



By Matthew Jones

Thursday 27th May 2021, 0:24 GMT

APAL Forum moves to July

Apple and pear event rescheduled after Covid-19 outbreak in Victoria



Apple and Pear Australia (APAL) has rescheduled its annual forum to mid-July.

The move comes in response to unfolding Covid-19 developments in Victoria, which could see the state re-enter a temporary lockdown.

The APAL Forum 2021 was scheduled to take place from 31 May to 1 June. It will now be held on 19-20 July (2021), with welcome drinks on 18 July.

"We are genuinely excited by the talent, topics, and the opportunity to reconnect, but the safety of our attendees is our first priority," said APAL chief executive Phil Turnbull. "We have made the decision to postpone the forum and look forward to it taking place in July.

"Many of our speakers have already confirmed they can take part in the forum on the new dates, and we hope growers and industry can too."

The forum will look to the future of our industry, covering consumer and retail insights, managed varieties, cutting-edge technology and new research in pest control and pollination under nets.

Confirmed speakers include social commentator and business analysts Bernard Salt, who will deliver the forum's opening address looking at unfolding trends impacting all aspects of Australian society.

A session on the retail landscape for apples and pears will also take place on the forum's opening day, with speakers to include James Stewart of KPMG and Tristan Kitchener of Kitchener Partners.

The conversation then turns to the growing influence managed varieties are playing in the industry, with insights to be provided by Rowan Little of Montague and Andrew Hooke of APAL.

Day two of the forum examines a number of production and post-harvest topics, with sessions themed around 'Tech, automation, robots and drones' and 'Protecting your orchard from unwelcome visitors'.

More updates to the programme will be announced over the coming weeks.

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