

Exporter Cuts Container Rejections and Recall Time

A citrus and table grape grower-packer cut rejected export containers from three a season to one, and brought mock recall time down from 6 hours to 15 minutes, after adopting Pak-Bot.

At a glance	Before Pak-Bot	After one season
Export containers rejected per season	3	1
Time to run a mock recall	About 6 hours	About 15 minutes
Retailer audit preparation	About 40 hours	About 8 hours
Office time on grower pack-out queries (hrs/week in season)	15	3

The client and the challenge

The client grows and packs citrus and table grapes, and also packs fruit for about 20 outside growers. Most volume is exported by sea container to Asia, with the rest sold to domestic retailers.

The business had good quality and traceability records in Producepak, but turning them into answers took too long:

- **Problem pallets reached the container.** QC results sat in the inspection module while loading crews worked from the shipping list. A pallet that had failed inspection could still be loaded. Each rejected container cost around AU\$60,000 in fruit, freight and claims, and the business lost three in a season.
- **Recalls and audits were slow.** A mock recall meant pulling lot, packing and dispatch records together by hand, about 6 hours each time. Preparing for a retailer audit took about a week of one person's time.
- **Growers wanted answers now.** Outside growers phoned or emailed daily asking how their fruit had packed out. In peak season this took about 15 hours a week of office time.
- **Supplier claims went unmade.** Out-of-spec fruit from outside growers was often packed without a claim, because the inspection evidence was hard to find later.

The solution: Pak-Bot inside Producepak

Pak-Bot was rolled out to the quality team, the dispatch supervisor and the office, with quality alerts switched on for every export program.

1. **Quality checked at the loading dock.** Before sealing a container, the supervisor asks "Show me the QC results and photos for the pallets on container 4". Any failed or uninspected pallet is flagged before it ships.
2. **Instant corrective action alerts.** When an inspection fails, Pak-Bot alerts the quality manager and dispatch at once, with the photos, so the pallet is held.
3. **Recalls in minutes.** Staff type a lot number and see the grower, pack date, QC scores and every customer and pallet that received fruit from it, including pallets still in transit.
4. **Self-serve answers for growers' questions.** The office asks "Pack-out summary for grower 12 this week" and emails the result to the grower straight from the chat.
5. **Evidence for supplier claims.** Inspection data and photos are pulled up by grower and delivery, so out-of-spec fruit can be claimed back with proof.

Results

Avoiding two rejected containers paid for the change many times over; the time savings came on top.

Benefit	How it was estimated	Annual value
Fewer rejected containers	2 fewer rejections × about AU\$60,000 each	\$120,000
Supplier claims recovered	Out-of-spec deliveries claimed back with inspection evidence	\$35,000
Grower query time saved	12 hrs/week × 26 peak weeks × AU\$50/hr	\$15,600
Faster audits and mock recalls	2 audits × 32 hrs + 4 mock recalls × 5.75 hrs = 87 hrs × AU\$50/hr	\$4,350
Total		\$174,950

The business also passed its retailer audits with a live recall demonstration, and growers now receive pack-out summaries the same week instead of waiting for a phone call back.

Why it worked

- **Quality and dispatch share one view.** Pak-Bot links each pallet's inspection history to the container it is loaded on.
- **Traceability on demand.** Lot, grower, QC and customer records come back in one answer, not a manual report.
- **Anyone can ask.** Supervisors and office staff use plain English, so answers no longer depend on one person who knows the reports.

To see what Pak-Bot could do for your export business, talk to your Producepak solution consultant.

Sources

- [Pak-Bot chatbot for fresh produce, Farmsoft.com](#)
- [Pak-Bot chatbot for fruit and vegetable packers, Producepak.com](#)
- Producepak, ProducepakQI and Pak-Bot brochures supplied by Producepak