

Grower Story

Quality & Yield in Lemons

Grower: Jeff Skilton

Location: Burnett, QLD

Quality & Yield Gains

"This years lemon crop has been our best yet," says Jeff Skilton "and by the look so far, the next crop is going to be even better".

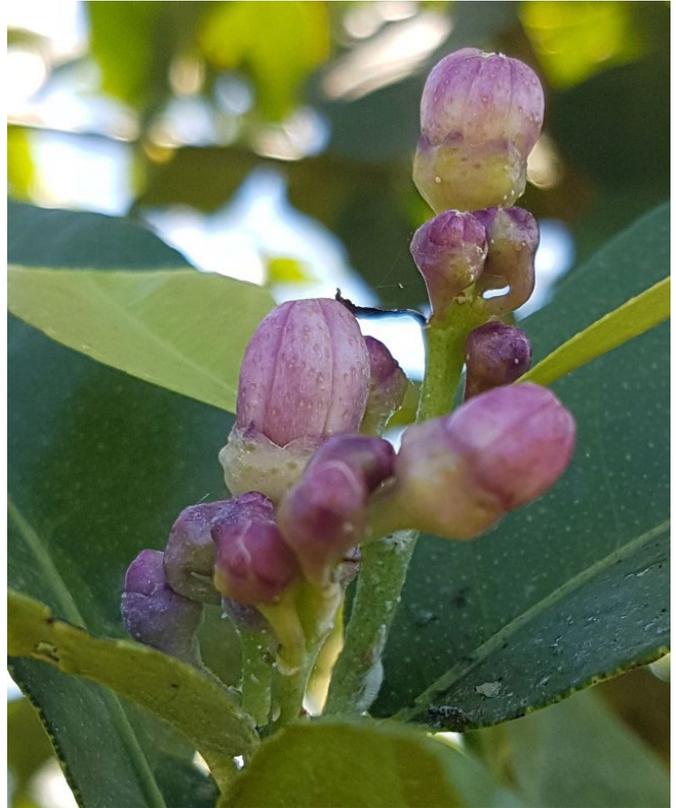
Jeff Skilton (of Skilton Farms) has been farming in Burnett, QLD, for over 20 years. Last season he decided to implement the Metagen Bio-Mineral program in his lemons, which includes Digester biological inputs. Jeff treated everything, understanding the importance of soil health in citrus.

"It was recommend to me and I wanted to see what was possible. The gains in both yield and quality have been quite unexpected," says Jeff.

"The lemons responded well. We had good cropping, quality and good size.

"I couldn't be happier with the great first grade pack outs. We went from 50-60% to over 70% achieving first grade.

After picking the soil inoculants were reapplied this season and Jeff is already seeing positive indications in the upcoming crop. With improved profitability, Jeff has plans to expand the orchard by 50% in the near future.



Prolific Flowering

"The flowering we have had this season has been incredible. Last seasons pick was really good and now this next crop is already showing to be even better."

"We have a seedless variety of lemons and they have been flowering since March and are continuing right through solidly. The older lemons started flowering a few months ago and have had really solid fruit set. "

This early flowering is critical to ensure harvesting when there is high market demand.

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Biological Efficiency

The program incorporates biological efficiency with advanced mineral balancing; using trace element adjustments in specific ratios with Digestor biology and activator.

Some of the chemistry benefits are increased boron efficiency and increased availability of calcium. This results in stronger cell walls which in turn is giving increased resistance to disease, better shelf life and superior skin quality.

“You have to have a whole approach and do things from many angles.” says Jeff.

“The healthier the tree the better the disease resistance. And you have to have the pests and bugs under control too.”

Pest monitoring plays an important role allowing us to have an eye on pests, disease and nutrition requirements in an integrated approach.



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Plant Health Gains Across Diverse Tree Crops

It is not just lemons where the gains are being seen. In other citrus and tree crops the Metagen Bio-Mineral Program is bringing important gains in fruit quality and disease management.

In mandarins and other citrus we are seeing strengthening in the rind and a reduction of post harvest breakdown. There are improvements in skin texture and a reduction in albedo breakdown.

The links between correct biological balancing and improved plant health are commonly seen. The integrated approach at Skilton Farms all contributes to having no black spot in their lemons this past year.

Biological Inputs for Citrus Trees

SOIL

 Metagen Digestor + Activator

FOLIAR

 Metagen Mineral Metabolt Foliars

 Metagen Setbest ATP Energy

(* Metagen Pty Ltd took over Petrik, as reflected in this article)