

# Date Forum 2019

## Arid Zone Research Institute

Stuart Smith

Department of Primary Industry and Resources

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# Hermannsberg dates

- Dates planted at Hermannsberg in 1880s. Seed sent from Adelaide Botanical Gardens by Baron von Mueller.
- CSIRO tried to plant dates at the Research Station in Katherine in 1952-53. They did not survive planting.



# Mecca Date Garden, “El Mima”

- First commercial dates planted in Alice Springs – Vic and Sue De Fontenay in 1952.
- Were offshoots from 15 palms growing around Alice.
- 1953-55 Deglet Noor was introduced from California to the farm “El Mima”
- Later became the Mecca Date Garden – Palm Circuit is named after these palms.

# Frank McEllister (and Houltly)



- Frank McEllister studied seedling dates in Central Australia, and he realised that the industry would not go forward until overseas clones were imported. He studied overseas in 1986 (Israel and California) and tissue culture and offshoot dates started to be planted at AZRI in 1989 and this continued into the early 1990s.
- In 1975 50 offshoots were imported from USA and only 12 survived. These were planted at AZRI with offshoots from Hermannsburg.
- 342 Palms from seed imported from USA were grown and planted at the Sewage effluent farm in 1976- 1977. 80 died. The remaining 265 were transplanted along De Fontenay Drive in 1987-1988. These were removed 10 years later.

# Geoff Kenna



Geoff Kenna and John Mansfield conducted a RIRDC Funded evaluation of the date cultivars between 1992 and 1995. Did a real great job on the final report, which has a huge amount of detail on cultivar evaluation and also bagging techniques. Their recommendation was to move away from cultivar evaluation and move toward research in cultural practices.

# Andrew Nesbitt



Around the turn of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, Andrew Nesbitt and others did a lot of leaf nutrient testing and tensiometers. Got some baseline data on N, P, K, Ca, Mg and Na.

# Dr Raghu Sathyamurthy, Martin Hidalgo



Raghu and Martin did some herbicide work.

# Dr Cameron McConchie, Dr Vivek Bhat



Dr Cameron McConchie and Dr Vivek Bhat did some pollination work. Pollination is still one of the biggest issues for the production of Barhee.

# Dr Vivek Bhat



# Glen Oliver collecting pollen with students



# Male pollen flowers (Fard)



# Parlatoria scale research



Dr Brian Thistleton and Michael Neal have done some work on Actara as a way to manage the Parlatoria scale. Seems to work ok.

# Parlatoria scales



# Planting new dates 2015



# Tasting



# Where to from here?

