

FUTURE ORCHARDS 2012 WEBSITE PROFILE

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APAL's Future Orchards 2012 website based at <http://apal.hortwatch.com> is an integral part of the Future orchards project, offering visitors detailed information not only on blocks in their area, but all blocks in the project throughout Australia. This secure website allows Australian growers to view details about some of the best blocks of apple and pears across the country all from the click of a mouse.

The Library

Over the course of the project a great deal of information is being collated, from field day handouts and notes to relevant research papers, to analyses of blocks within the project. Already there is a wealth of information that gives great direction on the requirements of an orchard in the year 2012. These articles are all collated for you in the site's library – just click the article title to open it, or right click and choose 'save target as' to save the item to your computer for later reading.

Block Information

The project has set up grower monitor blocks right across Australia. These blocks have been selected to represent a good cross section of the more progressive plantings of apples and pears.

The Block Search page lets the visitor access all blocks of trees, with the ability to narrow the search by Type (apples/pears), Variety, Rootstock, Planting Density, Age, Region, Replant Status, or a combination of these factors, helping you to quickly find the blocks most relevant to you.

Key components of the blocks are recorded and will be updated throughout the course of the project

A brief summary of each block's information is shown on the search page to further help you identify sites of interest.

Block ID	Density (trees /ha)	Age (years)	TRV	Rootstock	Replant	Latest Profit Year	Profit \$/ha	Gross Kg/ha
NW16	1666	3	2000	M9	Yes	2006	-25347	1389
NW21	1450	7	6938	M9	No	2006	8423	27298
NW23	1000	11	10300	M26	No	2006	57889	40488
NW26	1428	7	-	M26	Yes	2006	3840	12857

The above table is a sample of the search result for Cripps Pink blocks in New South Wales, showing a wide range of profitability and productivity. At a glance you can see obvious differences in the age of the blocks and planting density. Interestingly, NW21 and NW26, although the same age and planted at very similar densities, show significant differences in

productivity and profitability – perhaps a result of the different rootstock choice, or the poorer block being on replant land.

For more information on an individual block, simply click on the linked Block ID to view the Block Summary page.

Block Summary Page

The Block Summary draws together an overview of the block's information, including a description of the block, summarized block profit information for all years analysed, block establishment costs, and Tree Row Volume (TRV) and Trunk Cross Sectional Area (TCA) information.

Each of these sections has a link to view detailed information.

Detailed Block Description

Covering details like planting spacings and style, ground preparation for planting, pollination, soil type and structure, irrigation systems, land topography and shelter, the block description is intended to give you an impression of the physical block characteristics.

Block Profit PDF

Clicking on the Block Profit link opens a PDF of a detailed block profit analysis for the block.

For the purposes of the project we have used an 'orchard gate' return for the analysis across all blocks. We use actual returns where these are specified by the grower, or default values if actuals are not available. Additional orchard expenses and management costs are based on default values.

The aim is to minimise the impact of 'external' variables like economies of scale in the size of the orchard operation, marketing decisions and associated costs, eg, local or export, etc, providing an analysis that gives a fair comparison across all the blocks.

The block analysis will continue to be carried out annually, building a profile of the progress of each block over time. In the case of NW21, analysis of both 2005 and 2006 has already been carried out, showing a good progression for this seven year old block from gross production of 16,212 kg/ha and a loss of \$-5,637/ha in 2005, to 27,298 kg/ha and a profit of \$8,423/ha in 2006.

Detailed Block Establishment Costs

Where available, we include detailed actual establishment costs for each block, including a breakdown of each cost and description as provided by the grower.

Photos and TRV/TCA Growth Information

Twice a year blocks are photographed – a photo of an individual tree is taken to show structure and size, and a row photo to show development of the block. Over time this builds into a great resource to track the growth of the block, and when placed alongside the block

profit analyses can give you a better understanding of the progress and current stage of the block.

Each photo can be clicked to open an enlargement in a new window.

Once a year TRV and TCA measurements are also taken on each block. These measurements give the viewer of the information good quantified data on the development of that particular block of trees.

Have a Go

We're sure you will find this web based database very simple to use. And the best way is to have a go. From the luxury of your warm office, take a tour of the best blocks of trees throughout Australia. Happy surfing.