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INFORMATION PAPER: HORTICULTURE STATISTICS

Introduction

The ABS is currently participating as a member of the Horticultural Industry Statistics Working group, co-ordinated by the Australian Horticultural Corporation (AHC). The aims of this Working Group are to identify the deficiencies in existing horticultural statistics, to assess the types of statistics that are required to meet future needs and to consider strategies and approaches which will overcome these deficiencies.

At a meeting of the Working Group on 29 July 1992, the ABS volunteered to produce an information paper to provide a description of the major statistical collections covering horticultural activities, related industries and foreign trade in horticultural based goods. It was also agreed that the paper would incorporate details on the foreign trade classification and sources of horticultural statistics.

PART A. AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS

The ABS conducts two annual agricultural collections:

- (i) The *Agricultural Commodity Census* and associated supplementary collections; and
- (ii) The *Agricultural Finance Survey* (AFS).

1. The Agricultural Census and associated collections

The census is conducted by the ABS on a year ended 31 March basis.

Data are collected from all farms with an Estimated Value of Agricultural Operations (EVAO) of \$22,500 or more.

Some examples of horticultural data collected in the census include area and production of tomatoes and cauliflowers, number of orange and apple trees, production of grapefruit and peaches, and usage of fertilisers and irrigation.

In conjunction with the census, a series of *Supplementary* collections are conducted by the ABS to obtain production details for commodities not available at the time the census is conducted (e.g. the main potato crop planted before 31 March but not yet harvested).

Data collected from the *Supplementaries* are limited to area and production details of commodities. However, the *Supplementary* collection does provide a vehicle for collecting more detailed information on selected commodities or varietal information on a user funded basis. For example, the ABS has collected varietal information on grapes for the viticulture industry and varietal information on apples and pears via the *Supplementary* collection.

To enable calculation of industry best estimates of total agricultural production, the ABS also conducts an *Agricultural Activity Collection* to obtain information from those farms with an EVAO between \$5,000 and \$22,499.

The commodity information of relevance to horticulture, is restricted to the collection of:

- * area of vegetables grown for sale for human consumption, by type of vegetable;
- * number of trees/area of commercial fruit and nut trees (include both bearing and nonbearing) by type of fruit;
- * area of nurseries, flowers and cultivated turf.

The most recent activity collection was conducted for the 1991-92 census year. The two previous collections were conducted only for coverage maintenance purposes and to monitor the size and predominant industry of farms below

INQUIRIES

- * for further information about this publication contact Mr Geoff Heffernan on Canberra (06) 252 5338 or any ABS State office.
- * for information about other ABS statistics and services please contact Information Services on Canberra (06) 252 6627, 252 5402, 252 6007 or any ABS State office.

the census cutoff. The information collected determines the farm's status for the following year's collections and no statistical data are obtained.

2. Agricultural Finance Survey (AFS)

The AFS provides statistics about the financial performance of agricultural industries and the sector as a whole. The major economic indicators produced from the survey include Turnover, Value added, Cash operating surplus, Net capital expenditure, Value of assets and Net worth, all classified by industry and State.

The AFS is conducted by the ABS on a financial year basis. It has been conducted as an annual collection since 1986-87. Prior to that it was conducted irregularly.

The population of the AFS consists of all economic units whose principal activity results in them being classified within Sub-division 01 "Agriculture" of the Australian Standard Industrial Classification (ASIC) and which had an EVAO of \$22,500 or more.

The 1991-92 AFS consists of approximately 3,500 farm businesses, selected at random from all in-scope farm businesses on the ABS's business register.

The data collected includes income from the sale of agricultural products, other income (e.g. interest and dividends), expenses, wages and salaries, employment, value of assets (including acquisitions and sales), indebtedness and livestock numbers.

Within the Industry Classification there are two industry groups relating specifically to horticulture:

- (1) Fruit : comprises Grapes (ASIC Class 0134)
Plantation Fruit (ASIC Class 0135)
Orchard and Other Fruit (ASIC Class 0136)
- (2) Vegetables : comprises Potatoes (except Sweet Potatoes) (ASIC Class 0143)
Vegetables (except Potatoes) (ASIC Class 0144)

Financial details covering the Nursery industry (ASIC Class 0195) were collected separately for 1986-87 and 1987-88. Since 1988-89, Nurseries have been included in "Other Agriculture".

PART B. OTHER INDUSTRY STATISTICS

The ABS also collects some information on horticultural based commodities from the value added industries in the manufacturing, wholesale and retail sectors. While the Manufacturing Census is conducted annually, commodity data are collected only every three years. The Wholesale Trade Survey and the Retail Census are both conducted irregularly but collections covering both these sectors are being conducted in respect of the 1991-92 financial year.

PART C. FOREIGN TRADE STATISTICS

The ABS compiles and disseminates a detailed range of foreign trade statistics covering all merchandise goods including horticultural commodities. These statistics are compiled from information submitted by exporters and importers (or their agents) to the Australian Customs Service (ACS). Their system is described later in this paper.

The basis for the commodity classification of trade statistics is the Harmonized System (an international standard classification with a 6-digit hierarchical code).

For Australian purposes, the Harmonised System (HS) classification is extended beyond 6 digits to provide additional sub-categories. For exports the 7th and 8th digits are used. For imports, the 7th to 10th digits are used (with the 7th and 8th being used by the ACS for tariff classification purposes).

The Australian Harmonized Export Commodity Classification (AHECC) is designed for use by exporters and their agents when providing Australian Customs Service (ACS) with details of exports, and to assist users in the interpretation of export statistics published by the ABS.

An example of this system as used in the AHECC is shown below -

SECTION 02 - VEGETABLE PRODUCTS

CHAPTER 08 - EDIBLE FRUIT AND NUTS; PEEL OF CITRUS FRUIT OR MELONS

0806		GRAPES, FRESH OR DRIED:
0806.10	0806.10.00	— Fresh
0806.20		-- Dried:
	0806.20.10	-- Raisins, unseeded
	0806.20.20	-- Raisins, seeded
	0806.20.30	-- Currants
	0806.20.40	-- Sultanas
	0806.20.50	-- Mixed fruits

The Customs Tariff is the basis for the classification of imports. Like the AHECC, the first six digits of the Customs Tariff classifications are prescribed by the international standard set in the Harmonized System.

An example of a ten digit import classification in the Customs Tariff is shown below -

DIVISION 02 - VEGETABLE PRODUCTS

CHAPTER 07 - EDIBLE VEGETABLES AND CERTAIN ROOTS AND TUBERS

0710.22.00	BEANS:
0710.22.00.05	— Green (French)
0710.22.00.06	— Other

Requests to change the trade classifications

The following criteria have been developed to assess requests:

- all requests should have the support of a relevant government department or industry association to ensure that the widest possible range of user requests is satisfied; and
- there should be a sufficient number of exporters or importers and sufficient level of trade to allow for further dissection.

The ABS cannot amend the 4 digit Headings or 6 digit Sub-headings which are specified as part of the system.

Once there is a proposed structure for the change in the commodity classification, the proposal is tested. This is done through a questionnaire which is sent to the principal exporters/importers of the commodity. The questionnaire ascertains several things:

- whether importers and their agents can readily identify the goods, when Customs documentation is completed;
- that sufficient levels of trade in the newly-split commodities will be maintained to justify the change; and
- that the introduction of additional statistical codes would not be likely to result in the application of a confidentiality embargo.

Once an investigation is finalised, the ABS notifies all parties concerned of the result. Changes in the AHECC are put in place during January and July each year.

An example of a recent change in the AHECC is the change in the classification of oranges which was introduced in January 1992. The item "Oranges" (0805.10.00) was subdivided into "Navel" (0805.10.10), "Valencia" (0805.10.20) and "Other" (0805.10.90). This has enabled more detailed statistical information to be provided at the varietal level.

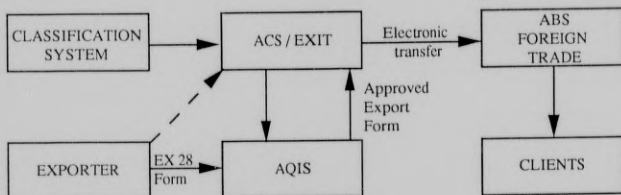
PART D. SOURCES OF FOREIGN TRADE DATA

1. Australian Customs Service (ACS)

The ABS obtains foreign trade data from the Australian Customs Service (ACS). This data includes details on both exports and imports.

Exporters are required to lodge details of their exports with ACS electronically through the EXIT system. This is the source of official export statistics compiled and disseminated by the ABS.

The following diagram summarises the flow of information in export trade statistics:—



The resulting trade data are used to produce estimates that are the basis for merchandise trade data included in the Balance of Payments, and by exporters and industry groups to identify markets and follow trends.

The statistics compiled by the ABS are available in publications, printouts, microfiche, computer tapes, floppy disks and via electronic data services (e.g. DISCOVERY, AUSSTATS or TELESTATS). These include information on:—

- * total exports by value and quantity
- * details of exports classified by:
 - Australian Harmonised Export Commodity Classification (AHECC);
 - country of destination and port of discharge;
 - State of origin and port of loading;
 - mode of transport.

Confidentiality

The ABS publishes all data at an aggregated level. However, if this exposes the trade of a single company due to the nature of their trade in a particular commodity, that company could request to have the data withheld from publication.

2. Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service (AQIS)

AQIS compiles foreign trade data from the Notice of Intention to Export/Import Permit form (EX28) that must be completed by exporters. These data are used to monitor fresh fruit and vegetable export development.

The AQIS data collection system is linked with the ACS' EXIT system by the fact that Customs will not clear any prescribed goods to leave the country unless a valid Export Permit (EX28) is provided. AQIS has no links with the ABS system of data collection.

The publication *Australian Exports of Fresh Fruit and Vegetables* is the most common form in which AQIS data are disseminated. It gives quantity of exports of individual horticultural commodities, by State and by destination.

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IAN CASTLES
Australian Statistician

SOURCES FOR STATISTICS AND OTHER INFORMATION

AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE

Electronic Products -

AgStats (on Floppy Disk)	Catalogue No. 7117.0
CD-AgStats (on CD-ROM)	7115.0

Agriculture - General -

Apparent Consumption of Foodstuffs and Nutrients, Australia	4306.0
Information Paper: AgStats, Australia	7107.0
Australian Farming in Brief	7106.0
Characteristics of Australian Farms	7102.0

Agricultural Commodity Production —

Summary of Crops, Australia	7330.0
Value of Agricultural Commodities Produced, Australia	7503.0

Agricultural Finance -

Agricultural Industries, Financial Statistics, Australia	7507.0
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Some of the above publications and products are also available separately by State.

NOTE. In addition to the above services the ABS can also provide special data services by providing customised tables or by undertaking tailor-made information and statistical consultancy services to suit the individual needs of clients.

FOREIGN TRADE STATISTICS SERVICE

Foreign Trade Classification —

Australian Harmonized Export Commodity Classification	1233.0
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Foreign Trade Commodity Statistics —

Exports, Australia, Monthly Summary Tables	5432.0
Imports, Australia, Monthly Summary Tables	5433.0
Exports, Australia (Quarterly)	5434.0
Imports, Australia (Quarterly)	5435.0

Foreign Trade services available on request —

Special Returns service. This service provides commodity—based foreign trade statistics tailored to users' requirements. The data are available on computer printout or via the electronic service, TELESTATS.

Microfiche service. A variety of tabular formats is available covering commodities exported or imported at various levels of aggregation.

Magnetic tape service. Foreign trade statistics are also available on 9 track magnetic tape. This service is recommended where users wish to obtain trade data at the most detailed level.

Other foreign trade data services. A wide variety of customised data services are available on an ad hoc or subscription basis. Data can be provided on printout or floppy disk or via electronic mail.

