



# News



## & views

**AUTUMN  
2026**

### W elcome to Autumn!

Looking in the revision mirror for just a moment, we had a solid year in '25 with many performance highlights to report. These will be expanded on in the Company's Annual Report but briefly, fruit volumes through the Glass House packhouse were strong, packing efficiencies contributed towards a lower unit cost base and the season was longer than the norm.



**Update  
from  
Roger Turner  
General Manager**

We were able to clear the volume and I believe, in the main, achieve respectable returns for our growers' fruit.

I would like to welcome Suzanne Bell as our new Operations Manager. Suzanne comes to us with solid experience in the industry and hands-on skills in packhouse operations, quality control and workplace health and safety.

2026 will be an "off year" for many areas with lower volumes. This will more than likely, bring better pricing than last year and better returns for our growers.

Given we will be forecasting lower packhouse volumes, our focus on unit costs will be an for increased vigilance over the coming months.

Helping us in this regard, the commissioning of our new grader will be a major contributor in keeping our costs under control. The speed and efficiencies this new acquisition brings will be welcome in the present cost environment.

The commissioning of the new line has gone very well and we are extremely happy with the performance of the visual grading system. This feature will provide for quality consistency and reliability, attributes sought after in the market.

You can read the full report on the commissioning of the new grader Page 4

Shepard is going through a very tough season this year. Later Hass supply from Western Australia has squeezed the traditional window for this variety and put significant pressure on prices in all states.

Growers are being asked to delay picking Hass to allow Shepard stocks to clear ... the alternative being Hass entering the market on a low price point that may become the benchmark for months.

Our Lychee season on the Sunshine Coast has come and gone, and our growers have reason to be very happy as a number of factors confided in their favour.

The season was late, with the pick coinciding with the Chinese New Year. Hence prices were excellent, quality was outstanding and volumes well in excess of previous years. A perfect combination.

*Working for each other..*

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## DATE CLAIMER

24th Annual General Meeting

**Friday 8th May**

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# Message from the Chairman



**Matthew Gray**  
**Chairman**

Hi Readers,

And a warm greeting to our grower members, many of whom will be contemplating the challenges of the season ahead ... so many factors at play this year impacting how we manage our affairs.

Looking back however, we finished '25 on a high note with strong volumes and efficiencies at the Glass House packhouse contributing towards a very successful year. This was the encouragement your Board needed to confidently decide to replace the existing grader at Glass House and invest in the latest grading technology.

The commissioning of our new Reemoon packing line promises new horizons in speed and sorting efficiencies designed to benefit both grower and customer alike.

At the ready to welcome in this new chapter of the packhouse is our recently appointed Operations Manager, Suzanne Bell. Suzanne brings to the position vitality and a wealth of experience in the horticultural industry. Welcome aboard Suzanne.

Also joining the Team very shortly will be our new Marketing Manager Brad Colliss. In this role Brad will be liaising with both growers and the market, with the aim of achieving growth for our business through win-win strategies.

We are looking forward to the recently acquired productivity gains combining with our new Team to support Roger's efforts, ultimately enabling the most favourable outcomes for our growers.

The AGM is only a month away, see page 4, and I look forward to seeing as many growers as possible to discuss the role of NFC in their farming enterprises and to have an enjoyable evening overlooking the water at the Caloundra Boat Club.

Warm regards

Matthew Gray  
**Chairman**

*'News & views' is the quarterly newsletter of Natures Fruit Company, the trading entity of The Fruit Company Ltd. Opinions and advices given and/or comments and claims made in editorial contributions or advertisements in the Newsletter are not necessarily endorsed by the Company Board or Management. Any reader wishing to act upon material published in the Newsletter should seek their own professional advice which will take into account each reader's own specific conditions and needs.*

# Future proofing our business

In a meaningful demonstration of faith in the future, the Board of Natures Fruit Company has decided to invest in the latest hi-tech grading capability for its Glasshouse Mountains packing facility.

Justifying the acquisition, the Board is convinced the technology will secure productivity gains resulting in lower packing costs and deliver consistent grading standards.



As the world continues to embrace technology and adopt hi-tech solutions for all manner of tasks, the horticultural industry has not been spared its share of scientific and technological innovation.

Robotic fruit picking, while still in its infancy, is not that far away. But one technical advance that has reached a degree of maturity in our industry is the high speed intelligent sorting of fruit in our packhouses.

In July '25 your Board decided to replace our existing grader at the Glasshouse packhouse with the latest Reemoon RM200 vision grader.



**The Reemoon RM200 Packing Line**

The case for moving on this state-of-the-art technology was not one of 'trending for trend' sake nor fulfilling ego but one of strategic common sense, strengthening the business through a position of competitive advantage.

Essentially we are talking about high definition and resolution technology used to examine an avocado on the packing line. Along with an advanced electronic weighing system the high tech features enable precise sorting based on size, weight, colour, shape including cosmetic imperfections.

Using HD rapid photography cameras and advanced image processing technology, the



vision inspection system can scan the surface of a piece of fruit in a fraction of a second, accurately identifying any slight imperfections.

**The Vision Inspection System**



**Drop Zone - Reemoon RM200**

The adoption of these technologies not only improves grading efficiencies decreasing costs, but provides for consistency and reliability in quality outcomes. This can only be a win for all stakeholders, the customer, the grower and ultimately the industry.

Further, 'smart sorting' is becoming the new engine ... custom grading to meet individual client specifications, by simply adjusting the high definition visual scanner to match a client spec in terms of allowable shape tolerances, cosmetic imperfections, etc. This will empower our marketing to carve out new niche markets.

## **Commissioning**

Installation of the new grader commenced mid-December following the dismantling and removal of the existing Compac unit.

By late February the new line was ready for trialling. Ancillary equipment was either modified to suit the new configuration or replaced with new. Some other building structures adapted to accommodate the new grader.

After minor teething problems were remedied, we began running selected pieces of fruit through the high-definition cameras within the vision inspection system. We were able to adjust the program to fine tune tolerances for various defects and surface imperfections.

*Continued Page 4*

# The Fruit Company Limited

## 24th Annual General Meeting

The convening of our Annual General Meeting is a statutory requirement under Australian company law. The meeting must be held by the 31st May each year.

Accordingly, the 24<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting of your Company will be held Friday 8<sup>th</sup> May.



To give growers the opportunity to view our new Reemon grader in operation, the formalities segment of the meeting will be held at the Glass House Mtns packhouse.

It is planned to follow the meeting with a demonstration and commentary explaining the technical features of the Reemoon RM200 grader, inviting growers to have a 'hands-on' understanding of the many hi-tech features of this equipment. The afternoon will also be an ideal opportunity to meet our new Operations Manager who will be stage managing the presentation.

Following the formal meeting we will adjourn to the Caloundra Power Boat Club for drinks and the AGM dinner.

### **All members are encouraged to submit their proxies.**

Proxy forms and other notices will be forwarded to all shareholders by Thursday 16th April.

Provision will be made on the proxy form for shareholders to record their vote on each of the mandatory resolutions and have the opportunity to voice opinions, raise issues etc.

Responses to questions and comments raised per proxy will be collated and distributed to all member by Friday 15th May.

A copy of the Chairman's Report outlining our operating and financial performance for 2025 and projections for this year will be distributed to all shareholders as part of the Company's Annual Report.

The Company Annual General Meeting is the opportunity for all shareholders to have a voice and contribute towards the future direction of the company. We encourage all grower members to become involved in the planning and development functions of your company by attending the AGM.

The company is able to assist attendees wishing to stay over at Caloundra on the Friday night with accommodation at a venue near the Boat Club. A courtesy bus shuttles between the venue and the Club hourly.

<b>Key Dates</b>	Thursday 16th April	<b>Proxy Forms to Shareholders</b>
	Thursday 7th May	<b>Proxies to be returned by</b>
	Friday 8th May	<b>AGM</b>

*Continued from Page 3*

## Future proofing our business

As more fruit was graded, we were able to further hone and customize programs that will optimise the outcome for our growers.

Over the coming months we will continue to fine tune the equipment and customize our programs with the support of Reemoon as throughput increases during the local harvest. One thing our packing runs to date have clearly demonstrated is that Natures Fruit is future proofed for higher volume runs.

Our decision to work with Reemoon on this project has proven to be a worthy one. The quality of the equipment and high level of technical support during the installation and commissioning process has been exceptional.

Natures' General Manager, Roger Turner has enthusiastically supported the acquisition of the new grader and cited the new direction as a major commitment by the company.

"This investment carries with it the promise of increased operational efficiencies, lower costs, and greater customer satisfaction through quality consistency", Roger commented.

"With the installation and commissioning now complete, we are looking forward to the '26 season and demonstrating how this new technology can deliver meaningful results for the benefit of our growers and customers alike."

# WELCOME TO THE TEAM



**Suzanne Bell**  
Operations Manager

We welcome aboard Suzanne Bell who has joined the Team at Glass House Mountains as Operations Manager.

Suzanne comes to Natures with a solid background in various positions in the food and fresh produce industries, specifically in roles of quality compliance and health and safety.

More recently, she was quality and packhouse manager for a major multi-site fresh produce enterprise where she was presented with the distinguished Smorgon Innovation Award.

Having joined the Company in March, Suzanne is getting her feet under her desk.

Quizzed on how she sees the challenges ahead at Natures, Suzanne was quick off the mark, not hesitating,

*"I want to draw on every feature of our new packing line and get the best outcome for our growers. I'm excited with the performance potential of this unit."*

In her leisure time Suzanne enjoys putting her creative talents to the test throwing clay on a pottery wheel.

Please make Suzanne feel welcome in her new role at Natures.



**Brad Colliss**  
Marketing Manager

Appointed to the new position at Natures as Marketing Manager, we'd like you to welcome Brad Colliss to the Team.

Brad joins us battle-hardened having benefited from a successful term in the southern states as Marketing Manager for one of Australia's leading apple brands. In this role he gained valuable experience liaising with both growers and trade customers, equipping him well for the job ahead.

Born and bred into the industry, he has spent his career never far from a tray of fruit.

Brad is looking forward to forming strong working relationships with current and future growers as key to growing the business. He commences with us Monday 20th April.

Recently becoming Sunshine Coast residents, Brad and his partner Gail are keen hikers and will certainly be in their element exploring the many scenic hiking trails in and around the Glass House Mountains.

We wish Brad every success in his new role and look forward to your welcoming hand shakes.

## Pushing Our Barrow

Our new print advertisement unveiled recently promoting the advantages of coming on board with Natures. The advert will be appearing in industry magazines over the next few months.

The "peace of mind" message in the advertisement clearly articulates the suite of benefits growers gain 'doing business' with Natures Fruit Company.

The Natures' package is most compelling and it is hoped the campaign will attract new grower members.

## WHAT DOES PEACE OF MIND MEAN?

Confidence knowing your fruit is in trusted hands.

At Natures Fruit Company, we are both your packer and your marketing partner. We value integrity and transparency when handling your fruit, accountable for your returns and keeping you informed every step of the way.

Considering changing your packer? This is what you can expect from us:

- **Competitive returns.** We access all markets for the best price.
- **Immediate transparency.** Packout data in hand within 48 hours.
- **Reliable payments.** In your bank within four weeks of packout.

Grower benefits secured by 35+ years' experience.

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Peace of mind is not just a promise.

**WE PROVE IT**

Talk to us about your next season.



# Calcium Loading to Optimise Avocado Robustness/Quality



Horticultural Notes

Graeme Thomas  
GLT Horticulture

After many years of research with the aim of optimising fruit quality through better nutrition, we now know **“nitrogen is the manipulator of yield and calcium the manipulator of quality”**.

The Robust Fruit Project AV21005 has been working towards achieving what practical measures are needed to achieve the goal of optimising robustness whilst still maximising yields.

From the data highlighted in the literature review ...

**“Improved fruit quality and robustness in avocado supply chains – AV 19004”**,

completed in November 2020, showed that the relationship between nitrogen and calcium in the fruit could be analysed and was a simple measure of robustness/quality.

From the data since generated, we have been able to determine that with a skin ratio, of nitrogen to calcium when less than 15:1 at harvest, fruit has the potential to be more robust than if the ratio is greater than 15:1

From previous research, we knew that calcium uptake only occurred in the first ten weeks following fruit set, as per the adjacent chart.

## Ensuring calcium uptake

As with any nutrient added to a tree, you need to ensure that it can be taken up by the roots.

The following needs to be optimised:

- Precise irrigation
- Free draining soil
- Good root health



This is best depicted in the **Robust Fruit Wheel**.

Whilst all of the above factors very important in producing better quality fruit for our consumers, today we are highlighting how, by the pre flowering loading of calcium, you can maximise the calcium levels in your fruit and as a result, improve quality and robustness.

## What to apply

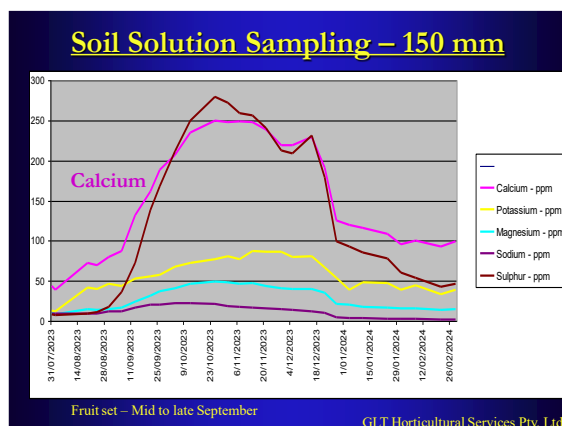
Calcium is an element that in the economically available forms is not very soluble. The solubility of lime in water is 0.0014 kg / 100 litres, whereas gypsum is more soluble at 0.26 kg / 100 litres of water.

Even gypsum needs time to dissolve and accumulate in the soil water, to be available to the tree. Results below show the time taken for calcium to accumulate in the soil solution following the application of mined gypsum.

The quantities required to lift the calcium level in the soil solution is significant and the most referred option is gypsum.

## When to apply

Gypsum applied Mid August. Peak concentration in soil solution October



Gypsum was applied Mid August. Soil Calcium concentration peaked in soil solution October. The delay in the availability in the soil solution is determined by many factors including the form of gypsum being used, the soil Cation Exchange Capacity, the presence of mulch and intensity of your rain/irrigation.

How quickly this occurs will vary depending on the above factors. It is best determined by taking soil water solution samples and having them analysed to measure the change.

Gypsum needs to be applied 6-8 weeks before flowering, the latter being different between regions and varieties.

**The goal is to have the elevated calcium in the soil solution for the 10 week period following flowering**

## How much to apply

How much will depend on the following:

- The Cation Exchange Capacity of your soil
- The form of gypsum to be used.

Soil CEC	Gypsum – t / Ha.
< 5	1.0
5 - 10	2.0
10 - 15	3.0
15+	3.5

As a general guide, we have found that a low dose of gypsum does not make a significant change to the soil calcium solution.

If using mined or by product gypsum, the following rates should be used as your starting point and depending on your skin analysis result, altered accordingly:

It should be noted that calcium loading may affect the uptake of potassium and magnesium. This needs to be monitored in your leaf analysis results.

## How to measure your result

Measuring your result can be done in 2 ways.

1<sup>st</sup> you can measure the change in the level of calcium in the soil solution during the period immediately post flowering.

This is done using soil suction tubes and analysing the level of calcium in the soil solution. We have found that calcium at a level of 250 ppm will raise fruit calcium levels. Further research is required to fine tune this level.

Good results may be obtained at lower levels.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> and more simple method is to measure the N:Ca skin ratio in your fruit, pre harvest. Whilst this method does not allow you to correct the ratio during the growing season, it allows you to select blocks that are less robust that need to be picked quickly. The more robust fruit with a lower skin ratio can be more safely picked later. That result will then give you guidance as to your future calcium loading programs.

Early indications suggest that we should target the skin calcium levels in your fruit to be above 0.1%

## Let's now consider nitrogen nutrition flexibility

From the research and industry results generated over the past 5 years, it is very common to have a skin nitrogen result at 1.2%. At this level the nitrogen nutrition program is generally sufficient to maximise yields and fruit size.

Indeed, reviewing skin tests over this period, skin calcium levels have been shown to be in the range of 0.01% to 0.18%, whilst the range of nitrogen results have varied between 0.34% & 1.92%

Any fruit with a nitrogen:calcium skin ratio of 40:1 would be very susceptible to rots, bruising and lenticel damage, whereas fruit with a skin ratio of 8:1 is very robust and capable of withstanding the stresses of market distribution.

*The following shows effects of maximising fruit calcium, even with a constant skin nitrogen level. If it can't be measured, it can't be managed*

Skin Nitrogen %	Skin Calcium %	Nitrogen : Calcium Ratio	Potential Damage Rots, Bruising, Lenticel
1.2	0.03	40:1	Very High
1.2	0.05	24:1	↓
1.2	0.1	12:1	↓
1.2	0.15	8:1	Very Low

Maximising calcium uptake immediately post fruit set, not only provides for a higher calcium level in the fruit and a preferred nitrogen: calcium skin ratio ... it follows that you will have greater flexibility in maintaining a nitrogen program to optimise yield and fruit size.

Isn't that precisely what you need for a sustainable and profitable operation?

In the past the quality and robustness of avocados in Australia have had a negative effect on developing both our domestic and export markets.

**We now know the technique and the measurements needed to be able to manage the robustness of the fruit we grow.**

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# YEAR END TAX PLANNING

## Four questions to ask before 30 June 2026

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As the summer heat wanes, the air is cooling as June 30 approaches, and with it, another financial year closes. Before your numbers (and any tax bills) are locked in, now is the time to consider how best to position both your personal and business affairs.

With all the complexities in the business and tax world, what questions should you be asking?

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### Are big plans on the horizon?

Equipment purchases, a new business stream or a new vehicle? These and other non-typical big-ticket items provide opportunities to speak with your adviser and plan the most tax-effective course. It's important to ensure that the brand-new vehicle meets business deductibility requirements.

The Australian government has also confirmed the instant asset write-off (IAWO) threshold at \$20,000 per asset purchased (and installed and ready for use) before 30 June 2026.

### What was my super account password?

It's all too easy to forget your super account login. But now is the time to login and review your information. With several data breaches across super funds this year, if you haven't yet updated your password or enabled two-factor authentication, now is the time.

Once updated, you can check your balance, review your beneficiaries, and contributions received. The concessional contribution cap for FY26 is \$30,000. You may be able to discuss with your adviser if an additional contribution is suitable for your circumstances, and assist with potential tax implications. Importantly, super contributions apply for the year they are received into the fund. So, if you are contributing personally or a business paying employee super, it's best to keep processing times in mind. Additionally, the new payday super laws start on 1 July 2026. The 12 per cent super guarantee must now be received into the employee's fund within seven business days of payday.

The ATO will also be closing its small business super clearing house on 30 June, so if this is the current method used for super payments, an alternative will need to be set up in time. Contact your payroll software provider and accountant to ensure that everything is ready to go.

### Am I up-to date with the ATO?

The ATO has increased the difficulty of success for interest refund or remission applications recently. This is especially the case when compared to the concession treatment available earlier this decade. From 22 January 2026, interest and penalty remission applications require additional details and must be completed via a new specialised form.

Additionally, in FY25 the ATO issued over 84,000 director penalty notices for unpaid liabilities, indicating their firmer and faster approach to debt collection. ATO interest is no longer tax deductible as of 1 July 2025. So, any accrued interest is both more difficult to remit, and not deductible, making ATO debt more expensive after tax.

Finally, the ATO will be applying a firmer stance on failure to lodge penalties and default assessments. In the context of this stance ensuring all lodgement obligations are met and met on time is critically important for success.

### Where should my trust distributions go?

End of financial year cash has a habit of disappearing into whatever is the loudest in the moment. While there is no need to smash the piggy bank, taking a moment to consider the plan leading into 30 June will always be worthwhile.

If you operate a family trust, the ATO's recent case against Goldenville Family Trust is a stark reminder of the importance to prepare and sign trust distribution resolutions before 30 June. The Trust attempted to distribute amounts to beneficiaries by describing the trust's income as "interest" with the bulk being distributed to a foreign beneficiary. The ATO found that a 2016 resolution was actually created in May of 2017. Given that this risks a 47% penalty tax, reviewing potential beneficiaries and preparing the distribution resolutions is important for year-end planning.

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## Avoid last-minute stress as the financial year draws to a close

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### In summary

End of year planning works best when the time-sensitive items are handled early and documented well. Discuss the big-ticket items and strategies with your tax adviser or financial planner. It is worth the time now to be sure you're comfortable and organised ahead of 30 June, avoiding any last-minute stress as the financial year draws to a close.



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