Purpose

To terminate the operation of the present dried vine fruits stabilization scheme, and to return to growers their contributions with interest earned on their investment.

Background

The dried vine fruits stabilization scheme currently applies to sultanas produced in 1978, 1979 and 1980 utilized above average returns to growers in prosperous years to create a fund to compensate them in years when returns were below average.

In the 1978 season growers contributed $1.2 million to the fund and further significant payments by growers to the fund for the 1979 and 1980 seasons are expected. Refunds to growers at the end of the stabilization term could probably not be made before well into 1982. This would deny growers the use of substantial moneys.

The Government therefore accepted a request from the industry to terminate the scheme.

Main Provisions

The Act is to come into operation on the day it receives Royal Assent (clause 2).

Clause 3 repeals the Acts which established the stabilization scheme, imposed the stabilization levy and provided for collection of the levy. Clause 5 provides that no levy is payable for 1979 and 1980.

The channel through which moneys in the stabilization fund are to be distributed to growers is the Dried Fruits Stabilization Committee Ltd., defined in clause 4 as the "Company".
Clause 6 provides for the realization of all investments of stabilization moneys after 1 October 1981. Payment to growers will be in proportion to their respective levy contributions. The trust account is to be closed on 30 June 1982 and any residue is to be paid into Consolidated Revenue, though if the Minister is subsequently satisfied that a person is entitled to any such money, it is to be paid to him.

Clause 8 provides that arrangements may be made with the Company to make payments to growers, with the Audit Act 1901 not applying to such moneys in the hands of the Company.

The Company is allowed to make arrangements with packers of sultanas to make a payment to a grower as agent of the Company. The Audit Act 1901 will not apply to such moneys in the hands of a packer (clause 9).

For further information, if required, contact:

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