Fankhauser Apples Drouin Victoria speaking about striving for fruit quality. Their orchard strives to produce premium fruit that they pack and market themselves. Brad highlighted the fact that they spend time in the orchard assessing maturity, fruit and tree growth, water availability, pest and disease levels to ensure that premium fruit is grown.

This orchard walk was a little different to previous as it saw the group undertake some taste testing of Pink Lady™ apples.

An eating quality trial had been set-up across Australia with all regions picking the Pink Lady™ apples at three timings (seven days before first pick, at first pick and after second pick) and stored until the September orchard walks.

The WA apple samples were from an orchard in Manjimup and Donnybrook, and had been air cooled stored. Each of these apples were rated for texture, juiciness, sweetness, flavour and the chance of purchasing again. The responses to the apple samples varied across the group with different people showing different responses to the early, mid and late maturing fruit.



► THE eating quality trial rated texture, juiciness, sweetness, flavour and the chance of purchasing again.



The group was asked to describe their favourite apple in one word from what was tasted

crispiness
 crisp refreshing
 sweet overall
flavour
 crunch texture juice
 taste balance
 crunchiness

Growers were then asked what was wrong with the worst apple using one word

soft mealy
 dry bland
floury
 texture
 poor pressure



Apple growers can take steps to ensure more consistent and good eating quality of apples are available to consumers through good orchard and post-harvest management practices.

harvest quality. Since harvest maturity is most important this demonstration trial looked at the effect various harvest regimes may have on the final quality and eating experience of the product.

Thank you to Tony Giumelli from Blue Moon Orchard for hosting the day and thank you to our growers who donated fruit to the eating quality trial, it was greatly appreciated.

From the results on the day it looked like the early pick on block B was what most people would return to purchase (see Figure 1).

While no two seasons are the same growers can rely on set practices and measurements to ensure optimum harvest time to achieve best post-

MORE INFORMATION
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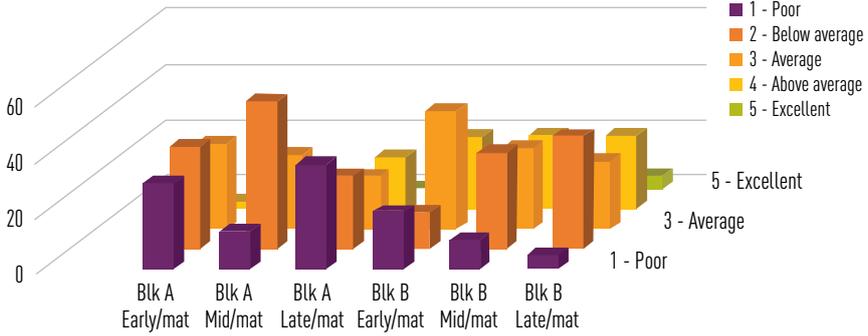


FIGURE 1 Rate the chance of purchasing the apple again



Following fruit quality *all the way to market*



► **TASTING** champagne ciders at Carmel Cider, Lisa, Susie, Claire and Elizabeth.



BY POMEWEST INNOVATIVE ORCHARDIST GROUP

Following this year's theme of fruit quality in the Future Orchards program. Pomewest ran a two day bus tour to Market City and the Woolworths Delivery Centre. The group consisted of growers from the South West and Perth Hills who were also joined by other industry representatives from the HortConnectWA network.

▶ **ABOVE:** At the Naked Apple for cider tasting and dinner.

Over the two days we visited TQAS where we saw the application of quality standards for international export and local standards. Chris Hall showed us how fruit is tested for maturity before it is exported around the world. The group then headed up to the hills to do some cider tasting of champagne ciders at Carmel Cider then onto Naked Apple Cider House for another cider tasting followed by a great meal, all looking at the aspects of value adding to apple products. Next morning we made an early morning visit to Market City with John Mercer from WA Farm Direct who showed us the biosecurity treatment of imported fruit followed by a tour of the market facilities with time to talk to market agents.

It was then onto the Woolworths Delivery Centre where we saw the daily process of distribution of the fruit sent up to market. Again quality testing was in place as new produce was received.

It was a great tour enjoyed by all with some good learnings on how the market system works along with how we can ensure apples remain in great condition all the way through the supply chain.

Thank you to John and Jenny Mercer and team from WA Farm Direct who hosted us over the two days. 🍏

MORE INFORMATION ▶

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- ▶ **TOURING** the Woolworths delivery centre.
- ▶ **WA Farm Direct** Market City produce bays.

