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## Preserving a century of horticultural history

Historic materials dating back to the early days of the dried fruits industry in Australia will soon be preserved for future generations.

Dried Fruits Australia (DFA) was awarded a \$7,860 local history grant from the Public Record Office Victoria to undertake the conservation project.

DFA chief executive officer Anne Mansell said the organisation had collected valuable industry memorabilia over the past century.

“The dried grape industry has a long and memorable history, established in the Mildura region by the Chaffey brothers in the 1890s,” Ms Mansell said.

“Since Dried Fruits Australia began representing the interests of growers more than 110 years ago, it has accumulated a vast array of materials including photographs and video footage, newspaper clippings, meeting documentation and industry reports.

“They are all reflective of this once-dominant industry and of the people who have provided leadership and vision.”

Ms Mansell said the project would ensure the materials were maintained and shared by the industry and community.

“Most dried grapes are still grown around Mildura, and local families will be interested to learn how their forebears helped to shape the region where they live,” she said.

“The industry will also be able to reflect on its history and the important contribution it has made to Mildura and the Australian economy.”

DFA will work with the University of Melbourne Grimwade Centre for Cultural Materials Conservation and Mildura Rural City Council Library Services over the next year to conserve the materials.

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### Media contact

Lauren Roden, Communications Officer

T: 0438 262 242

E: [lroden@driedfruitsaustralia.org.au](mailto:lroden@driedfruitsaustralia.org.au)