

FUTURE ORCHARDS' BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Fruit Size Progress Update – January 2013

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29 January 2013

This year fruit size data is available from all growing region except Tasmania, with the most comprehensive data coming from Southern Victoria. The main varieties being monitored are:

- Cripps Pink types
- Royal Gala types
- Granny Smith
- Red Delicious

In addition, there are a number of minor varieties and pears on the database in small numbers.

This report focuses on the four main varieties.

Cripps Pink Types

Days after full bloom (DAFB) South Australia shows the highest fruit growth rate and the largest fruit size in mid-January, while Northern Victoria is showing the lowest growth rates and smallest average fruit size. See Figure 1.

The other regions lie in between these two extremes.

Compared to last season Northern Victoria fruit is around 4 to 5 mm smaller in diameter than last year. See Figure 2. Fruit sizing in the other regions is very similar to last season.

When fruit size is looked at by calendar date, flowering date tends to override the DAFB growth rate and fruit size, consequently, Queensland, South Australia and Southern Victoria all had similar average fruit size in mid January. Being a

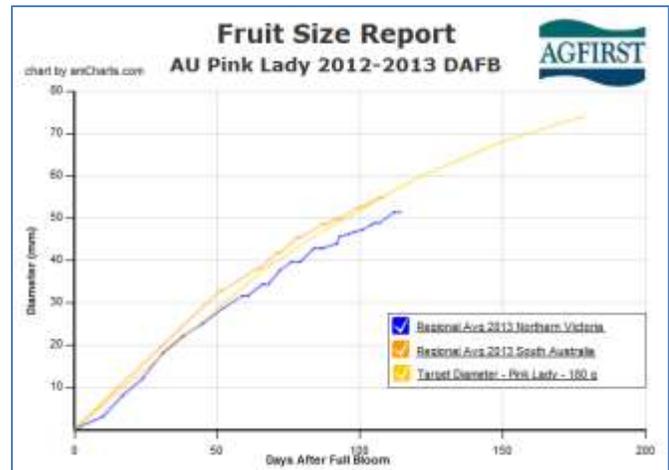


Figure 1: Pink Lady 2013 Northern Victoria vs South Australia (DAFB)

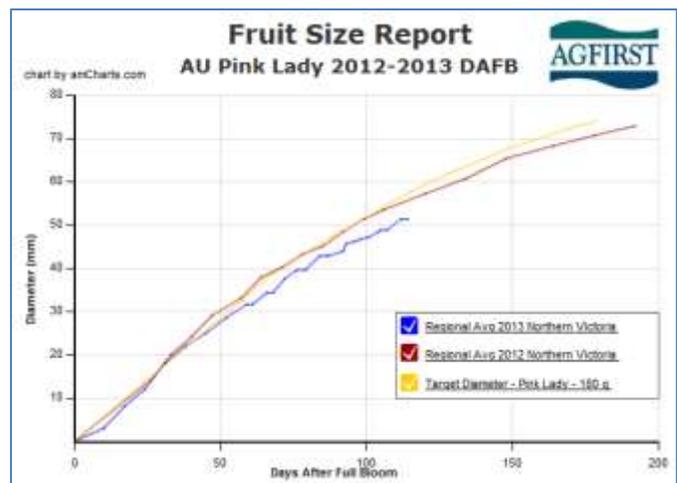


Figure 2: Pink Lady Northern Victoria 2013 vs 2012 (DAFB)

later flowering region, Western Australia has the smallest average fruit size.

The overall impression is that the average Cripps Pink fruit size may be a little smaller than last year.

Royal Gala Types

DAFB South Australia shows the largest average fruit size for the blocks being measured, with Queensland the smallest at around 10 mm smaller. It is thought that some of the blocks in South Australia

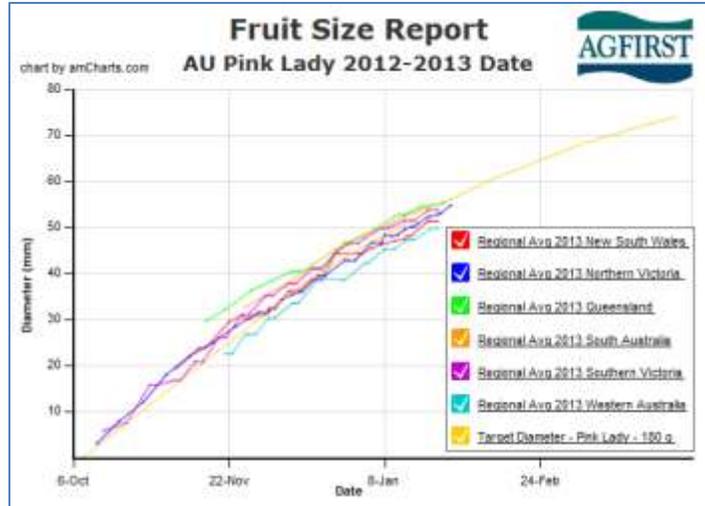


Figure 3: Pink Lady regional averages 2013 by Date

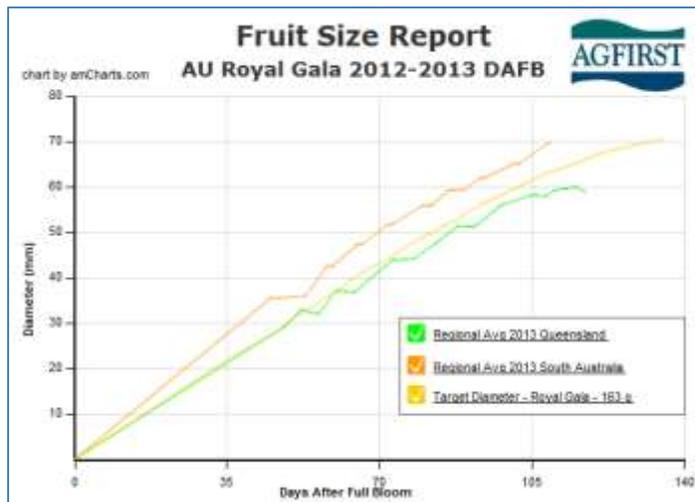


Figure 4: Royal Gala Queensland vs South Australia (DAFB)

below it almost down to the 150 count average fruit size line. This may not be a reflection of fruit sizing behavior, but more a function of different blocks making up the data at that stage as there is a sudden drop in the sizing curve.

New South Wales and Northern Victoria Royal Gala fruit size is smaller this year than last year as Figure 5 shows. Last year Northern Victoria took a dive in average fruit size around 108 DAFB, which is indicative of larger fruit being skimmed off for early market.

have particularly light Royal Gala crops this year and as crop load is known to have a huge impact on fruit sizing a significant amount of this difference could be due to crop load, rather than a regional difference. See Figure 4.

Average fruit sizes for the other regions are all bunched together on the 110 count average fruit size line. The Southern Victoria line holds the 110 count average line until late December/early January, then drives

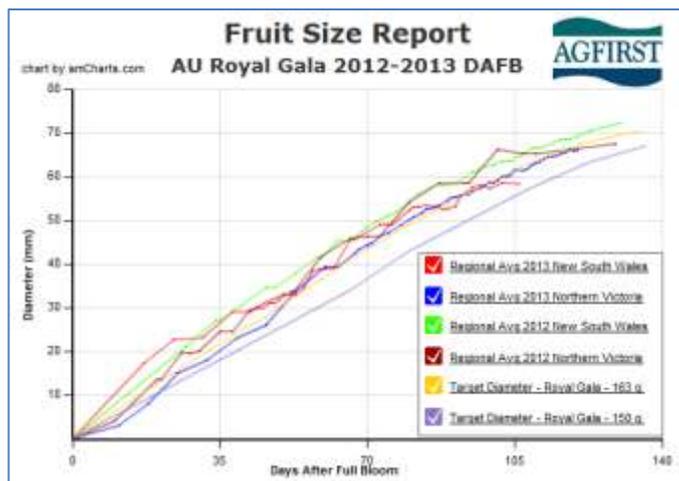


Figure 5: Royal Gala New South Wales and Northern Victoria 2013 vs 2012 (DAFB)

By calendar date the largest average fruit size for Royal Gala are in South Australia and Northern Victoria, which have very similar size curves, both tracking above the 110 count average fruit size line. New South Wales and Western Australia share the smallest fruit size by date, the latter because of its later flowering in which case it will climb above the NSW line as it is already showing signs of doing (Figure 6).

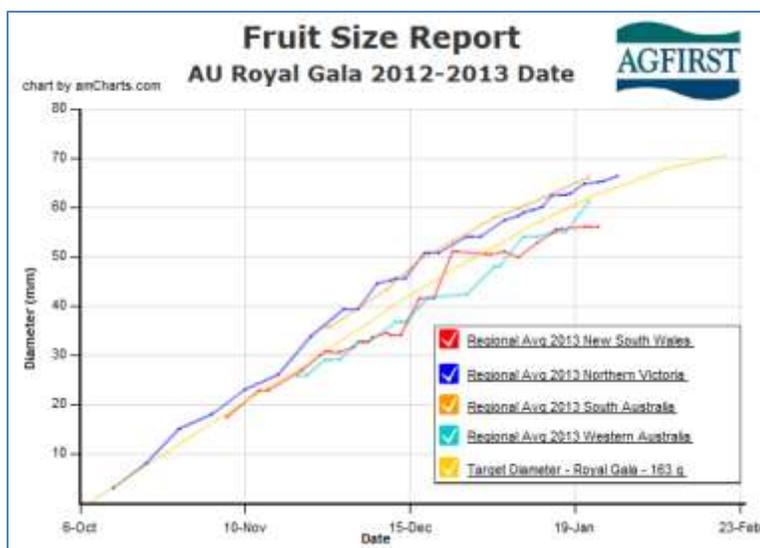


Figure 6: Royal Gala regional averages 2013 by Date

Southern Victoria is in between these two groups and tracking along the 110 count average.

Within regions individual block comparisons differ widely around the regional averages, indicating that specific orchard factors such as crop load, irrigation, rootstock and nutritional management will override the regional differences to some extent.

Fuji

DAFB South Australia is running between 5 to 6 mm larger than other regions measuring Fuji, and Western Australia is running a little behind New South Wales and Southern Victoria. Western Australia is sitting on the 100 count average trend line with the other districts above it (Figure 7).

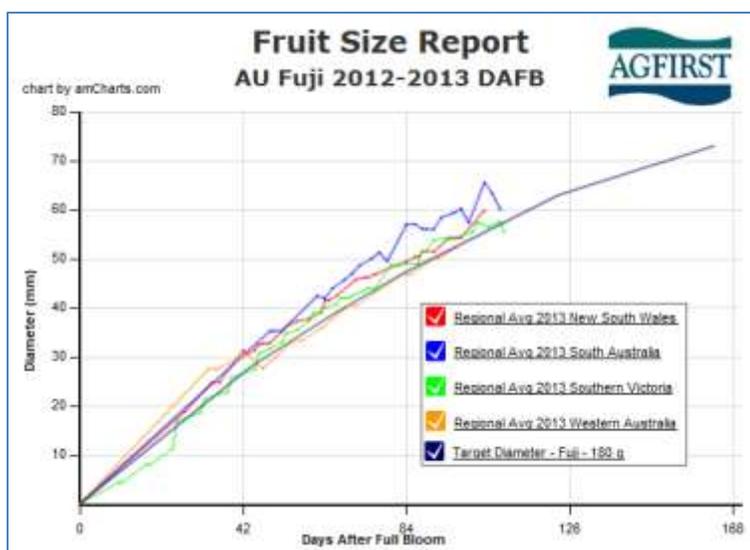
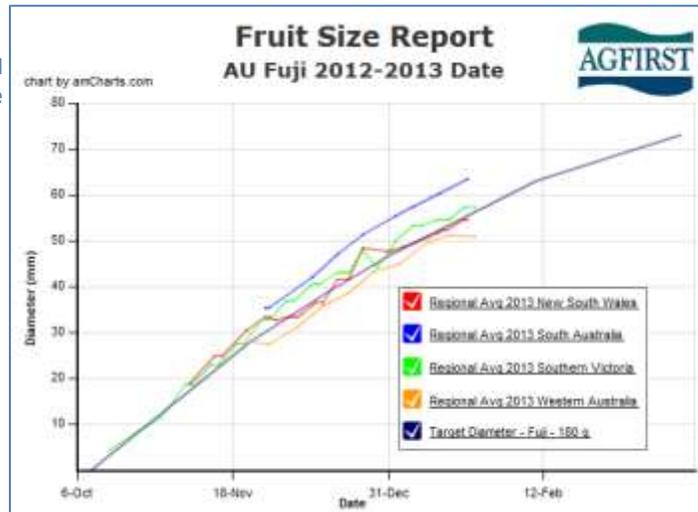


Figure 7: Fuji regional comparison 2013 (DAFB)

Compared to last year, New South Wales is of similar size and Southern Victoria is a little smaller in fruit size.

By date, South Australia has the largest average fruit size and because of its much later flower, Western Australia the smallest average fruit size at over 10 mm smaller (Figure 8).

Figure 8: Fuji regional comparison 2013 by Date



Granny Smith

Only Northern Victoria, Southern Victoria and Queensland were measuring Granny Smith in January.

Both Victorian regions are showing similar fruit size curves in terms of DAFB while Queensland is running over 10 mm smaller.

Northern Victoria fruit size for Granny Smith is smaller than last year, while that of Southern Victoria is larger.

By calendar date, Northern Victoria is 5 mm larger than Southern Victoria.

Red Delicious

Figure 9 shows Red Delicious size curves. Northern Victoria has the largest average fruit size this year.

Red Delicious size in Queensland appears to be smaller this season than last season.

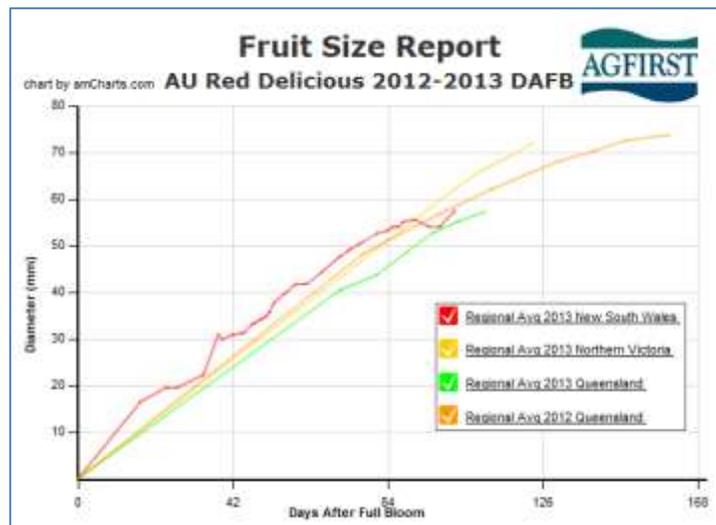


Figure 9: Red Delicious regional averages 2012-2013 (DAFB)

Note

The fruit sizes referred to in this report are the averages of the orchard blocks on the AgFirst database so are showing how fruit size is behaving in those blocks.

Real regional average fruit size could differ from this data, particularly for those varieties and regions where the database is small.