

1 June 2021

Integrity of data and accurate information critical for Koala Cherries' growth

KOALA CHERRIES, ARGUABLY AUSTRALIA'S LARGEST CHERRY OPERATION, HAS GROWN "MONUMENTALLY" IN THE PAST FIVE YEARS, DOUBLING ITS CROP SIZE. CHRIS NEALON, CHIEF OPERATIONS OFFICER ATTRIBUTES THE ABILITY TO HAVE GROWN SO SUCCESSFULLY IN NO SMALL PART TO THE ROLE ABC SOFTWARE PLAYS IN THE BUSINESS.

Five seasons ago Koala introduced ABC Software's packhouse data control system EVA (now called ABCpacker). It has since added ABCgrower into its field operations and is about to start trialling the spray diary module.

Efficiencies through improved and integrated data control, data integrity and data flow, have hugely helped the business grow, Chris says.

"ABC's software gives us good database architecture with the ability to easily manipulate and use information right from tree to customer."

Koala Cherries has 220ha of fruit across its various farms in Victoria, with two more substantial farms under development. This year, 3000 tonnes of cherries were processed through its Yarck packhouse, with 100 tonne each day.

Chris says that EVA "happily ticks along" dealing with the myriad of packhouse data elements - handling units including packaging, pallets, cartons, stock control - plus admin and sales all happening at the same time.

"It doesn't ever struggle to keep up. We can be confident that ABC will keep powering along in the background."

It's this confidence in data integrity that Koala gains huge benefits from. Using ABC as a primary, secure, central database across all facets of the business means Chris and his team can pull out information and use it however it's needed.

Reporting is easy, integration to our payroll is straightforward, pickers and contractors have confidence they are paid accurately, stock is tracked efficiently, and the ability to effectively meet the differing requirements of customers including Australia's four largest supermarkets and their respective ordering systems, is a given.

"To have accurate data flow crossing through all our platforms is critical, as is speed. Time is very critical in a cherry harvest. With the ABC integration we have data at our fingertips. Our marketing team, our production team, in fact everyone can all see the information they need quickly and easily. It's made us hugely more efficient.

"It certainly makes everyone's day easier," says Chris.



Working with the ABC Software team in New Zealand has proved no barrier for Koala. Chris says suggestions for improvements are met with an open mind and can-do attitude. He appreciates that he can access any of the ABC team and is not limited to just one point of contact.

“The whole team steps up to do what’s needed. They might have their own specialisation, but everyone has a broad understanding of the software and is there to help.”