

A History of Dried Grapes



Late 1880s

Two Canadian brothers, George and William Chaffey, recognized the potential to irrigate arid land around the Murray River.

1893

The Chaffey brothers worked closely with Federal and State government authorities. By 1893, they had 8,000 acres under irrigation, supplying around 3,500 pioneer fruit growers, growing largely vine and citrus crops. However in those days transporting fruit, firstly by river to Echuca and then by rail to Melbourne took several days and fresh produce would often spoil along the way. When a promised rail link to Mildura did not eventuate, growers began drying their grapes for freighting to Melbourne and other markets.

1895

The Mildura Raisin Trust and the Renmark Raisin Trust were formed and operated independently of each other, but shared the same objectives of protecting growers by regulating prices, setting standard terms and conditions of sale and promoting exports.

1907

The Mildura Raisin Trust and the Renmark Raisin Trust joined to become the Australian Dried Fruits Association (ADFA). From its inception, the ADFA was established by dried fruit growers to protect their interests.

1923

The Association underwent a crisis when returns to growers crashed to very low levels, largely as a result of additional production flowing from the WWI soldier settlement schemes.

A subsequent re-structure led to increased focus on export and on meeting local grower requirements for profitable returns.

ADFA Today

The ADFA is an active and effective grower based organisation that is committed to seeking profitable returns to growers. It represents growers' interests to all outside parties including government and provides a forum for discussion and decision making on all matters relating to the conduct and management of the Australian dried fruits industry.

The dried grape industry currently has about 1,000 growers, many of whom are members of the ADFA. Australia's largest processor/marketer, Sunbeam Foods is a member of ADFA and is represented on the ADFA Board of Management.

ADFA

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Australian Dried Fruits Association

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