

Citrus Growers Fund

Management Plan 2024-25 to 2028-29

Primary Industry Funding Schemes (Citrus Growers Fund) regulations 2017.



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Enquiries

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https://pir.sa.gov.au/primary_industry/horticulture/citrus_growers_fund

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Introduction

The [Primary Industry Funding Schemes Act 1998](#) (the Act) was established to provide South Australian primary industries with a legislative instrument to raise funds within their sector to fund activities that support the sector.

Section 4 of the Act allows the Governor to make regulations to establish a fund for a particular primary industry sector.

The Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development (the Minister) is the Administrator for all the funds, which ensures appropriate accountability for the application of funds for the benefit of those industries. Department of Primary Industries and Regions (PIRSA) manages the operations of the funds for the Minister. The Minister is required to report annually to Parliament on the operation of each fund and its accounts.

The Citrus Growers Fund (the fund) is established by the [Primary Industry Funding Schemes \(Citrus Growers Fund\) Regulations 2017](#) (the Regulations), which came into effect on 19 January 2018.

Contributions are payable at the rate prescribed in the Regulations, which is \$1.00 per tonne of citrus fruit. Contributions are payable by the citrus grower and are collected by the processor or packer as a deduction from the amount payable to the grower. Packers and processors are required to pay the contribution where they are also the grower. Growers who sell their citrus fruit direct are required to pay the contribution on their own behalf. Contributions are to be remitted by the close of each quarter.

Contributors may seek a refund of their contributions. If a refund is paid to a contributor, they are deemed to be *'in default'* and not entitled to receive direct benefits or services funded by payments from the fund.

Payments are made from the fund for purposes defined in Regulation 7.

This management plan is required by the Act and is the responsibility of the Minister as the person administering the fund. This management plan update has been developed in consultation with the South Australian citrus industry via Citrus SA. It covers a five-year period and will be revised by the Minister annually in consultation with industry members. The Minister may also update this plan at any time.

Estimate of contributions to the fund

The Regulations require growers/producers of citrus to contribute to the fund.

The contribution rate for this fund is set in Regulation 5(1)(a) and is \$1.00 per tonne of citrus.

The estimated contribution income for the most recent and the next five financial years is provided in Table 1 (below). Income estimates have been forecast based on the annual value of contributions to the fund over the previous six years, with the forecasted estimate for the current year consistent with industry forecasts.

Previously, income estimates were based on production estimates for the current season with the average annual contribution representing the projected contribution value for subsequent years.

Citrus Table 1 – Contribution Rates and Estimated Income					
	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
Grower contribution rate per tonne (\$)	\$1.00	\$1.00	\$1.00	\$1.00	\$1.00
Estimated Production (tonne)	191,000	192,000	192,000	197,000	197,000
Estimated income (\$)	\$191,000	\$192,000	\$192,000	\$197,000	\$197,000

Collection agents are required to remit contributions to PIRSA on a quarterly basis.

Collection agents that only deal in small quantities may seek the approval of the Minister to transfer money less frequently.

Investment of the fund

PIRSA administers the financial operations of the fund on behalf of the Minister in accordance with the Regulations and the [Public Finance and Audit Act 1987](#).

Contributions are invested in an interest-bearing account in accordance with the Department of Treasury and Finance. Interest paid on monies held is treated as income to the fund consistent with the Regulations.

Purposes of the fund

Payments from the fund must be made in accordance with Regulation section 7:

7-Application of Fund

The Fund may be applied by the Minister for any of the following purposes:

- (a) payments to a body that, in the opinion of the Minister, represents citrus growers for 1 or more of the following purposes:
 - (i) the reasonable operating and management expenses of the body;
 - (ii) fees for affiliation of the body with regional, State or national citrus or horticulture industry bodies;
 - (iii) promoting the South Australian citrus industry, including through industry field days, conferences and other events;
 - (iv) the collection and dissemination to citrus growers of information relevant to the citrus industry;
 - (v) representation of citrus growers, or participation of the body, in regional, state or national citrus or horticulture industry forums;
 - (vi) programs designed to encourage communication and cooperation between citrus growers, citrus packers, citrus processors and persons marketing citrus fruit or citrus fruit products;

- (vii) other purposes of the body;
- (b) payments for other purposes for the benefit of citrus growers;
- (c) payment of the expenses of administering the Fund;
- (d) repayment of contributions to the Fund under regulation 6.

Funding guidelines

Eligible organisations

An applicant organisation may be considered to be eligible to receive a payment from the fund if that organisation is '*a body that, in the opinion of the Minister, represents (South Australian) citrus growers*' (Regulation 7(1)(a)).

Application process

Eligible organisations are invited to submit applications to the Minister in May each year. Under extenuating circumstances, the Minister may consider applications for funds at other times.

Eligible organisations are encouraged to liaise with the Responsible Officer in the development of any application.

The application should be in the form of a letter to the Minister which:

- confirms the organisation represents South Australian citrus growers
- requests a nominated payment from the fund
- attaches an operational plan, which includes for each activity:
 - a brief description of the activity and its intended outcome
 - alignment to a purpose outlined in Regulation 7(a)
 - the budgeted cost.

The proposed activities in the operational plan should so far as possible, align with the national citrus strategic objectives, and may extend over multiple years. Collaborative projects are encouraged. Payments from the fund may be used as industry co-contribution for other grant programs.

To be eligible for consideration, applicants must ensure that they have completed all reporting requirements of any previous agreement with the Minister.

Application approval

The Minister will assess applications in line with the Regulations and this management plan. This will include checking that the proposed activities comply with Regulation 7, verifying that the requested amount is within the Expenditure Authority for the Fund, alignment with industry priorities and best return on investment for Fund contributors. An applicant may be asked for additional information if required.

Approval for payment from the fund to the eligible organisation is deemed to be an agreement with the Minister that the eligible organisation will undertake the activities outlined in the operational plan and comply with any requirements in the Regulations and this management plan.

The successful applicant will be required to sign and return an acknowledgement of these conditions, provided with the letter of approval from the Minister, prior to payment being made.

Once approved the approved operational plan should be posted on the fund recipient's website, so that it is publicly available for contributors to view.

Amount Available for Payment

To ensure prudent management of the fund, industry agreed at the 2019 Citrus Growers Fund Public Meeting to always retain a minimum balance of \$100,000 to ensure appropriate moneys are available for refund requests.

The amount available for payment under Regulation 7 in any financial year will not exceed the available balance of the fund at the time, minus

- minimum balance of \$100,000
- annual allowance for refunds under Regulation 7(d)
- annual allowance for audit and administrative costs under Regulation 7(c)

Payments terms

Payments from the fund to the eligible organisation may be made in accordance with the schedule in Table 2. The amount of any payment will not exceed the available balance of the fund at the time (estimates in Table 1), minus an amount which is considered sufficient to cover audit and administrative costs plus an allowance for any refunds to contributors.

Table 2 – Payment Terms	
July	January
50%	50%

Reporting requirements

The fund recipient is to provide an annual report at the end of the financial year. The annual report should be aligned to the approved operational plan and should articulate activities undertaken and outcomes achieved. The annual report should also include a statement of acquittal to demonstrate that all moneys provided to the fund recipient were expended and/or committed. The report should also explain any deviations from the original submission, should this occur.

In addition to the above reports, the applicant organisation may be required to provide the following information under Regulation 9(1):

- a) a copy of the financial statements of the organisation and
- b) a copy of the annual report of the organisation and
- c) a copy of the business plan of the organisation and
- d) any other information reasonably required for the purposes of the fund.

Fund administration

Refunds

A citrus grower may, within a month following a financial year (July), make a claim for a refund in respect of contributions paid by the grower in the previous financial year (Regulation 6).

A person claiming a refund is declared to be '*in default*' of the Fund and is not entitled to receive direct benefits or services funded by payments from the Fund (Regulation 7).

In accordance with Regulation 8, a citrus grower that has been refunded, or has not paid all contributions payable to the Fund at any time in the preceding two financial years is deemed to be '*in default*'. They are then not entitled to receive benefits or services directly funded by payments from the Fund. The Minister may provide the fund recipient with information identifying citrus growers in default (Regulation 9(2)).

Changing the contribution rate

The contribution rate is established in the Regulations.

A change to the contribution rate may be initiated by the Minister or by industry but can only be made following consultation with the industry.

Acceptable evidence of support for a variation to the contribution rate includes results of any contributor survey held for the purpose and any other consultation conducted with industry. The evidence must demonstrate a genuine attempt to engage with the majority of contributors.

The new contribution rate will be implemented at the start of the financial year or another appropriate point in the production cycle. Sufficient notice will be provided to the industry of the new rate.

Updating the management plan

Section 9 of the Act requires that this management plan is updated annually; that industry is consulted when preparing the management plan; that the revised plan is presented at a public meeting at least once per year; that it is available for public inspection; and that it may be updated at any time.

The updated management plan will be presented at a public meeting, which will be advertised and facilitated by PIRSA, and can be attended by all fund contributors. The management plan will then be posted on the PIRSA website to meet the requirements of section 9 (7) of the Act, in a manner permitted by section 8(3) of the [Legislation Interpretation Act 2021](#), which provides for the 'inclusion of digital material'.

Revising the management plan (annual update routine)

Timing (estimate)	Activity
October/December	PIRSA update management plan for next financial year
January/ February	Consultation on revised management plan
February/March	Minister approves management plan
March/April	Advertise and hold public meeting to present management plan