

September, 6th

Annual Almond Conference: Focus on Succeeding in Challenging Environment

Succeeding in a challenging environment is the major focus of the annual Australian Almond Conference in Mildura on November 1-2.

Record numbers of more than 200 growers, processors and marketers from across Australia and overseas are expected to attend.

Almond Board of Australia chief executive Julie Haslett said today that the industry was on the brink of an unprecedented growth and interest in almonds was at an all time high.

"Australian production will exceed 25,000 tonnes this year and we expect that to double within four years," she said. "We are set to overtake Spain to be the second biggest almond producer in the world behind the USA." Mrs Haslett said the rate of almond plantings within the Murray Darling Basin in recent years indicated that an increasing number of primary producers saw almonds as a sustainable crop alternative.

"Almonds are a real success within the horticultural industry and our annual conference gives all stakeholders, new and established, a valuable chance to network with their peers, share ideas and learn from experts in their respective fields."

The two-day conference, which will be held at The Grand Hotel in Mildura, will feature a wide range of practical demonstrations and workshops. Key topics will include:

- Water
- Pollination
- Plant improvement
- Risk management
- Skilled labour
- Profitability and international competitiveness
- Marketing
- Updates from overseas study trips

Former Test cricketer and television personality Max Walker will be the guest speaker at the conference dinner.

The ABA's annual general meeting and Annual Levy Payers' Meeting will also be an integral part of the program.

Mrs Haslett said registrations for the conference were now open and anyone interested in being involved, either at a personal or corporate level, can register online at www.almond2007.com or contact the conference secretariat on 03 9439 3855 or email almond07@clems.com.au.

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