

2007 Blueberry Harvest Information Sheet

2008 Blueberry Harvest Information Sheet

Ridley and Mieke Bell and staff welcome you to Mountain Blue Orchards Pty Ltd.

[Click here to download the latest Application for Employment form. \(Word Document 29.5Kb\)](#)

The following is a brief summary of our orientation session which you will need to be instructed in before you can harvest fruit at Mountain Blue Orchards (MBO).

Please retain these sheets for reference and read carefully prior to reporting for work on your first day, as it contains the list of items that you will need to bring with you.

THE PICKING SEASON

The commencement of the blueberry harvest commences each year in small amounts during June. If weather conditions are suitable, it begins seriously in July, when additional harvest crew members are required.

Preference is given to people who show themselves to be available and reliable, and who are available for the complete season. The season normally extends from July until December.

FIELD SUPERVISORS

Our harvest supervisors during the picking season are David Folwell and Paul Kilroy. They will be responsible for all aspects of picking, including:

- Allocation of rows,
- Fruit quality,
- Weighing and recording tallies,
- Ensuring that rows are picked according to instructions,
- Transporting fruit to the packing shed, and
- Start and finish times.

David and Paul are there to support pickers and to make your time at Mountain Blue enjoyable and productive. If you have any queries about harvest procedures please do not hesitate to ask.

STARTING AND FINISHING TIMES

Because blueberries cannot be picked when they are very wet from either rain or heavy dew, starting times may vary. Generally, picking will commence between 7.00 and 8.00 am. However, if the weather appears doubtful, please phone for confirmation. The office number is (02) 6624 8258. If that number is unattended you may try Ridley's mobile on 0428 789 533

Finishing times will vary depending on the amount of fruit to be picked on the day. Pickers' family commitments can be accommodated.

ABSENCE FROM WORK

We would appreciate it if you would advise a harvest supervisor the day before any planned absence so that we can organize a replacement for you. Unexpected absences should be advised by phone on the day.

FOR OUR RECORDS

The following details must be provided prior to commencement of work

- Bank account details (prefer with a bank statement)
- Tax declaration form completed
- Casual employment details form completed and signed

BASIS OF PAYMENT

- All employment is on a casual basis and will be paid by a piece rate based on the number of kilograms picked.
- We expect a minimum number of kilograms of fruit to be harvested by you in an average day.
- You will be advised daily of the current picking rate (\$/kg) and any changes or extra loading to the rate for a particular variety.
- Your pay will be made electronically on Wednesday.
- Pay week is from Wednesday to Tuesday.

Any queries regarding kilogram count or pay should be addressed to the harvest supervisors, or to Ridley.

WHAT TO BRING

- Bring your own food and drinks.
- Please bring plenty of water. During the picking season it can be particularly hot in the open sun. It is therefore essential for pickers to drink plenty of water to avoid dehydration. It is possible to refill your water bottles at the farm
- Pickers must provide their own belts for attaching picking "buckets".

WHAT TO WEAR

- Pickers must wear covered footwear. Thongs and bare feet are not acceptable.
- Wear suitable clothing to protect you from the sun, such as long sleeved shirts and trousers. A tight weave of material also reduces exposure to solar rays. Loose fitting clothes are cooler, (but can be dangerous near plant or machinery with moving parts). A collar helps to protect the neck from solar rays.
- Wear a hat with a broad brim or a flap at the back to protect the neck.
- Wear sunglasses that comply with Australian Standards AS 1067

WHAT MUST NOT BE WORN

For health and legal reasons, there are restrictions on the wearing of jewellery and gloves in the field.

- Jewellery - the only items of jewellery permissible are a watch and a plain (no stones) ring. No other jewellery is permitted. This includes ear-rings, necklaces, rings with stones and other piercings.
- Gloves – gloves are not to be worn by pickers. This includes cotton gloves with the "fingers" removed.

SUNSCREENS

- Use a minimum 15+ broad spectrum sunscreen.
- Apply sunscreen to dry skin 20 minutes before going outside.
- Re-apply sunscreen every 2 hours.
- Apply zinc screen to lips and nose for extra protection.
- Mountain Blue Orchards can supply a 30+ sunscreen

See a doctor or chemist for further information about protection from the sun.

"Working In The Sun – Skin Cancer" (Extract from 'Tree Fruit Health and Safety Guide'):

- People working in the outdoors should take care to limit their exposure to the sun.
- Skin cancer can be any lump, bump or spot that doesn't go away.
- Check your skin, especially those parts most often exposed to the sun.
- Report any skin changes to your doctor.

HYGIENE

- Proper standards of hygiene are to be observed at all times as we are handling raw food.
- Do not come to work if you are sick or have cuts on your hands.
- Mountain Blue has a strict hand-washing procedure that must be adhered to by pickers before they start work.
- Hands must be washed as demonstrated after going to the toilet, after using facial tissues etc. and before re-entering the field after meal breaks.

OTHER IMPORTANT POINTS

- The speed limit around the farm is 20 km/hr.

- Park as directed by the harvest supervisors.
- Muster outside the packing shed for briefing and directions prior to commencing work.
- Do not leave valuables in your bags or in vehicles.
- In the unlikely event of a fire or other emergency, the staff "mustering area" is in the carpark near the packing shed.
- No pets

BEHAVIOUR THAT WILL LEAD TO INSTANT DISMISSAL

- Failure to follow the reasonable instructions of the harvest supervisors, or other members of management.
- Physically or verbally abusing any employee of the company.
- Stealing from the company, any other employee or our neighbours.
- Smoking in the picking rows, or at the sorting / weighing area.
- Operating machinery or equipment in a manner dangerous to the operator or to others.
- Tampering or interfering with irrigation, irrigation monitoring systems, weather stations, insect traps and other pest monitoring systems.