

Submission to the Productivity Commission.

CITRUS GROWING.

Farm ..... LAKE ..... was developed from virgin country granted to my father N.D.E. SCOTT as a soldier settler on 21 Dec. 1921. He worked and developed that land until his death.

I worked on the farm since finishing my schooling in 1942 the farm passed to me upon my fathers death in 1973. My wife Agnes commenced working on our farm in 1946, we were married in 1948, and since that time we have worked together. In the early days even taking the children down the farm in the pram as we pruned the trees in winter or harvested summer crops and other farm tasks

Following my fathers demise, Agnes and I had very little money between us with which to continue operating the farm, so to keep the farm we adopted the practice to farm without the need to employ any outside labour. Over the years this has meant long hours and mostly a six day work week. The result of this is that we have been able to remain totally debt free while continueing to maintain the farm at a high level of production, and at the same time put a few dollars aside for investments. However with the lowering of import' tariffs down to the present 5% on Fruit Juice Concentrate coupled with high tariffs imposed by countries to which we export our citrus has meant that the return to growers such as ourselves has fallen to a ridiculous level. &90 per tonne for valencias through the the packing shed . Last year we harvested 230 tonnes of Valencias, navels and grapefruit for a total farm income from fruit sales of \$23139 to this was added income from investments, rebates of

\$10317

Thus our total income was \$33456

Total farm expenses were \$26429

Profit for the year was \$ 7027

Divided between Agnes & I. \$ 3513 which amounts to \$67.55 per week.

The question to be asked is, Who would work for such a low wage? , absolutely no one, this is much lower than any of the so called sweat shops employing illegal immigrants.. The only people willing to labour for these pitiful financial returns are the likes of Agnes and myself who work for the love of our farm and the life style of working productivly our own patch of dirt. At the age of 75 and 74 years respectively we are still not retired. We have no

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superannuation except in the value of our farm, no holiday pay  
no sick leave benefit, or 17% loading or long service leave,.

It must also be noted that we have been known for many years as a  
producer of high quality citrus, this can be verified by EXCELLO  
Co Griffith.

Over the past few years we have lowered our water usage by  
changing our irrigation technique and also cultural methods  
with the desire to maintain our growing of quality fruit.

Unfortunately most politicians, state and federal , together  
with the bureaucrats sit in their offices making many decisions on  
problems within the citrus industry without having any practical  
experience , they solve farming and marketing problems by consulting  
the text books and theoretical hypothesis. By not attempting to get  
out onto the farms to witness first hand how the genuine farmer and  
their families cope with the decisions that are made by these very  
same bureaucrats they are doing a disservice to the farming  
community.

All we ask for is a commitment by those in power to try  
to deliver a fair and adequate financial return for our labour,  
together with a positive agenda to implement a sound export and  
marketing environment to ensure long term viability for farmers.

No doubt some may say that if we are doing it tough then  
sell up and get out. Why should we. Its the love of our farm that  
keeps us in the industry, advancing years will eventually  
determine the final outcome.

This is not a winge, but a genuine plea for a fair and  
honest deal for those who wish to stay in the citrus industry.

Frank Scott. 30/10/01.

(signed)