



Produce Industry Freshness System Wins Award in Europe

December 22, 2006 - An innovative quality system used by many of Australia's leading apple producers to maintain consistent quality of their apples marketed domestically and exported to the UK and Europe, has been honoured by the Belgian and Dutch fresh produce industry.

The SmartFreshSM Quality System has been awarded the Fructura Award for providing the Belgian and Dutch fresh produce industry with a new system for maintaining the freshness and nutrition of fruits longer throughout the supply chain, right through to the consumer.

The prize was awarded during the recent Fructura Exhibition in Belgium, after being voted on by a jury of industry representatives and researchers. Fructura is a tri-annual European industry exhibition showcasing innovation in the fresh produce industry.

The SmartFresh Quality System, developed in the United States by AgroFresh Inc, has been used widely in the Australian apple industry since gaining regulatory approval in 2004.

Manager of AgroFresh in Australia and New Zealand, Ms Jane Turner, said the Fructura jury's recognition of SmartFresh linked the Australian apple industry to the most important breakthrough for the produce industry in recent years.

"SmartFresh has been described by many in the apple industry as the most influential innovation in post-harvest horticulture in 30 years," Ms Turner said.

SmartFresh is a "freshness protection system" that works with the natural ripening process by making the fruit less susceptible to the damaging effects of ethylene, which causes loss in quality and over-ripening in fruit., SmartFresh manages the fruit's ethylene sources and successfully delays the ripening process.

“Fresh-picked quality, taste, appearance and important nutritional benefits are sustained so that consumers can enjoy a crunchier, juicier, overall better tasting fruit,” Ms Turner said.

“This award is very relevant to us in Australia because it confirms the acceptance and status of this innovation not only for our apple exporters to the UK and Europe but for our domestic marketers as well for enabling them to deliver a consistent quality of apple to the consumer,” Ms Turner added.

The Fructura Award is the third prize won by the SmartFresh Quality System in 2006.

In January 2006, SmartFresh was awarded the SIVAL d’OR (Golden Award) in France, and in March it received a second gold trophy at the SIFEL trade show in Agen.

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