

Aussie mango producer sings kiwi software praises

NEW ZEALAND FIRM ABC SOFTWARE'S DELIVERY OF CUSTOM-BUILT PACKING AND TRACEABILITY SOFTWARE HAS IMPRESSED A MAJOR AUSTRALIAN FRUIT PRODUCER.

Ooloo Farm Management, part of the Brisbane-based OneHarvest group of companies, is a mango grower which manages the fruit from picking and packing including the distribution network into customers. Ooloo grows Calypso™ mangoes in Darwin, Katherine and Mataranka in the Northern Territory and Dimbulah in Far North Queensland.

Ooloo Farm Management Post Harvest Operations Manager Henrik Christiansen said software developed by ABC Software had generated reporting and efficiency systems enabling it to process around a million trays of mangoes in the 2011 season.

"We couldn't have done that without (co-owner) Sharon Chapman, the ABC Software team and the software OLi that's been custom-built for us," he said.

Henrik said the focus of OLi started with the picking and pack house operations and establishing visibility in terms of what was happening in the pack house. It also worked at developing more "smarts" around market accesses, traceability and productivity reporting.

Ooloo Farm Management went through a full scoping project in 2009 in search of the perfect software solution.

"All the companies we considered initially were Australian-based but none of them had the ability to deal with the complexity that we needed in the future. None of them had a complete solution," said Henrik.

But on a trip to New Zealand visiting friends in Hawke's Bay, Henrik took time out to tour the region's pack houses. One of those he visited was Mr Apple Ltd, one of New Zealand's largest apple growers, packers and exporters.

ABC Software had developed its systems, allowing Mr Apple to effectively manage its fruit from the orchard to the pack houses and cool stores, onto the markets and

through to customer invoicing and grower payments.

Henrik was impressed and knew that this was just the type of system that Ooloo needed.

But in addition to having the right technical solution, he says ABC Software ultimately beat other developers to win the business because of its experience, culture and ability to "just get us".

"We are a no frills farming organisation and Sharon knows how to deal with us. ABC Software is a straight talking team with a 'just get it done' attitude," he said.

OneHarvest IT Manager Andrew Beard said ABC Software's delivery to date had fuelled his confidence in taking the project to stage two, which included developing software for the rest of OneHarvest's business, which also deals in avocados and watermelon.

"The efficiencies OLi has created are game changers. At the completion of a day's packing, we can have the end-of-day process, including all reporting, done in ten to fifteen minutes. Prior to OLi, that would have taken hours," Andrew said.

Over the last five years Ooloo Farm Management has grown from handling 100,000 trays a season to handling a million trays of mangoes in season 2011. With trees on its farms not yet at maturity and Calypso™ mangoes gaining in popularity, this trajectory is set to continue. With the support of ABC Software's skills and solutions, the company is well placed to handle the demands and reap the rewards of this growth.

**Henrik Christiansen – Post Harvest Operations Manager,
Ooloo Farm Management**

Andrew Beard – IT Manager, OneHarvest

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