

CROOKWELL POTATO ASSOCIATION INC CELEBRATES 25 YEARS

On Saturday 14th November 2009 CPA celebrated 25 years with a dinner at the RSL. Visitors from far and wide travelled to Crookwell to help celebrate this great achievement in a small country town. An event of the night was a 'This Is Your Life' episode for David Montgomery presented by Garry Kadwell. David's relatives and personal friends attended to make this a very special night for David. David has been instrumental in all achievements of the Association and thus received a Life Membership of the Association.

Crookwell Potato Association Inc. was formed in 1984 and incorporated in 1993.

The Association objectives were to develop a New South Wales agriculture approved seed certification scheme based on Pathogen Tested, micro propagated seed potato stock, produce seed potatoes of world standard under the National Certified Seed Potato Scheme, engage in research and development projects to enhance productivity, identify national and international markets, improve growers returns and establish a resource center for members providing administrative and executive support.

The formation of the Crookwell Potato Association Inc created a network of seed potato producers within a disease free area.

The members were all professional farmers engaged in wool, fat lambs and cattle production as well as potatoes.

At the inaugural meeting members agreed to a voluntary levy arrangements based on tonnes of seed sold each season. Levy obligations have been met without default since inception and are paid annually and disbursement of funds is approved at either the annual general meeting or periodic general meetings during the year.

Levy funds are expended on administration, marketing, research and development.

Networks have been established with potato production enterprises in all states and overseas. Marketing opportunities first identified by the Association are passed on to members. They in turn service those markets at their discretion. Members also individually identify markets with Association support.

Members are financed to visit National and International production areas, conferences and seminars. Those members in turn report back to membership. Promotional community activity is regularly undertaken.

Since inception an active marketing programme has been undertaken by the Executive and Members involving regular visits interstate and overseas.

Particular areas of national interest have been New South Wales – Riverina, Hillston, Hunter Valley, Dorrigo, Windsor / Richmond, and Robertson; Queensland – Gatton, Bundaberg, Atherton; Western Australia - Esperance, and Manjimup, Gin Gin and Broome (variety trials); Tasmania – Devonport – early generation seed; Northern Territory – Katherine and Daly Waters (variety trials); South Australia – All production areas - Mt Gambier, Virginia, Pinaroo, Penola and Victoria – Lower Murray River, Swan Hill.

International marketing visits have been made to the Netherlands, Egypt, Russia, India, Singapore, Indonesia and Thailand.

Export activity covered the period 1992 – 2002 with sales to Papua New Guinea, Indonesia and Thailand. All export marketing and market development has been conducted by Technico P/L since 2002 till 2006. Involvement in and expenditure on research and development has been significant.

The following projects have been undertaken with voluntary contribution from the Association with matching funding from Horticultural Research and Development Corporation and Horticulture Australia. Cost Effective Production of Micro Tubers, Encapsulation of Miniature Seed Potatoes, Reduced Chemical Usage in the Production of Seed Potatoes, Production of whole round seed for certification and Precision Farming Research Project.

Workshops have been undertaken to address: Disease and pest control, Review outcomes of research projects, Capital Region Tourism presentation on Rural Innovation Centre, Innovation and my Business, Collaborative Farming and Marketing, Supply Chain Management, Tourism and Reporting on Technico P/L – national and international.

A number of members have undertaken short courses supported and/or endorsed by the Association e.g. NSW Waterwise course, Chemical Users Course and Forklift Training.

Guest speakers are regularly invited to address general meetings. Topics have included Irrigation Management; Financial and Investment Planning; Chemical and Fertilizer use and Farm Insurance.

Dinner nights are held with interstate clients during field visits and inspections to Crookwell.

Overseas production countries regularly visit to observe and understand our seed potato production techniques.

Community support and activity has extended to Crookwell Market Days, Crookwell Business Development Assn, Crookwell Country Weekend, Upper Lachlan Catchment Management Authority, Capital Region Area Consultative Council, Upper Lachlan Landcare Group, NSW Farmers, Sporting Sponsors, Frail Age Unit, Hospital Auxiliary, Crookwell Rotary and Crookwell Region Advancement Group. Since 1996 till 2002 an annual feature event hosted by the Association is the Australian Potato Tasting Championships.

Three high profile judges were invited to participate and have included Richard O'Brien, Ambassador of Ireland to Australia, Joost Dirkswager, Counsellor, Royal Netherlands Embassy and Miriam Baltuck, NASA Representative in Australia.

A Crookwell identity has always one of the three judges.

The Association is a major contributor to the Annual Crookwell Country Weekend with a display of the potato industry highlighting regional, national and international activity.

The potato peeling competition was always a popular event.

The Resource Centre is the administrative headquarters of the Association. A permanent part time secretary is employed 15 hours per week to manage day to day operations. All Executive positions members are honorary.

The Resource Centre co-ordinates members activities, maintains and prepares statutory records and returns, accounts and production statistics; prepares and distributes regular newsletters.

A research project was undertaken in 1988 "Cost Effective Production of Microtubers".

Successful research outcomes saw the incorporation of Technico P/L in Crookwell in 1994. Now owned by overseas interests, Technico P/L is now a global company marketing seed potato technologies. Crookwell Potato Association were minority shareholders of Technico P/L.

A close relationship exists between the two entities.

Albert Kadwell was an active member of the Crookwell Potato Association until he died on 12 March 2003. He was a highly regarded farmer not only here but in agricultural areas around Australia. His work and dedication to the Seed Potato Industry has been acknowledged by many growers.

Albert was community minded and led by his Christian faith, he was admired and loved by everyone who came in contact with him and will always be remembered by his family, friends and colleagues.

Crookwell Potato Association takes great pride in being able to sponsor the Albert Kadwell Memorial Scholarship of \$500 each year to a local high school agricultural student to further their rural education.

All photos courtesy of Kim Smith.



Kim Weir presenting David with his Life Membership.



David on the 'This Is Your Life' lounge (with compliments of Kay Kadwell)



'This Is Your Life' presentation



Mike Munro (also known as Garry Kadwell) Host of 'This Is Your Life'

