

PO Box 221
LEETON NSW 2705

21 November 2001

Citrus Industry Inquiry
Productivity Commission
Locked Bag 2
Collins Street East Post Office
MELBOURNE VIC 8003

Dear Sir

My family has owned and worked Farm 525, Leeton for the past 40 years. I have been working on the farm since I left school 15 years ago. The citrus component of my farm is 20 acres, made up of both Valencias and Navels.

Over the past few years, since the reduction of the tariff from 3.5% down to 5%, I have seen my income dramatically reduced. I am finding it very difficult to keep to date with new technologies and better farming practices.

I feel that a number of other issues are affecting industry, including:

- The importation of cheap FCOJ from countries such as Brazil, which has steadily increased over the past 5 years.
- The abolishment of 25% juice content sales tax concessions meaning that demand for local product decreased.
- A number of labelling issues, the most important being the Country of Origin labelling.

I would like to be able to stay in the industry, but unless circumstances change I will be forced to remove my orange trees and look at other alternatives.

In Leeton we are seeing many growers and businesses in town suffering from the affects of the downturn in the citrus industry.

I eagerly await the results of your inquiry.

Yours sincerely

Agostino Cristofaro
Farm 525, Leeton