

Future Orchard 2012 – South Australia Orchard Walk September 2006

Field Day Notes

- Initial day successful - approx 30 growers attended
- FD started at J Plummers Shed and then went out and inspected 2 monitoring block sites.
- Plenty of discussion (and challenges) throughout day - Steve Sparks handled pretty well.
- Several growers (predominantly young growers) extended discussions past the end of the field day
- Steve obviously more at home working on Gala than he is on Pink Lady but presented the information in an easy to understand manner - focussing on big picture rather than specifics. However very prepared to discuss anything in detail when challenged.
- Growers responded well to Steves practical approach to things.
- Steve highlighted that he felt SA growers tended to take too many upper canopy limbs out of our trees too early thereby reducing our TRV - Canopy density and cropping potential.

Post Field Day activities

- TR and myself held further discussions with Steve on the saturday - clarified many of the information needs required
- TR and myself took Steve on an inspection tour of the district showing him many of the local orchards - His response indicated a surprise at the level of intensification being undertaken by the whole industry in SA - not just sections of it (as in Nelson)
- 1 large orchard in particular - was highlighted as being just like what the AgFirst group were endeavouring to achieve in Nelson.

Full property economic assessments

- Steve indicated that they were looking for upto 20 growers Aust wide to participate in a full property economic assessment to get some Australian base line information. - This was mentioned at the FD and Monitoring Block meeting
- Respose to date has been "stone cold" - if want to achieve this will need to press - how and what is needed and the benefits of the information very hard at the next round of visits.
- Growers have their obvious concerns re financial disclosure - however there is also a feeling of it involves a lot of detailed work.
- Mock up of type of information, how it is to be collected/collated and how it will be used would be of significant value
- Demonstration of benefits of this information to the industry would be also of value