



PRESS RELEASE

Largest dried grape vineyard in Australia under new management

Golden Dried Fruits (GDF) has completed the signing of a 25 year lease with Arrow Funds Management for their 750 hectare Advinco Farm in Nangiloc Victoria. The lease commences on July 1 and will make GDF the largest grower of dried grapes in Australia.

GDF is owned by the 100% Australian family owned food business, Scalzo Food Industries, which also owns dried grape processor Australian Premium Dried Fruits. The group is already the largest fully integrated dried fruit business in Australia, with other owned or contracted vineyards making up the existing supply. The addition of the Advinco farm secures the four largest dried fruit properties in the country to the group, which will see production more than double in the next three years.

The new farm addition is opposite GDF, so existing experienced GDF Vineyard Manager Shannon Sharp, will take on total responsibility for both farms with a combined 950 hectares now under the GDF banner.

Scalzo Foods CEO & Managing Director Michael Scalzo said “securing the lease is a hugely exciting moment for our dried fruit business. Managing the property always made sense geographically, being next door to GDF. There are some significant challenges in the short term to bring the property back from its very poor condition, but we are committed to making it the show piece it once was under its original owners. The farm is producing extremely low volumes compared to a typical dried grape vineyard, which is not sustainable. We hope that our experience and commitment, plus some help from Mother Nature will see the property become a valuable contributor to the industry once again in coming years.”

APDF also has supply contracts in place with over 60 independent growers farming traditional dried fruit properties of 10-30 hectares, contributing 3000-4000 tonnes to their annual intake.

APDF CEO Craig Greenwood said “the company now has a great mix of corporate and family owned and run farms in its supply base. It is very important we do not underestimate the need for both to maintain relevance in the global dried grape industry. Corporate farms bring much needed scale, while the family run farms maintain the great tradition the industry has, along with quality and innovation that you sometimes don’t achieve at the corporate farm level. We see a great need for both forms of supply, which are both sustainable and profitable when managed well. We are seeing great results from growers who have adopted mechanised practices and new varieties”.

“Australian dried grapes enjoy a reputation globally as a premium product, although global supply and price dynamics remain ever present. It’s important that our farming and processing goals include a relentless drive toward greater efficiencies and lower costs to ensure we can remain competitive. This model offers a sustainable and exciting future for our business and the dried grape industry.”

Since acquiring APDF in April 2016, Scalzo Food Industries has invested significantly at both the farming and processing level, creating a fully integrated dried grape business that now competes on a global scale.

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