

1. A brief summary of how you have shared the outcomes from your project (no more than 500 words)

- On the 24th of July Jubilee Almonds/ Century Orchards Horticultural Committee held a horticultural meeting. The committee consists of the managers, CEO and Horticultural Directors of JA and CO. At this meeting I presented what I had observed and learnt in both Spain and Californian almond producing regions. At the end of the presentation we discussed how my findings could be implemented into the business.
- On the 27th of August I was the guest speaker for Waikerie Rotary Club where I presented about my success on being awarded the scholarship and my findings from my study tour. The club consists of around 50 members with 30 of the members attending the dinner. Some members also approached me following the dinner to discuss my tour and were particularly interested in discussing the possible conversion of their existing vineyard to almonds.
- I am scheduled to be guest speaker at Jubilee Almonds / Century Orchards 28th Annual General Meeting on the 11th of October. I will be presenting to the Board of Directors as well as the investors of JA and CO about my study tour and findings.
- I have also spoken to reporters and had an article published in the Murray Pioneer and the River news about my tour.

2. What advice you would provide future successful applicants on how to get the most from their project (no more than 500 words)

Speak to your employer and industry body about your project particularly what you hope to gain from the project as well as details on the project budget. On my success of being awarded the Bursary, my employer Jubilee Almonds agreed to sponsor any additional costs which may be incurred. This allowed me to spend a significantly longer amount time overseas than the Bursary alone allowed which helped me get the most out of my study tour to California. In addition to this Jubilee Almonds also offered to sponsor me to attend a study tour to Spain run by the Almond Board of Australia for a very select group of almond growers from across Australia. By incorporating the two projects it has allowed me to gain an international perspective on the industry. It has also allowed my employer to see that I am actively looking to expand my knowledge and am passionate about my career and the industry.

The Almond Board of Australia helped me get in touch with key growers, researchers and the Almond board of California. As well as this they also helped me to find a travel companion for my tour. This was a great relief for me as I was able to travel with someone who was well acquainted with the region I was visiting and also provided an alternative perspective on the information which was presented to us.

If undertaking an overseas study tour I would suggest engaging a travel agent to assist with organising flights as they can become quite complicated. However I would recommend organising your own accommodation if possible. This allowed flexibility and reduced the costs. My trip was thoroughly planned however only some of my key accommodation was pre-booked (eg. the hotel where my flights landed, where we would spend the weekends and where our flight departed). This allowed us to be very flexible with our plans. This was a benefit as there were some unforeseen circumstances where people could no longer catch up with us and we were able to organise alternative arrangements with very little notice.

I would also recommend finding a travel partner or host who is willing and able to provide assistance with things such as transport, translation and company for the duration of the trip. This gave me much more confidence to get out and explore the regions I visited which would have been more intimidating if I had been travelling alone.

3. A presentation which provides a brief summary of your project, project findings and lessons learnt. The presentation may be in the form of a video, handout, web site, power-point presentation or other relevant format which can be distributed to others who may be interested in your project.

Gaining insight into the latest developments coming out of the leading almond research facilities based in Spain & California

Commercial almond production in Australia has been based on the production techniques developed in California who contribute over 80% of global almond production. Australia is the second largest producer of almonds accounting for 7% of global production while Spain accounts for 5% of global production.

In May 2014 I was fortunate enough to be selected to travel with the Almond Board of Australia to Spain, visiting key industry bodies, growers and associated facilities. From Spain I was able to travel to California where I spent time visiting key researchers and growers to gain insight into the almond research being conducted at world class agricultural facilities.

The focus of the Spanish tour was based on shake and catch harvest systems, high density almond plantings, dwarfing rootstock breeding programs and commercial plantings. Almond production in Spain is currently seeing a shift from traditional low input low intensity production to high input and high intensity production as the technology becomes available and almond prices become more attractive to growers. A method being used to accelerate and increase production in Spain is high density almond plantings. In Australia almonds are commercially planted around 250 trees per hectare. These high and super high density plantings being developed in Spain are based anywhere from 500 to 2500 trees per hectare. To overcome issues with vigorous growing almond trees Spanish almond breeders have developed several different 'dwarfing' rootstocks which reduce the vigour of the tree making the tree structure more manageable for increased density plantings.

From Spain I travelled to California where I visited researchers, farmers and extension officers throughout the Central Valley. Due to the severe drought that California is currently experiencing, irrigation and drought management was emphasised throughout the tour. Leading almond growers in California are using research based on midday light interception and spur dynamics to allow growers to make informed management decisions. This information has helped growers with orchard establishment decisions including tree spacing, varieties and density and has also helped growers make general management decisions in regards to pruning, irrigation, fertiliser and disease management. Researchers from the University of California are attempting to use this information to create modelling software where in the near future growers will be able to model a range of management options to determine the best possible outcomes for yield, sustainability and orchard longevity.

The study tour gave me the opportunity to gain a better comprehension of two major almond producing regions. Both regions are introducing and establishing new innovations which will have a significant impact on the almond industry. I am grateful to the Ag Bureau of Australia, PIRSA, the former Rural Youth Movement, Jubilee Almonds and the Almond Board of Australia for giving me such a fantastic opportunity to broaden my horizons.

2014 Almond Board of Australia Spain Study Tour Itinerary

DATE	DAY	TIME	LOCATION	CONTACT	TOPIC
25th May	Sunday				
26th May	Monday				
27th May	Tuesday				
28th May	Wednesday	All Day	Sant Sadurni d'Anoia	Agromillora nursery	Tissue culture, micro grafting & super high density rootstock trials
29th May	Thursday	AM PM	Mas de Bover	IRTA Borges Unio Corporacio Alimentaria	Almond research and breeding Almond processing and marketing Spanish Coopertive Farming
30th May	Friday	All Day	Reus	Crisol/Aboreto	Almond Co-operative farming and marketing
31st May	Saturday				
1st June	Sunday				
2nd June	Monday	All Day	Caspe/La Granja d'Escarpe	Agromillora growers	Super high density orchards and harvesting
3rd June	Tuesday	AM PM	Lleida	IRTA Ocean Almond	Experimental site for almond breeding program Development of commercial almond orchards in Spain
4th June	Wednesday	AM PM	Les Borges Blanques	IRTA Tenias	Traditional Almond Production in Spain Shake and catch harvest systems
5th June	Thursday	AM	Les Borges Blanques	IRTA	Grower field day
6th June	Friday				

2014 Rural Youth Bursary California Study Tour Itinerary

DATE	DAY	TIME	LOCATION	COMPANY	CONTACT	TOPIC
7-Jun	Saturday					
8-Jun	Sunday					
9-Jun	Monday					
10-Jun	Tuesday	AM PM	Colusa	Nickels Laboratory Vann Brothers	Franz Niederholzer Blake Vann	Irrigation Systems and Monitoring Large scale family operated almond production
11-Jun	Wednesday	AM PM	Davis	UC Davis	Bruce Lampinen Ted Dejong	Light interception & Spur Dynamics Almond tree physiology & modelling
12-Jun	Thursday	AM DINNER	Modesto	Blue Diamond Doubletree Hotel Modesto	Dave Baker & Mel Machado Richard Waycott & Karen Lapsley (ABC)	Processing facility and small growers Overview of Californian almond industry
13-Jun	Friday	AM PM DINNER	Modesto	Almond Board of California Stanislaus County Farm advisor DuPont	Bob Curtis Roger Duncan John Jenkins	Almond Board R&D program Rootstock and pruning trials Carob Moth and Navel Orange Worm Management
14-Jun	Saturday	All Day	Fresno	Strmiska Crop Consulting	Caroline Kay & Mike Strmiska	Pest and Disease management in California
15-Jun	Sunday					
16-Jun	Monday	AM PM	Parlier Fresno	Kearny Ag Centre Crop Vitality Specialists	Themis Michailides David Dungy & Faith Potter	Plant pathology, almond diseases & aflatoxins KTS fertiliser and Processing Plant
17-Jun	Tuesday	AM	Fowler	Burchells	John Slaughter & Kaylan Roberts	Almond breeding
18-Jun	Wednesday	AM PM	Bakersfield	Paramount Farms Paramount Farms	Brian Ezell Rob Baker	Lost Hills Processing Facility Orchard Tours
19-Jun	Thursday	AM PM	Bakersfield	Paramount Farms Ag Wise (Grower)	Rob Baker Ed Kuykendall	Research Facilities Harvest yield predicting
20-Jun	Friday					
21-Jun	Saturday					
22-Jun	Sunday					