

Insatiable global demand for macadamias, particularly from Asia, has seen prices rise to record highs, with growers reaping the rewards, as Australia's largest processor, The Macadamia Processing Company (MPC), this week announces a \$0.30/kg increase on its already record price.

Asia's increasing discovery of Australian macadamias, coupled with improved exchange rate conditions, are helping to drive demand and provide better prices for growers.

MPC General Manager Steven Lee said "Our sales and marketing program is achieving its aims and as a result better prices are flowing to growers. As a grower-owned company we are redistributing some of the profits back to our growers".

In February 2015 MPC released a record notional price for growers of \$4.40/kg for their nut in shell - now increased to \$4.70/kg for all 2015 deliveries, due to improved market conditions.

Over the past five years the company's revamped supply chain strategies, implemented by its marketing arm, Macadamia Marketing International (MMI), have seen vastly improved demand for its macadamias.

In recent times MPC has invested heavily in infrastructure at its New South Wales Northern Rivers factory at Alphadale, near Lismore - spending \$4.5M on an energy efficient system using macadamia shell to dry the crop. This eco-friendly system generates operational savings in excess of \$800,000 annually.

Uniquely MPC offers growers a centralised nut sorting service. "We're providing strong payment for our growers and we're working hard to reduce their on-farm operating costs and improve their efficiencies as well," said Mr Lee.

During April MPC set another record with almost 1,000 tonnes of nuts delivered to the factory in a single week. "It was the biggest week ever. The 1,000t is equal to approximately \$4.7million dollars worth of crop purchased from growers. We hope the season continues as well as it has started," Mr Lee said.

Australia's 2015 crop is shaping up to be a good one with the Australian Macadamia Society forecasting 47,000 tonnes. The harvest has been progressing well with crop quality improving as the season progresses. Growers have reported little orchard damage or crop loss from recent storms with harvesting recommencing in most regions. ENDS