

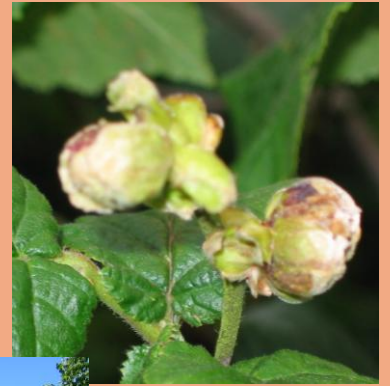
Australian Hazelnut Industry

Where have we come
from and what can we
learn from it?

by Dr Basil Baldwin

The Tasmanian story

- The European hazelnut was introduced into Australia over 150 yrs ago. The original varieties were probably English.
- In 1845, nursery catalogues included hazelnut
- Small collection of vars in Royal Botanic Gardens, Hobart. Vars included Cob Nut and White Aveline
- 1960's - Small var collections at Hadspen and Scottsdale
- 1960's - Forestry Commission nursery at Perth had hazelnut plants for sale
- Professor Bob Menary had a collection at the Tas University
- Big bud mite was present at all of these sites
- 1990's John Wheatley was propagating several vars including Tokolyi Cosford
- About 1990 John and Connie Zito planted Wanliss Pride at Kettering
- 2005 Hazelnut planting at Hazelbrae, George and Diana French



Big bud mite



Victoria – the early years

- Oven's valley orchards in the early 1900's
- Main variety grown was *Wanliss Pride*
- 1980, Imre Tokolyi selected *Tokolyi Cosford*
- Orchards – in hills east of Melbourne
- Rex and Jane Bean - *Wanliss Pride* orchard
- Many other growers with small orchards
- *NE Victoria*
- Browns - Tokolyi/ Brownfield *Cosford*
- Dennis Bear - planted *Tokolyi Cosford*. Made own harvester
- Peter Wheelright – Barcelona and processing
- Royce Sample – Atlas orchard
- Equipment manufacturer - Peter Rinaudo
- Milan Paskas - variety collection and nursery



Cosford nut UK



NSW

- *Glen Innes Variety* trials planted in 1937
- Orchard at Eden
- *Southern Highlands*
- Jim and Lauren Gleeson - Wanliss Pride - Moss Vale
- *Orange*
- 1972 Dept of Agric, plants from Glen Innes transferred to Orange
- Chris Offner and McRaes. A wide range of varieties
- Graeme Eastwood entrepreneurial grower
- *Mudgee*
- Dennis Todd - Lue
- Clem and Vanessa Cox



Australian hazelnut research

- *Glen Innes* -1937 Variety trial established. Source of varieties unknown
- *Tasmania* - some varietal evaluation at the Grove Horticulture Research Centre in 1950's – no published data
- 1960's and 80's Imre Tokolyi planted hazelnuts from Turkey, Italy, Spain and USA. He made several selections - Tokolyi Cosford, American White, Beenak Dream and Tokolyi's Turkish. He died in 1983. His wife Gizella Publ. *The Australian Hazelnut*, 1988. Hungarian immigrant 1956. Established *Corvina* biscuit factory
- *Orange* - 1972 Trees from Glen Innes transferred to Orange. 1982 - Atlas recorded highest yield at 2.2 kg/tree
- *Victoria* - 1970's and 80's many vars imported through plant quarantine
- 1980's - John Kenez, collections of hazelnut cultivars at Toolangi and Ovens research stations but no systematic evaluation recorded
- RIRDC – provided funding in 1995 to commence an evaluation of hazelnut varieties in SE Australia. cultivar assessment. Supported by HGA. Final report Baldwin 2010 [Hazelnuts: Variety assessment for South-eastern Australia |](#)
- Snare and Gottschall 2017 [Hazelnuts In Australia: Opportunities for long-term development | AgriFutures](#)
- Simpson et al 2023 [AgriFutures Australia Hazelnuts in Australia: Productivity and economic analysis for industry expansion | AgriFutures Australia](#)



Varieties and propagation

- Early imports - probably English varieties
- Plants? Imported for varietal trials at Glen Innes
- Imre Tokolyi imported nuts to establish a nursery
- Victorian Growers imported many varieties
- Milan Paskas - Variety collection
- Richard Salt - Barcelona and pollenisers imported as plants
- Chris Offner - Oregon collection, plants or nuts?
- Bruce West - imported many varieties from Oregon
- Ferrero - Importations from Chile
- Ben Barrow and Associates imported new OSU varieties from Chile via tissue culture



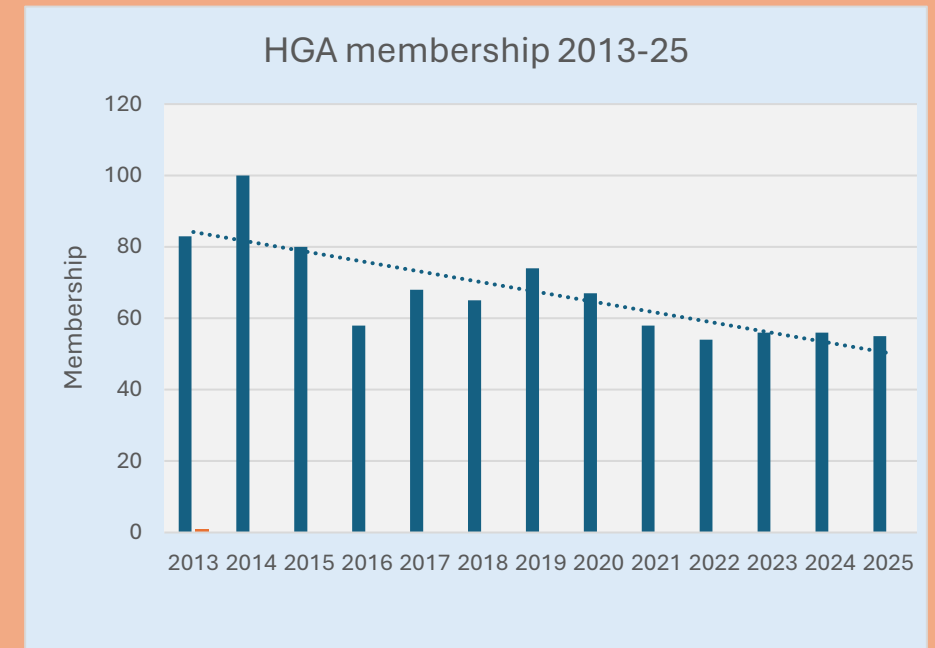
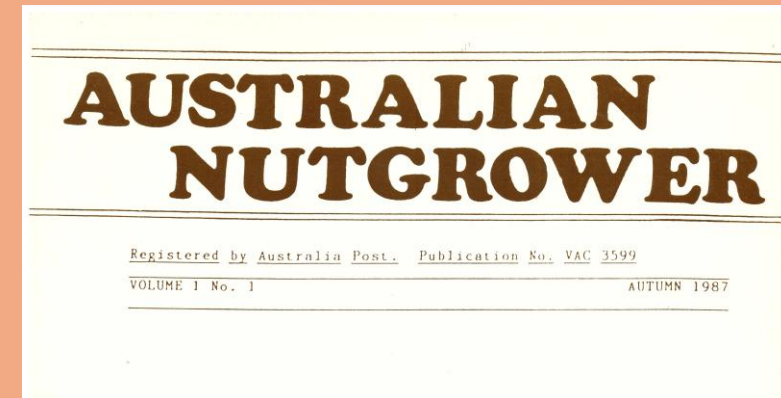
Victorian Nut Growers and Hazelnut Growers Australia

- 1978 Founded Victorian Nut Growers Association
- NSW Nut Growers Association also formed, no date
- Australian Nutgrower Vol 1 No1 Autumn 1987
- Editors: Rex Bean and Jennifer Wilkinson
- VNGA organized Conferences and Field Days
- Guest speakers invited from Oregon
- 1986, Allen, A. Publ *Growing nuts in Australia*
- 1992 Formation nut industry associations
- Australian Nut Industry Council formed

ANIC includes all nut industries, publication

Australian Nut Grower, regular council meetings incl HGA. Funds *Nuts for Life*

2005 Jennifer Wilkinson Published *Nut Growers Guide*



Oregon contacts and contributions

(these have been very significant)

- 1981 Professor Maxine Thompson invited to Australia by VNGA. Included visit to Orange, considered varietal collection were seedling types! Included Tonollo and Wanliss Pride. She was working on development of non-suckering varieties.
- 1988 Professor Harry Lagerstedt came to Australia. Considered there was a need for varietal evaluation in SE Aus. Also, a need to define most suitable ecological areas. Developed hot-callusing tube for grafting.
- Professor Shawn Mehlenbacher, breeder of EFB vars and superior types. Expert on compatibility alleles. Scion wood of TBC sent to Oregon.
- 2001 Becky McCluskey (OSU) spent sabbatical leave in Orange, provided training on the evaluation of kernel quality for varietal assessment research.
- Basil Baldwin trips to Oregon for scientific and industry advice also ISHS International conference.

Hazelnut production in Turkey, Spain, Italy, France and UK

- Local traditional varieties and district industries
- Mainly coastal
- Small orchards 1-10ha (to 20ha France)
- Local varieties Negret (Spain), T. di Giffoni, T. Romana and TGDL (Italy) Fertile de Coutarde, Pauetet and Corabel (France), Kentish Cob and Cosford (England), Tombul (Turkey)
- Sell to major processors
- Mechanically harvested in Europe, nuts fall free to the ground, hand-picked in Turkey
- European growers supported by country research organizations eg INRA (France) and IRTA (Spain)
- Local machinery agents, FACMA (Italy) and Gariga (Spain)



Some significant Australian hazelnut business models



- Dennis Todd - Lue. Had processing equipment made, processed nuts and sold vanilla coated kernels through up-market retail stores. He also developed nursery for TBC stock and pollenisers. Business discontinued.
- John Wymond and his wife - Pakenham. Established an orchard and processing plant. Insufficient supply of hazelnuts to continue operations. What happened to the orchard?
- Clem and Vanessa Cox - Mudgee. Planted an orchard, set up a processing plant, sold nursery stock, mainly TBC and pollenisers. Did contract harvesting. Retired, business discontinued. Where have all the orchards gone from the stock they sold?
- Bruce West - Megalong Valley. Imported several varieties from Oregon incl Ennis and Lewis for his nursery. Stock sold throughout NSW and Victoria, especially Ennis. Where have all those orchards gone?
- Ferrero as Agri Australis, imported stock from Chile. Planted about 1 million trees and propagated plants in pots for sale. Orchard removed and operations discontinued.

What can we learn from this?

Some reflective questions

- Where have all the growers gone?
- Why has HGA membership declined?
- Why have so many orchards been abandoned?
- Do we value Australian research?
- Should there be a key research body for the industry?
- Do we value grower knowledge and experience?
- Are we disadvantaged by being a widely-dispersed industry?
- Could/should there be a key State or area of production?
- Should we have a collection of varieties or is this irrelevant?
- Can we move from our “Emerging Industry “ status to a viable industry?
- **What are your thoughts about the experiences of our industry pioneers?**