

# November 2018 PIT Group New Growers Report – Project PS17002

## PGAI PISTACHIO NEW GROWER INFORMATION DAY

### November 2018 - Meeting Date and Venue

**PGAI is conducted a special PIT Group solely aimed at new and prospective pistachio growers. This was a meeting specifically aimed at new growers (with young trees) and those investigating growing pistachios.**

**The New Grower PIT Group meeting started at 9.00am (registration) for 9.30am start. Lunch 12-1, then by 1.30pm out to Josh Boram's property for a session 1.30 to 3 pm.**

**Robinvale: Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> of November, 9 am sharp**

Address: **Robinvale Golf Club**, 4240 Murray Valley Hwy, Robinvale VIC 3549  
**Josh Boram's property**, Corner of Mills Lane and Murray Valley Highway,  
Boundary Bend, Victoria, 3599

### TOPICS

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|---|----------------------|
| • Site selection/soils/soil analysis                              | Dr Ben Thomas        |
| • Tree selection/rootstocks/planting density/male tree percentage | Dr Ben Thomas        |
| • Pests and diseases (reference to 2011/orchard sanitation)       | Stuart Pettigrew     |
| • Orchard Sanitation - the Almond Industry's experience           | Brett Rosenzweig     |
| • Tree growth/budding/pruning/central leader etc                  | Dr Ben Thomas        |
| • What happens to the pistachios after harvest?                   | Grant Birrell (APPC) |

The 2018 Spring Sessions of the PGAI PIT Group program included a third meeting aimed specifically at new growers and those who are considering growing pistachios. The meeting was well attended at the Robinvale Golf Club with 24 registered to attend.

Dr. Ben Thomas gave a detailed talk on all aspects of pistachio orchards, from site selection water and nutrition for pistachio trees with emphasis on budgeting for the correct nutrition at the correct time with a focus on nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium application with respect to tree uptake and use. Craig Feutrill delivered Stuart Pettigrew's talk as he was unavailable for this meeting and reported on the latest findings from project PS16000 with respect to insect pests and beneficials found in pistachio orchards involved. Essentially – at the moment – very few damaging pests found but very high levels of beneficial insects. Stuart is working in conjunction with the Almond industry which have a project looking at *Carpophilus* beetle and Carob Moth. The message from Stuart's talk was the perfect segue into Brett Rosenzweig's discussion on the need for orchard sanitation particularly with respect to the problems the almond industry has encountered beginning with the 2013/4 season with *Carpophilus* beetle and Carob Moth. Insects that were not a problem prior to the 2010/11 wet season that have now developed into a multi-million dollar problem for the Almond industry with no easy solution in sight.

Grant Birrell from APPC gave an excellent presentation on what happens to pistachio nuts once harvested, where they go, how they are prepared for sale and the future developments occurring at Pioneer Pistachios to manage the expansion of the industry over the next 10-20 years.

After the presentation, lunch was supplied and then it was a 30-minute drive out to Harry and Josh Boram's property at Boundary Bend. At the Boram's property we looked at planting methodology, nutrition, irrigation, pruning and pests/diseases. Despite the short sharp showers all growers who attended asked many questions and shared knowledge.

Pictures overleaf.



Grant Birrell (APPC) presenting to the PGAI New Growers PITGroup meeting, the pathway that pistachio nuts take once harvested, at the Robinvale Golf Club on 22/11/2018.



Dr Ben Thomas,(Ben Thomas Consulting) discussing modified central leader pruning and tree nutrition at the Boram's property Boundary Bend..



Harry Boram, discussing their experience at the Boundary Bend property with the new pistachio trees and modified central leader pruning.