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60 people to attend Hazelnut Field Day

Ten years of research and real life industry practice will culminate at a Hazelnut Field Day conducted by Charles Sturt University and Hazelnut Growers of Australia Ltd tomorrow, with 60 people registered to attend.

Current hazelnut growers and those interested in entering the growing industry will converge on Orange at the Orange Agricultural Institute for information on recent research on suitable varieties, methods of production, marketing and profitability of the crop.

"The field days will give people the opportunity to see our research and the outcomes being put into practice by commercial growers," Charles Sturt University Senior Lecturer and hazelnut researcher Basil Baldwin said.

Mr Baldwin has coordinated the event which has stemmed from his ten years of hazelnut research funded by the Rural Industry Research and Development Corporation.

His research has shown that by growing appropriate hazelnut varieties on sites with proven ideal climates hazelnuts have the potential to grow in Australia as well as they do in other key production regions of the world, a knowledge he is hoping to share with other keen growers of the valuable nut.

The Hazelnut Field Day will combine inspection of research sites with visits to commercial hazelnut farms including Anyngo, the well established orchard of Lyn and Colin McRae, whose hazelnuts are grown and processed for specialist markets in the Blue Mountains and Sydney.

A second field day will be conducted in Myrtleford, Victoria on Saturday 25 February 2006.

Those who have missed out on the Orange day and are interested in attending Myrtleford can contact Karilyn Gilchrist at Charles Sturt University on (02) 6365 7889 or email kgilchrist@csu.edu.au.

MEDIA NOTE: The day begins at 10am at Orange Agricultural Institute, with an introductory talk on hazelnuts and market opportunities. Between 10-10.30am would be an ideal time for camera footage and possible interview with the researchers.