



Fruit growing is more than just growing fruit

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Managed & Delivered by

APAL

Funded by



About our orchard

→ Adelaide Hills

- 20ha orchard

→ Apples

- Blend of club and open varieties
 - Gala
 - Pink Lady
 - Granny Smith
 - Fuji
 - Jazz
 - Envy
 - Kissabel

→ 4 involved from family



A trip back in time

- Orchard like this is an easy decision
 - Low yield
 - Not labour friendly
 - Not platform friendly
- **Yellow machine only**
- (Bulldozer)



Nursery - get the foundation right

- Plant new orchard with the best trees you can get
- If you can't buy what you want then grow it
 - Not for everyone but worth considering
- Cost of being out of production is very high
- Knipboom trees



Grow the tree - plant of graft same story

Support the tree for growth

- Flower thinning
- Hay band to train
 - Wind hurts growth
- Tapener gun
- Get the rest right
 - Fertiliser
 - Soil test pre-plant
 - Water
 - Pest and disease
 - Fumigation



Improving efficiency - lower cost, better quality fruit

- Rosy Glow at 5.5 x 1.2m
 - old /weak trellis

- Old inefficient style
 - Not platform friendly

 - 60t/ha only

 - Beautiful fruit but not enough of it
 - Opportunity cost

 - Cut down and regrow onto trellis

- 3 years back to where it was and on the way up



Consistency is critical

Envy (Scilate)

- Good even bloom
- Simple and narrow
- 4.2 x 0.6 (1.2m per side)
- 9 wire system
- 4m to top wire

Concrete posts

- Wood was unreliable for us
- Import concrete now



Consistency is critical

100 t/ha

95t/ha first pick

Consistent size

Consistent colour

Consistent return

Consistent profit?



Big problem to fix: tracking costs

Doesn't need to be fancy

Just got it done quickly and used paper

Might be a bit slower but maximum of 5 minutes per day to keep track (do it as you go)

Now understand exactly what numbers we need to collect and how to present them

Do we move to a digital system?

Block	TASK	PPL	HRS
Thursday 19th			
JAZZ HILL	THINNING	20	9
KISSABEL	THINNING	4	9
LOQUAT	WIRE	2	9
Friday 20th			
JAZZ	THINNING	20	9
LOQUAT	WIRE	2	9
Saturday 21st			
JAZZ	THINNING	17	7.5
GBLA BH.	THINNING	17	1.5
LOQUAT	WIRE	2	9

Cost tracking - what you can learn

End of week calculate what is costs

- 100.6t/ha
- \$81,863/ha direct expenses
 - High costs but high yields
- \$0.81/gross kg to orchard gate
- Industry average was \$0.89/gross kg for 2022 to orchard gate (APAL Orchard Business Analysis)

Need to wait for remittance to do postharvest costs

Need to be >\$400/bin return

RAM EQUIPMENT

0.825 HA

TOP OF Block Rosy Glow

TASK	HRS	HRS/HA	\$/HA.
PRUNING	346.5	420	12,600
THINNING	419	507.8	15,234
EXTENDAY	4.1	4.96	148.80
SPRAY + FERT			8,750
OTHER			24,250

HARVEST YIELD 100.6 T/HA.

	BINS	HRS	\$/BIN	HRS/HA	\$/HA.
1ST Pick	P131	318.5	72.93	386	11,580
2ND Pick	W85	255.75	90.26	310	9,300
TOTAL	216	574.25	781.59	696	20,880

TOTAL EXPENSE 81,862.80

Key message

- Growing is one part of it
 - Right quality trees; if you can't buy it, grow it
 - Everything to get them into rapid production
 - Grow the tree
 - Find a system that works for your team
- Getting the numbers behind it is just as important
 - Start on paper if you need to; it's not too bad and minimal investment
 - Learn a lot about your blocks and their costs
- Make a start