



USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

# GAIN Report

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## Australia

### Canned Deciduous Fruit

### Weather Damages Fruit Crops in Victoria

### 2003

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**Report Highlights:**

Adverse weather has trimmed prospects for Australia's stone fruit harvest. A hailstorm and freezing weather will reduce production prospects for apricots, plums, peaches and nectarines. Pending a more thorough review of the damage, cannery peach deliveries in calendar year 2004 are now expected to be below the previous forecast.

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Includes PSD Changes: Yes  
Includes Trade Matrix: No  
Unscheduled Report  
Canberra [AS1]  
[AS]

An October 15 hailstorm and freezing weather in late September have caused severe damage to fruit crops in widespread areas of the Goulburn Valley, a principal fruit-growing region in the northeastern part of the State of Victoria. Many of the region's fruit trees, particularly the early season varieties, were in the critical flowering and fruit-setting stages when the damaging weather hit. The season is about ten days to two weeks behind normal, which helped to avoid more serious damage from the unfavorable weather.

Substantial losses are being reported for stone fruit crops -- apricot, plum, peach and nectarine. Reportedly, the pear crop in the area was largely unaffected. The Goulburn Valley produces about one-half of Australia's stone fruit and a significant percentage of the pear crop. There are also reports that some of the wine grapes in the area were damaged, but there is still the possibility of re-shooting of the vines.

Reduced quantities of fruit from the Goulburn Valley will likely have a substantial impact on availabilities of fresh stone fruit for the domestic and export markets. Australia's exports of fresh stone fruit have been rising, with annual shipments exceeding 10,000 metric tons (MT) of plums and 5,000 MT of nectarines. Lesser quantities of apricots and peaches also are exported. Most of Australia's fresh stone fruit exports are destined for markets in Hong Kong, Singapore and Taiwan. Relatively small quantities of fresh apricots are typically imported from New Zealand.

The weather also is expected to negatively impact peaches destined for canning – the Goulburn Valley is a major canned fruit producing area. Cannery intake of peaches in calendar year 2004 was expected to rise about 2.5 percent from the year-earlier level (see Canned Deciduous Fruit Annual, GAIN Report #AS3035, dated 9/30/03). This increase now is unlikely to materialize. Pending a more complete assessment of the damage, Post has revised cannery intake of peaches in 2004 downward from the previous 54,000 MT to 48,000 MT. Downward revisions also were made in CY 2004 exports, domestic consumption and ending stocks of canned peaches.

Industry officials are still assessing the full extent of the damage. Post will report more detailed information when it becomes available.

Australia Canned Peaches							
	2001	Revised	2002	Estimate	2003	Forecast	UOM
	USDA Official [Old]	Post Estimate [New]	USDA Official [Old]	Post Estimate [New]	USDA Official [Old]	Post Estimate [New]	
Market Year Begin		01/2002		01/2003		01/2004	MM/YYYY
Deliv. To Processors	50000	50200	53000	52700	0	48000	(MT)
Beginning Stocks	9600	9600	5802	7613	6292	2300	(MT, Net Weight)
Production	40670	41666	43990	43741	45000	39840	(MT, Net Weight)
Imports	500	420	500	344	200	400	(MT, Net Weight)
TOTAL SUPPLY	50770	51686	50292	51698	51492	42540	(MT, Net Weight)
Exports	9386	11573	9000	14398	11000	7300	(MT, Net Weight)
Domestic Consumption	35582	32500	35000	35000	35500	33000	(MT, Net Weight)
Ending Stocks	5802	7613	6292	2300	4992	2240	(MT, Net Weight)
TOTAL DISTRIBUTION	50770	51686	50292	51698	51492	42540	(MT, Net Weight)