

Citrus Industry Inquiry.
Productivity Commission

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We are Citrus Growers based at Farm 735
Wamoon via Leeton NSW.

Over recent years we have seen our financial
viability as citrus growers being eroded by the
importation of cheap Frozen Concentrate Orange
Juice (FCOJ).

Basically we can divide the Australian Citrus
Industry into 4 major sectors:-

- 1/ Concentrate Drinks (Mainly Imported FCOJ).
- 2/ Fresh 100% Juice.
- 3/ Local Fresh Fruit Market.
- 4/ Export Fresh Fruit Market.

Unfortunately, Fruit purchasers use the cheaper
FCOJ price as a mechanism for setting the price across
all sectors. This lowers the price overall paid to
growers even though they might be producing fruit
for example for the local fresh fruit market.

Growers are power less to negotiate a better price
because cheap FCOJ has such a strong market influence
even though Australia doesn't produce enough citrus
to meet our local Juice + Drink requirements.

We have been operating our Farms as efficiently
and as cheaply as possible for a number of years
and fail to see how FCOJ can be produced
so cheaply overseas without subsidies of some kind.

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Some Suggestions to help the citrus Industry move forward would be:-

- 1/ An efficient and cheaper transport system to assist our Export competitiveness.
- 2/ Lower Export Inspection charges.
- 3/ A constant supply of year round labour
- 4/ Single Desk Marketing in All Markets.
- 5/ The power to Collectively Bargain with Processors and Supermarkets for the Best Price
- 6/ A Bounty or Tax Concession that would not allow Imported FCOJ to undermine the price paid for the locally produced product.
- 7/ Truth in labelling laws that would make it clearly distinguishable whether a Juice product is Imported or 100% Australian.
- 8/ A complete and thorough Investigation into how FCOJ can be Grown (overseas), Processed (overseas), stored (overseas), Transported halfway across the Globe, again transported and stored at various locations around Australia, reconstituted and packed and again transported to point of sale, All this it is claimed can be done for less than we can grow (and only grow mind you) a tonne of fruit in Australia. Someone is being subsidised or we are doing something horribly wrong in Australia.

For and on behalf of
VA + F. Nardi

VA Nardi