

# Fruit & Vegetable news



GROWING THE RIGHT CRISPING POTATO  
*is what it's all about for one Bundaberg producer*

QUEENSLAND HORTICULTURE SETS VISION FOR THE FUTURE OF THE INDUSTRY |  
QUEENSLAND AVOCADO GROWERS NAMED SYNGENTA GROWER OF THE YEAR |  
DROUGHT GRANTS AND LOANS NOW AVAILABLE FOR PRIMARY PRODUCERS |  
HITTING SUSTAINABILITY GOALS DRIVES HORT360 THROUGH THE NEXT THREE YEARS



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Growcom was joined last month by Director-General of the Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries Bob Gee, Growcom Chair Belinda Frentz, and Chair, Future Fields Advisory Committee Angus Ferrier, to unveil the 10-year roadmap for the Queensland fresh produce sector, Future Fields.

### 14. Queensland avocado growers named Syngenta Grower of the Year

Second generation avocado growers Annaleise and Lachlan Donovan have been recognised for their achievements in the Australian horticulture industry by receiving the Syngenta Grower of the Year Award.

### 27. Drought grants and loans now available for primary producers

Drought grants and loans are now available for eligible primary producers to help them prepare for or assist with the carry-on finances of their enterprise during drought.

### 28. Hitting sustainability goals drives Hort360 through the next three years

With a proactive goal to boost sustainability, Growcom's Hort360 South-East Queensland (Hort360 SEQ) water quality program is set to be refunded through the Queensland Government's Department of Environment and Science with a \$1.1 million investment over the next three years.



## welcome

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Chief Executive Officer  
**Rachel Chambers**

Hello and welcome to the July edition of Growcom's Fruit & Vegetable News magazine.

First off, I would like to say how immensely grateful I am to the Growcom Board for entrusting me with their vision. The responsibility Growcom has to advocate for, and improve outcomes on behalf of its members, is one I don't take lightly.

As Chief Executive Officer I look forward to building on Growcom's strong advocacy platforms and shaping an organisation where members are the foundation on which all our knowledge, understanding and resulting actions are based.

By way of introduction, I come to Growcom after a short-term contract with the Local Government Association Queensland (LGAQ) as the Lead Transport & Logistics. Prior to this I served as the Mayor of the North Burnett for six years. I have a background working across multiple industries including economic development, education, health, and small business.

Personally, and professionally, I very much look forward to getting to further know and understand the Queensland horticultural industry. In order to accurately represent the diversity of the sector, I will be an active Chief Executive Officer right across Queensland, because as we all know, there are not too many farms in Brisbane on George Street.

What is near George Street however are politicians. The familiar saying, 'It takes one to know one' rings true in this case, as after spending the last six years as a politician I have learnt the art of being able to navigate, communicate and negotiate with government.

In my discussions with industry, I will be seeking to understand the issues through grower's eyes and in my dealings with government I will strongly represent the interests of the Queensland horticulture sector with data driven arguments and eloquent debate.

The horticulture sector will need unity, strength, leadership, and innovation to overcome the current challenges being thrown its way.

Growcom has been a partner in horticulture for many years, and I will ensure we continue to have the industry's back into the future as we ride out this next chapter together.

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*is what it's all about for one Bundaberg producer*







## policy & advocacy

Manager, Policy & Advocacy  
**Richard Shannon**

# QUEENSLAND HORTICULTURE SETS VISION FOR THE FUTURE OF THE INDUSTRY

Growcom was joined last month by Director-General of the Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries Bob Gee, Growcom Chair Belinda Frentz, and Chair, Future Fields Advisory Committee Angus Ferrier, to unveil the 10-year roadmap for the Queensland fresh produce sector, Future Fields.

This collaborative project was led by Growcom on behalf of the Queensland fresh produce sector and supply chain and was proudly supported and funded by the Queensland Government.

The Queensland horticulture sector is the lifeblood of many rural communities, creating over \$3 billion in value at the farm gate last year. The industry not only feeds the nation but through direct on-farm employment puts food on the table for up to 25,000 Queensland workers and their families.

Recently, COVID-19 has raised challenges and caused significant disruption to our sector, as have natural disasters and pest and disease incursions of national significance. We can expect these types of disruptions to continue, but they will also bring with them new opportunities. In addition, the pace of technological change will only continue to increase and drive new ways of doing things.

For these reasons we must continue to evolve and improve. There is enormous opportunity for those willing and able to anticipate and adapt.

Future Fields is the result of an extensive grassroots engagement and consultation process involving over 300 stakeholders stretching from Mareeba to Stanthorpe. Through this consultation process four fields of focus were chosen in terms of the likely benefit to industry from taking action:

- **Innovate to Access:** Reaching new markets through innovation in food processing, packaging and logistics.
- **Working Smarter:** Building skills to adopt and apply the new technologies that will reduce reliance on low skilled and labour intensive roles.
- **Bio Strong:** Managing pests, diseases and biosecurity risks using data intelligence and collaboration.
- **Coordinated Compliance:** Making it easier for growers to comply with government regulations and meet market driven requirements through digitization and eliminating duplication.

Seizing opportunities in each of these fields will prove instrumental if Queensland is to remain the preeminent state for horticultural production, supply chain innovation and food processing.

Many of the big, intractable challenges we face as an industry are entirely within our power to address.

Accordingly, Future Fields is creating a space for collaboration that would not ordinarily exist and gives all with a stake in our industry the opportunity to contribute and take action to make a real difference.

Growcom welcomes the State Government's enthusiastic support of Future Fields and looks forward to our ongoing, productive relationship with the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries.

Download a copy of the Future Fields plan: [www.futurefields.info](http://www.futurefields.info)



L-R: Chair Future Fields Advisory Committee Angus Ferrier, Growcom Chair Belinda Frentz, and Director-General of the Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries Bob Gee unveil Future Fields at the Hort Connections Conference in Brisbane.

## OUTLOOK: WINTER 2022

The Bureau of Meteorology has released its Winter 2022 Climate Outlook, which has the expected climate and water conditions for the season.

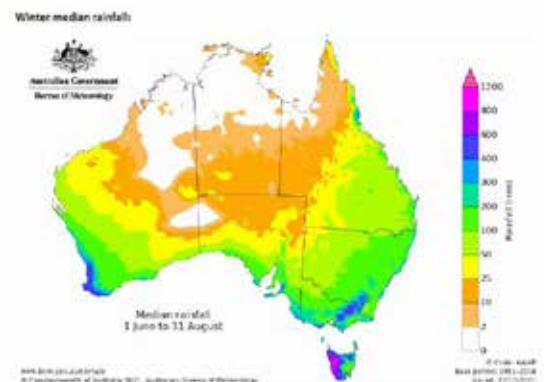
Winter rainfall is likely to be above average for most of central and eastern Australia, but parts of south-western Australia and south-western Tasmania are likely to have below average winter rainfall.

Warmer winter days are likely for tropical northern Australia, the south-west and far south-east Australia, with cooler days likely in most other locations. Almost all of Australia is likely to experience warmer than average nights this winter.

With wet soils and high streamflows in eastern Australia, flood risk remains for south-eastern Australia.

Northern Australia is in its dry season where large areas usually receive on average less than 25mm of rain during June to August. It only takes a small amount of extra rain to be above average at this time of year.

The winter outlooks reflect several climate influences, including a developing negative Indian Ocean Dipole, a slowly declining La Niña in the Pacific Ocean and warmer than average waters around northern Australia.





Queensland Farmers' Federation President  
**Allan Dingle**

## THE PRICE OF THE HUMBLE LETTUCE IS SENDING US A LOUD MESSAGE

Concerns around the rising costs of living have featured strongly in political debate during the Federal election campaign. The humble lettuce became the symbolic centre of political commentary and the idea that it could cost the same as a cup of coffee raised eyebrows across the nation.

We know that fruit and vegetable prices have gone up largely because supply chains have been severely affected by the COVID pandemic, floods, and international conflict which have led to the loss of farm workers and escalating fertiliser, fuel, and transport costs. Farmers have for the most part been absorbing these increasing input costs, with very little additional returns at the farm gate.

Data tells us that fruit and vegetables are costing on average, 6.7 per cent more than this time last year but interestingly takeaway foods only went up by around 0.7 per cent.

However, I would argue that our farmers and our food systems have been facing increasing pressures for some time. Costs such as supply chain regulation, food safety compliance, biosecurity and environmental management, extreme climate impacts and workforce issues are all having an impact at farm gate.

Ironically whilst the COVID pandemic focused our attention on public health and resulted in a high level of response at all levels of government, ensuring sustainable farming and food systems that support healthy, affordable diets for all seems to be something governments struggle to get their head around.

Australians are now eating less than half the recommended daily five serves of vegetables and this has been steadily declining since 2001. Low consumer demand domestically has become a significant problem impacting our farmers and also impacting the economic, health and wellbeing of all Australians.

This problem starts on farm undermining the confidence of growers and having a ripple effect across the fresh food supply chain. The problem directly contributes to regional economies and carries through to Australian families making poor dietary choices based on cost which is impacting our mental and physical wellbeing. Poor diets nationally are contributing to increased obesity and chronic diseases which is in turn putting enormous pressure on our health system at an increasingly alarming cost to us all.

So, the humble head of lettuce is not just a symbol of cost-of-living increases and inflationary pressures it seems but is representative of a much more concerning issue and the fact that we are just not doing enough to make healthy diets affordable in Australia.

Creating an operating environment that supports sustainable farming is an important part of the solution and is critical not only to a strong economic future for agriculture, but vital to the future health of the Australian people.

Failure to respond to the underlying issues that are contributing to rising food costs in this country will in the long run affect us all. Agriculture will be part of the post COVID economic recovery, but as a nation we need to make sure farmers are a valued part of the future health and wellbeing of the Australian people.

Australian food and fresh produce are in demand around the world, it is about time we valued it here at home. The future prosperity and wellbeing of Australians depends upon it.



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## workplace relations

Focus HR Founding Director  
**Naomi Wilson**

### Minimum wage increase

The Fair Work Commission (FWC) in June handed down its 2022 minimum wage review outcome.

Key points from the decision:

- The National Minimum Wage will increase by 5.2%, which amounts to \$40 a week.
- The new National Minimum Wage will be \$812.60 per week or \$21.38 per hour.
- Award minimum wages will increase by 4.6%, which is subject to a minimum increase for award classifications of \$40 per week and based on a 38-hour week for a full-time employee.

In delivering the decision, President Iain Ross stated that, "Given the current strength of the labour market, the adjustments we propose to make will not have a significant adverse effect on the performance and competitiveness of the national economy."

In his address, Mr Ross also spoke about high inflation, low unemployment, and strong economy as grounds for the higher-than-normal increase.

#### Timing

Increases came into effect on **1 July 2022** and must be applied from the first full pay period after this date.

#### Award minimum wage increase

The FWC has announced that minimum award wages will increase by 4.6%, which is subject to a minimum increase for award classifications of \$40 per week and based on a 38-hour week for a full-time employee.

This means minimum award wages:

- above \$869.60 per week, will get a 4.6% increase
- below \$869.60 per week, will get a \$40 increase.

#### Next steps

All businesses should review your rates of pay to ensure compliance with the new minimum rates – even if you already pay above Award rates, have employees on all up hourly rates or salaries, or employees under Agreements, you still have an obligation to ensure compliance with the new minimum rates.

The FWC is currently working to update their pay tools, information, and resources with the new rates. While these rates were not available at the time of publishing, Growcom will ensure members receive these rates via an email alert.

#### Superannuation Guarantee changes

From 1 July, two important super guarantee (SG) changes also came into effect. These are:

- The rate of guarantee increased from 10% to 10.5%
- The \$450 per month eligibility threshold for when superannuation is paid has been removed.

Don't forget that if an employee does not provide you with a choice of super fund, you need to review the Stapled Super Fund information on the ATO website: [www.ato.gov.au/stapledsuperfund](http://www.ato.gov.au/stapledsuperfund)

If you need assistance with your wage compliance checking either under an Award or with your Enterprise/Collective Agreement, Growcom is ready to help. Please contact our Workplace Relations Hotline on 07 3620 3844 or email [wrtteam@growcom.com.au](mailto:wrtteam@growcom.com.au)

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**14 October 2022**  
**Opal Cove Resort, Coffs Harbour**

## REGISTRATIONS OPENING SOON

As part of the National Fair Farms Week (10 – 14 October 2022), a conference will be held at Opal Cove Resort at Coffs Harbour NSW, featuring presentations, panel discussions, and Q&A, by horticulture and WR/WHS experts, followed by awards presentation and a dinner.

- Piece-rate changes
- Labour Access and retention
- Legislative changes
- ESG outlook for Horticulture
- Case Studies on Successful Practices
- Networking with the industry
- Issues and solutions for ethical sourcing in horticulture

More information will be released closer to the date  
visit: [www.fairfarms.com.au](http://www.fairfarms.com.au) or call 07 3620 3844

A photograph showing the lower legs and feet of a person wearing blue denim jeans and brown leather boots. They are standing in a metal pen or stall. Several sheep with thick, woolly coats are visible behind the metal bars. The floor is dirt and covered with some dark spots, possibly droppings. The lighting is warm and natural, suggesting an outdoor or well-lit indoor setting.

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# GROWING THE RIGHT CRISPING POTATO

*is what it's all about for one Bundaberg producer*

Samboy, Thins, Kettle Chips and Natural Chip Company; the snacks that go crunch in your mouth and keep you coming back for more.

Chances are, come spring, when you break open a pack of chips, the potatoes could well be sourced from Baldwin Produce, Bundaberg.

Baldwin Produce, a member of Growcom and Hort360 Certified, is proactive in doing what's best for soil and water, to get the most out of its crops and to boost environmental outcomes for the Great Barrier Reef and its catchments, so that future generations can enjoy this natural wonder.

Baldwin Produce, consisting of Tim and Brenda Baldwin and their son Eric, are proactive in implementing Hort360 certified practices at their own pace, so that there isn't too much added strain on their business.

"It's really a matter of trying to be progressive and get ahead of the game," Tim said.

"You can't refuse it if it's going to be there all the time."

Hort360 Reef Certified practices are just one part of this diversified venture.

## **Diverse crops offer rewards, and bags of chips**

When Fruit and Vegetable News visited Baldwin Produce, the potatoes were starting to flower, and the dam was at capacity with crystal-clear water.

The Baldwins plan to harvest this crop from August through to mid-November.

"We've got fairly sandy soils that suit for crisping potatoes and good irrigation supplies so there are a lot of things that add up for us," Tim said.

"A good crisping potato is probably a potato that grows in a range up to 90mm, doesn't have deep eyes, is round and has a good flesh colour.

"The Australian market [chips] is for white flesh."

In addition to potatoes, it's a diversified operation, with 12,000 macadamia trees planted on 40ha and some sugar cane.

"I don't think it's wise to have all your eggs in one basket," Tim said.

"The macadamia trees are holding up within reason at the moment – they were a hefty capital investment at \$20 a tree plus land prep and irrigation infrastructure.

"We headed towards some diversification with potatoes."

When asked what the biggest challenges were in starting to grow potatoes, Tim is honest and humble in his response.

"What was the biggest learning curve? When starting to grow potatoes, the biggest challenges was learning nutrient and water requirements," Tim explained.

"They all just look like a spud sitting here in the shed, different varieties have different characteristics requiring a few tweaks to their growing requirements.

"We are on a learning curve – I'm 55 and still learning plenty I can tell you.



"I don't think it's different to moving into any other industry.

"I don't think there is a farmer out there that has waltzed into growing any crop and nailed it bang first time."

Potatoes are nutrient hungry, sucking a lot out of the sandy soils. To spell the fields ready for next winter, the Baldwins' practice a 1 in 2 rotation with a summer sorghum crop and a winter cereal crop on the potato fallows.

"I have found that the biggest deterrent to a good potato crop other than government bureaucracy is too much rain," Tim said.

"When we have dry winters, we grow our best crops."

Diseases like blight and slimy stem can affect the potato crop, but lack of soil oxygen when too much rain falls is the biggest threat. Fundamentally the potatoes drown.

For the most part Baldwin Produce is drought-resistant and the business anticipates that with current capacity they will have enough water for up to four years.

Fruit and Vegetable News magazine asked Tim what kinds of responses he gets from the general public when they find out he's a potato grower.

"It's surprising how many people don't know that a spud grows under the ground," Tim responds.

### **Growing potatoes for chips**

"The goal for us is to fill the void when potatoes are not harvested in the south of Australia," Tim said, when asked why potatoes are grown in such a warm location like Bundaberg.

"They are a temperate crop.

"In Europe, their warm, growing season is equivalent to our cool season in this area in Queensland."

Tim added that crisping factories in Europe only cook fresh chips for a limited amount of time, with most potatoes stored at controlled temperature and atmosphere.

For good chips – fresh is best.

In Australia, there is a diverse geographic spread of growers.

"Chipping companies like to have a spread – if it rains up north, they have some diversity when it comes to drawing potatoes for chipping," Tim said.

At Baldwin Produce, about 100ha are planted every Autumn through to mid-winter. That's 3.25t/ha with a 37t/ha yield or a rate of between 10 and 12 spuds per plant.

Seed potatoes are freighted from South Australia to Baldwin Produce at a cost of \$1000/t plus and are delivered to the farm – by far the highest expense for the Baldwins' potato crops.

Fertiliser is running a very close second to freight at the moment, Tim said.

"Expenses are rising quickly and Snackbrands Australia is coming with us – they are lifting the contract prices to help cover the costs of production," Tim said.

Additionally, Tim said, farmers' ability to absorb costs is becoming harder with most competent farmers today using state-of-the-art technology and methods.

Despite these challenges, Tim is committed to farming and paving the way for the future of Baldwin Produce.





# HORT CONNECTIONS 2022 – A TREMENDOUS SUCCESS

For a second year in a row, the Australian horticulture industry descended on Brisbane for the premier event – Hort Connection. Delivered by AUSVEG and International Fresh Produce Association Australia New Zealand the 2022 event was heralded a ‘tremendous success.’

Delegates attended the conference in-person at the Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre from 6 - 8 June to explore the theme of ‘Growing Together’, which highlighted the importance of every sector of the horticulture industry uniting to build a stronger more resilient food system to feed local and international consumers.

Hort Connections 2022 encompassed speaker sessions, a trade show, off-site farm and retail tours, a National Awards for Excellence Gala Dinner, and a variety of networking events for all members of the horticulture supply chain.

The conference provided an opportunity for delegates to build their knowledge and networks and find out new ways to improve the productivity and profitability of their businesses.

Growcom was pleased to support this important industry event and we look forward to seeing everyone again in 2023.







# INDUSTRY LEADERS CELEBRATED AT HORT CONNECTIONS NATIONAL AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE

Australia's leading horticulture growers and industry members have been recognised at the Hort Connections 2022 National Awards for Excellence Gala Dinner, held at the Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre last month.

"The National Awards for Excellence provide an opportunity for the industry to come together, recognise the outstanding achievements of our leading growers and industry members, and celebrate the great work that our industry undertakes to keep Australia healthy and safe," AUSVEG CEO Michael Coot said.

"Everyone who was nominated for an award this year has demonstrated their passion and commitment to the industry and has made a valuable contribution to its ongoing growth and success. I'd like to congratulate every individual and business who won an award at this year's National Awards for Excellence and thank them for their continued dedication to our industry."

Winners of the Hort Connections 2022 National Awards for Excellence included:

- Annaleise & Lachlan Donovan (QLD) – Syngenta Grower of the Year
- Damien Manno (SA) – Corteva Agriscience Young Grower of the Year
- Rien Silverstein (VIC) – Boomaroo Nurseries Women in Horticulture Award
- Michael Simonetta, Perfection Fresh Australia (NSW) – Hort Innovation Exporter of the Year
- Peter Leach (QLD) – Bayer Researcher of the Year
- Goulburn Murray Valley Fruit Fly Area Wide Management (FFAWM) program – Visy Industry Impact Award
- Sam Kisvarda, Flavorite Group, Vic – E.E. Muir & Sons Community Stewardship Award
- Marlon Motlop (SA) – Butler Market Gardens Environment and Sustainability Award

## Queensland avocado growers named Syngenta Grower of the Year

Second generation avocado growers Annaleise and Lachlan Donovan have been recognised for their achievements in the Australian horticulture industry by receiving the Syngenta Grower of the Year Award.

The national award recognises outstanding achievement across all aspects of horticultural production, including growing, environmental management, staff management and quality of produce, and acknowledges grower commitment to innovation and advancing the Australian horticulture industry.

The award is supported by Syngenta, a leading agriculture company helping to improve global food security by enabling millions of farmers to make better use of available resources through world class science and innovative crop solutions.

The Donovan Family supply more than half of the avocados grown in Central Queensland, and have a strong vision for the industry, including making a significant contribution to export markets for avocados over the last 25 years.

"The Grower of the Year Award is the highest accolade in Australian horticulture and reflects Annaleise and Lachlan's dedication to their business and their tireless efforts on behalf of the horticulture industry," AUSVEG CEO Michael Coote said.

"Within the last twelve months, the Donovan Family became the first horticulture enterprise to be accredited through both Fair Farms and Reef Certification, both voluntary programs of Growcom, demonstrating environmental stewardship and ethical employment practices.

"They have certified all ten of their avocado orchards, which are located in the Burnett catchment of the Southern Lagoon in the Great Barrier Reef, meaning they can demonstrate best practice with regards the management of topsoil, fertiliser and pesticide use, and irrigation practices.

"They are highly dedicated to the avocado and horticulture industry, with Lachlan Donovan serving on the Board of Australian Avocados for 13 years and having participated in the development of a guide for growing perfect avocados through the Hort Innovation-funded project Improving market access for Australian avocados in Asia and the Middle East.

"Annaleise and Lachlan are very deserving winners of the Grower of the Year accolade, and we congratulate them on their tremendous success to date. I have no doubt we will continue to see great things from them for years to come."



Federal Agriculture Minister Murray Watt; Annaleise and Lachlan Donovan; and Managing Director, Australia & New Zealand, Syngenta Australia and New Zealand Paul Luxton.  
IMAGE: Andrew Beveridge, asbCreative





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# Brisbane monthly summary for June 2022

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Growcom and Ausmarket Consultants have entered into a partnership providing Growcom members with access to monthly fruit and vegetable market price information and data. Through this partnership, members also have the opportunity to access daily market reports at a discounted rate.

Visit Growcom's website to download your monthly market data report: [growcom.com.au/news-information/ausmarket](http://growcom.com.au/news-information/ausmarket)

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## Fruits

### Brisbane Monthly Special 6 - 10 Crop Summary

Species/Group/Variety	Tonnes	Pack	Low	High	Best	Avg
AVOCADOS, Bacon	2946.94	18LCtn	54.00	54.00	54.00	54.00
Fuerte		18LCtn	20.00	20.00	20.00	20.00
Hass		18LCtn	8.00	68.00	68.00	20.89
Jala		18LCtn	40.00	45.00	45.00	42.50
Shepard		18LCtn	8.00	35.00	35.00	19.25
Hass		SLTray	8.00	54.00	54.00	24.25
Sharwill		SLTray	20.00	20.00	20.00	20.00
Shepard		SLTray	6.00	24.00	24.00	16.67
Wurtz		SLTray	16.00	20.00	20.00	16.91
BERRIES, Blackberries	228.57	125g	6.00	7.00	7.00	6.47
Blueberries		125g	1.00	8.00	8.00	4.61
Raspberries		125g	1.00	5.00	5.00	3.03
Blackberries		250g	6.50	6.50	6.50	6.50
Gooseberries		Kg	30.00	30.00	30.00	30.00
FIGS, Dark Skin	25.16	300gLP	3.00	6.00	6.00	3.84
Dark Skin		SLTray	20.00	45.00	45.00	32.12
Light Skin		SLTray	36.00	45.00	45.00	40.50
GRAPES, Dark Seeded, Autumn Black	1021.84	18LCtn	40.00	45.00	45.00	42.50
Dark Seeded, Black America		18LCtn	20.00	40.00	40.00	29.95
Dark Seeded, Red Globe		18LCtn	15.00	20.00	20.00	17.50
Dark Seedless, Adora		18LCtn	24.00	30.00	30.00	27.00
Dark Seedless, Crimson		18LCtn	16.00	40.00	45.00	26.34
Dark Seedless, Melody		18LCtn	10.00	36.00	36.00	26.80
White Seedless, Great Green		18LCtn	25.00	36.00	36.00	29.03
White Seedless, Lusico		18LCtn	45.00	70.00	70.00	57.05
White Seedless, Sweet Globe		18LCtn	30.00	50.00	50.00	43.64
Dark Seedless, Crimson		9KgCtn	5.00	10.00	10.00	7.50
Dark Seedless, Sapphire		9KgCtn	30.00	50.00	50.00	40.64
KIWIFRUIT, Gold	874.64	5KgCtn	50.00	75.00	75.00	62.50
Gold		6KgCtn	40.00	45.00	45.00	42.50
Hayward		9KgCtn	40.00	60.00	60.00	47.39
Hayward		BulkPk	30.00	60.00	60.00	41.25
LEMONS, Eureka	1198.42	BulkCP	2.00	45.00	45.00	19.33
LIMES, Tahitian	392.08	18LCtn	12.00	40.00	50.00	25.22
Tahitian		9LCtn	5.00	35.00	40.00	16.71
Kafir		Kg	3.00	8.00	8.00	5.27
PINEAPPLES, Smoothleaf	997.96	Carton	12.00	30.00	30.00	20.43
Hybrid Topless, Unspecified		Each	1.60	3.00	3.00	2.30
Smoothleaf		Each	1.00	2.50	2.50	1.75
Hybrid Topless, Unspecified		SLTray	12.00	26.00	26.00	16.50
ROCKMELONS	1073.76	30LTray	8.00	28.00	30.00	17.79
		32LCtn	2.00	12.00	12.00	7.00
WATERMELONS, Long Varieties	2575.00	Kg	0.20	0.70	0.70	0.48
Seedless		Kg	0.20	2.00	2.00	1.30

STATE: A=ACT, N=NSW, Q=QLD, S=SA, T=TAS, V=VIC, W=WA, Y=NT, I=IMPORTED

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## Vegetables

### Brisbane Monthly Special 6 - 10 Crop Summary

Species/Group/Variety	Tonnes	Pack	Low	High	Best	Avg
BEANS, Borlotti	445.85	Kg	4.00	12.00	12.00	8.50
Butter		Kg	5.00	6.00	6.00	5.50
Flat, Continental		Kg	7.00	13.00	13.00	9.23
Round S'less		Kg	4.00	30.00	30.00	16.50
Snake		Kg	11.00	13.00	13.00	11.84
BEETROOT	184.88	10KgBag	10.00	24.00	25.00	15.58
Golden		10KgBag	30.00	38.00	38.00	31.82
		Bunch	2.40	2.80	2.80	2.60
Baby		Bunch	1.50	3.00	3.00	2.52
BROCCOLI, Baby	374.97	2.4Kg	28.00	48.00	48.00	39.05
		8KglPk	16.00	85.00	85.00	55.97
CAPSICUMS, Gold	711.88	10KgCtn	50.00	65.00	70.00	59.69
Green		10KgCtn	28.00	50.00	60.00	40.92
Red		10KgCtn	32.00	70.00	70.00	46.49
Gold		27LCtn	45.00	56.00	56.00	50.50
Green		27LCtn	8.00	40.00	45.00	24.68
Mixed Colour		27LCtn	10.00	34.00	34.00	20.86
Red		27LCtn	10.00	55.00	55.00	27.24
Gold		5KgCtn	40.00	45.00	45.00	42.50
Orange		5KgCtn	30.00	45.00	45.00	40.23
Red		Kg	1.00	2.00	2.00	1.50
CAULIFLOWERS	1100.83	Carton	6.00	70.00	70.00	38.47
Gourmet		Carton	24.00	30.00	30.00	27.00
CELERY	344.82	15KgCtn	10.00	40.00	50.00	22.92
CHINESE VEG., Bukchoy	275.59	Bunch	1.50	3.60	3.60	2.93
Choisum		Bunch	1.50	3.60	3.60	2.83
Kailan		Bunch	1.50	3.60	3.80	3.10
Pakchoy		Bunch	1.50	3.60	3.80	2.96
GINGER	182.90	Kg	3.00	24.00	30.00	9.65
LETTUCE, Baby Cos	602.16	Carton	40.00	80.00	80.00	63.64
Baby Cos, Sweet Gems		Carton	20.00	50.00	50.00	37.02
Baby Cos Hearts		Carton	24.00	60.00	100.00	42.99
Cos		Carton	35.00	108.00	108.00	61.86
Cos Hearts		Carton	40.00	50.00	50.00	46.63
Headed		Carton	30.00	108.00	108.00	69.02
Hearts		Carton	25.00	45.00	45.00	39.89
Open Varieties		Carton	8.00	26.00	26.00	22.14
Open Varieties, Green Oak		Carton	18.00	32.00	32.00	26.36
Open Varieties, Red Oak		Carton	16.00	28.00	28.00	23.86
Radicchio		Tray	16.00	30.00	30.00	25.00
ZUCCHINIS, Green	1505.03	10KgCtn	18.00	85.00	85.00	52.41
Lebanese		10KgCtn	16.00	65.00	65.00	29.84

STATE: A=ACT, N=NSW, Q=QLD, S=SA, T=TAS, V=VIC, W=WA, Y=NT, I=IMPORTED

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**AUSMARKET**  
CONSULTANTS



## **FRUIT AND VEGETABLE WHOLESALE MARKET PRICE REPORTING**

Ausmarket Consultants is an independently owned and operated business located in the Brisbane Produce Markets, Queensland. Ausmarket has been servicing the horticulture industry since 1996.

Ausmarket has been supplying price data to all sectors of the horticulture industry for 20+ Years. Clients include State and Federal Government, grower organisations, financial institutions, business consultants, educational facilities, industry organisations, restaurants/hotels, independent and major retailers, primary and secondary wholesalers, transport companies, and individual growers.

Our primary business activity is the supply of Australian fruit and vegetable market price data.

- Daily, weekly and/or monthly ongoing fruit and vegetable price data.
- Daily, weekly, monthly, and annual historic fruit and vegetable price data for 20+ years.
- Industry and grower organisation projects, programs, and market activity reporting.
- Grower subsidised wholesale fruit and vegetable market price reports.
- Price data from Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne, and Adelaide markets.

In addition to the data and information services, Ausmarket offer a wide range of quality assessment and quality mentoring services which include fruit maturity testing, loss assessments, independent outturn and arrival assessments, retail monitoring and pre-shipment compliance inspections.

## **SPECIAL GROWCOM GROWER MEMBER OFFER!**

Growcom and Ausmarket Consultants have entered into a partnership providing Growcom Grower Members with access to monthly fruit and vegetable market price information and data. Through this partnership, members also have the opportunity to access daily market reports at a discounted rate.

Visit Growcom's website to access your discount:  
[www.growcom.com.au/news-information/ausmarket](http://www.growcom.com.au/news-information/ausmarket)

### **AUSMARKET CONSULTANTS CAN BE CONTACTED BY:**

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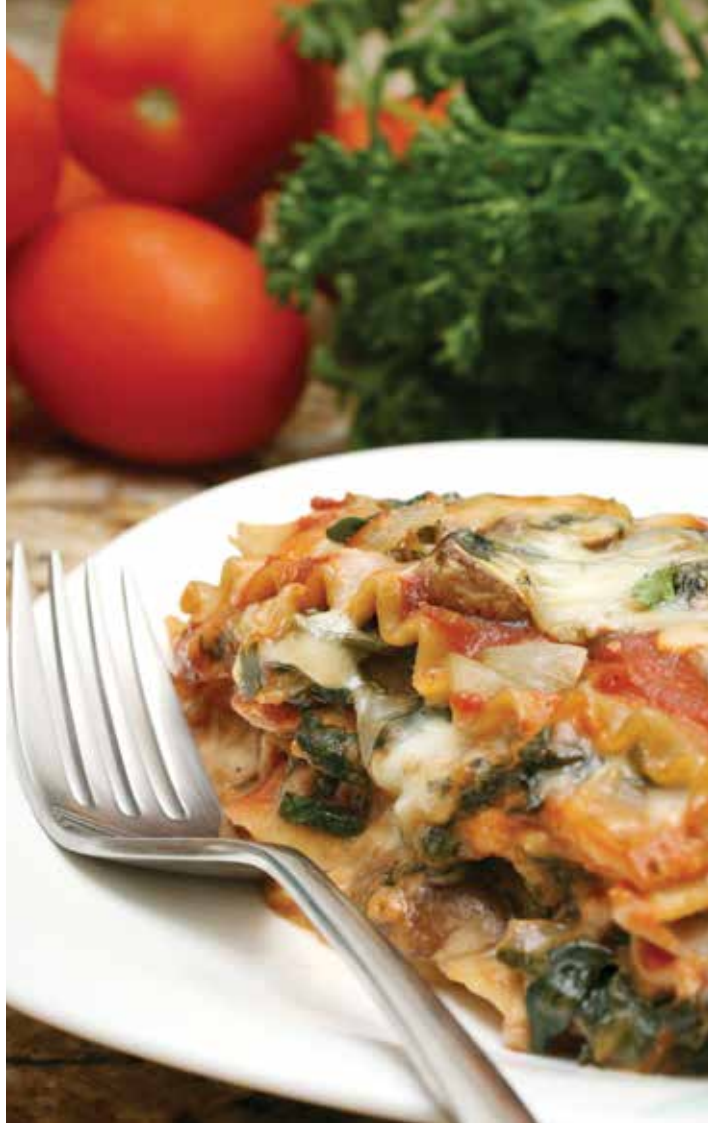
# Farmhouse Vegetable Lasagne

**SERVES 8 PREP TIME 30 MINS COOK TIME: 1.5 HRS**

*Recipe courtesy of Anne Fomiatti, Texas Branch.*

## INGREDIENTS

2 tablespoons	extra virgin olive oil
1	brown onion, diced
2 cloves	garlic, minced
1	medium capsicum, diced
2	sticks celery, diced
2	medium carrots, diced
1	small eggplant, diced
1	medium zucchini, grated
1 cup	mushrooms, diced
3 tablespoons	tomato paste
400g can	tomatoes, reduced salt
1 cup	vegetable stock, reduced salt
1/3 cup	red wine (optional)
½ bunch	rosemary
1 tablespoon	fresh parsley
2 tablespoons	dried thyme
1 tablespoon	dried oregano
1 tablespoon	dried sage
Pepper	to taste
375g	lasagne sheets
¼ cup	cheese, grated
<b>White sauce</b>	
1 litre	milk, reduced fat
Pinch	nutmeg
4 tablespoons	cornflour



## METHOD

**PREHEAT** oven to 160°C.

**HEAT** oil in a large saucepan and cook onion until softened, about 5 minutes, then add garlic and all other vegetables. Cook for a few minutes stirring constantly.

**ADD** tomato paste, canned tomatoes, vegetable stock, wine and herbs.

**BRING** to the boil and simmer for about 30 minutes. Do not reduce the sauce too much as any excess will be absorbed in the pasta/lasagne sheets.

**HEAT** milk and nutmeg in saucepan, add cornflour and stir until it thickens.

**LAYER** the tomato sauce, a lasagne sheet and white sauce in the baking dish. Repeat with two more layer.

**SPRINKLE** with cheese and bake for approximately 45 minutes to an hour.

To learn more about the QCWA Country Kitchens program and our healthy recipes go to [www.qcwacountrykitchens.com.au](http://www.qcwacountrykitchens.com.au) or contact us at [countrykitchens@qcwa.org.au](mailto:countrykitchens@qcwa.org.au)

The QCWA Country Kitchens program is proudly funded by Health and Wellbeing Queensland.





# FAIR FARMS NEWS

JULY / AUGUST 2022



THIS MONTH

*Mangoes taste sweeter with Fair Farms*

STAYING BUSY, UPDATED, CONNECTED,  
AND IN THE KNOW WITH FAIR FARMS

## Fair Farms National Conference & Awards

**14 October 2022**  
Opal Cove Resort, Coffs Harbour

Join Fair Farms this coming October as we celebrate Australia's Fair Farmers at the inaugural Fair Farms Conference.







## program update

Fair Farms National Program Manager  
**Sachin Ayachit**

# Staying busy, updated, connected, and in the know with Fair Farms

Hort Connections – what a truly amazing event. It was a delight to be able to meet so many growers and, horticulture and agricultural industry professionals. The entire Fair Farms team attended the convention handing out business cards, talking to anyone who wanted to learn more about the Fair Farms program, and seizing the opportunity to network and communicate with industry professionals who are helping to shape the space of fair work in Australian horticulture.

To narrow down one highlight from the event would be too difficult. It was awesome to meet the new Federal Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry Senator Murray Watt at Hort Connections. The Growcom leadership team was able to briefly talk about what Fair Farms does, and how it is helping to shape a positive outlook for horticulture growers and workers. It was a pleasure to attend the Gala Dinner that took place on the final day of Hort Connections, where Fair Farms member Donovan Family Investments took out the award for Syngenta Grower of the Year – a well-deserved win for an outstanding family run farm. If we were to choose a moment as a highlight of Hort Connections it would be the opportunity to meet, collaborate and talk with the many industry professionals who had become well-known colleagues through Teams and Zoom calls over the past couple of years. All in all, the event was an excellent success for organisers and attendees alike.

Our Business Development Officer Desda Cullearn had an eventful couple of months visiting several grower members to hand deliver Fair Farms gate signs and seized the opportunity to deliver a variety of information workshops in Victoria, the Northern Territory and South Australia. Desda is keen to continue engaging with horticulture peak industry bodies around Australia. Should you like to get in contact with her you can email her at [dcullearn@growcom.com.au](mailto:dcullearn@growcom.com.au)

In other news, you would've been notified recently that the program recently published an update to its program documents. The Fair Farms Standard, Rules and Audit Guide have all been updated to version 2. While most of these documents remain the same there are some important changes for grower members to take note of which can be found below:

### Program documents update

1. Specific timeframes have been introduced in the latest version of the Rules:

5.1 A Participant must complete the OSA within one month of registration.

6.4. In its initial year of participation, a Participant may only schedule a Fair Farms Audit once it has completed the required training modules identified during the self-assessment process (training needs analysis, section 5 above). The required training modules must be completed within three (3 months) of being advised of the requirement to complete assigned training modules.

7.4. The initial Fair Farms audit must be scheduled at the earliest opportunity (i.e., next harvest or peak employment period) following completion of Fair Farms training. It is expected that participants will undertake an initial audit within six months of registration. A participant may seek an extension of this timeframe such that an audit is completed within 12 months of registration.

2. As a result of the program review, we have also decided to remove the 'Auditor Competency Framework' from the Audit guide and have it as a stand-alone internal Fair Farms document.
3. The Standard has been amended to include references to reflect the regulatory changes made since the publication of the first version.
4. The Rules now provide further guidance on when half-day audits are appropriate.

#### 7.10. A half-day audit:

7.10.1. May be appropriate for recertification audits of Participants with a single controlled site, no labour-hire workers, and less than 25 directly hired workers during harvest or peak employment period.

7.10.2. Is generally not appropriate for an initial audit.

I'd like to personally thank all those who have taken the time to consult and bring to life recommendations made during the Program Review period. It is important to note that version 2 of the documents will be in effect from 1 July 2022. Please reach out to the Fair Farms team if you have any questions about this at [fairfarms@growcom.com.au](mailto:fairfarms@growcom.com.au)

### Coming up

So, what's next for the program? We're going to continue to raise the profile of the program for our members through several key events over the next couple of months. First up is Pineapple Field Days, where the team will be present and assisting the greater Growcom team set-up the pineapple industry's most exciting event for the year. Next, Fair Farms will be at BerryQuest International – we'll be chatting, presenting, and talking about fair horticulture employment.

The Fair Farms National Conference & Awards is shaping up to be an exciting event. We're in the thick of planning what will be the only conference of its kind within the horticulture industry, dealing exclusively with fair and ethical employment. With speakers planned and more details to be released very soon, we're excited to have you join us.

Head to [www.fairfarms.com.au/fair-farms-conference](http://www.fairfarms.com.au/fair-farms-conference) to keep up to date. For speaker and sponsorship enquiries please email [sselave@growcom.com.au](mailto:sselave@growcom.com.au)

If you would like to connect with me, you can reach me at [sayachit@growcom.com.au](mailto:sayachit@growcom.com.au)





Fair Farms National Program Manager Sachin Ayachit getting ready to speak on camera about ethical employment within the Australian horticulture industry.



Fair Farms provided an update as part of the Tuesday Trade Show presentation line up.



Fair Farms Business Development Officer Desda Cullearn (right) caught up with Elen Welch (left) from the NSW Farmers at the Growcom trade booth.



Growcom Chair Belinda Frenzt, Federal Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry Senator Murray Watt, Fair Farms National Program Manager Sachin Ayachit, and Growcom Acting CEO Richard Shannon.



Growcom Chair Belinda Frenzt presented newly approved Fair Farms auditing body Merieux NutriSciences with their official office sign.



# Mangoes taste sweeter *with Fair Farms*

From humble beginnings in the Northern Territory, Tou's Garden has gone from strength to strength to produce some of the sweetest mangoes in Australia. While there's a heavy focus on producing top-notch fruit, Tou's Garden is also known for being one of the first mango farms to join the Fair Farms program.

Fair Farms is the only Australian ethical compliance program that offers training and certification. The program has been designed by the horticulture industry for horticulture growers and is currently in its third year of operation.

Kittianant Chaipanukiat (Kit) who looks after Human Resources for Tou's Garden took some time out of his busy schedule to talk about the farm, his role, and the Fair Farms program.

"Tou's Garden started from humble beginnings in 1993 and by the year 2000 had a total of 35,000 mango trees, currently the farm has expanded to cover more than 1,500 acres," he said.

"Tou's Garden is named after one of its owners Tou Saramat Ruchkaew, who is involved in all aspects of the farm's management and owns the farm alongside director Ian Quin."

Kit himself has been with Tou's Garden since mid-2021 and still gets excited walking around the farm and seeing the vibrant fruit they grow.

"Every time I go around our farm to capture a photo for our social media marketing materials, it is like a daily adventure," he said.

Kit said the decision to join the Fair Farms program came down to ensuring the farm was doing the right thing by its people.

"We are a multicultural workplace at Tou's Garden, each staff member respects and takes care of each other—we're like a family," he said.

"Our directors applied to be a member of the Fair Farms program to ensure that our farm achieves and abides by Australian workplace laws and regulations."

After achieving certification with the program, Kit said Fair Farms now forms part of the farm's commitment to ensuring ethical practices are a part of the farm's daily operation.

The Fair Farms program not only offers a pathway to third-party audit and certification but ensures its members are well prepared for an audit by offering a suite of 13 online learning modules based on the Fair Farms standard.

Fair Farms National Program Manager Sachin Ayachit said the program was only as successful as its grower members.

"Farms like Tou's Garden who take a proactive approach to managing their staff are the true leaders of the horticulture industry," Sachin said.

"Fair Farms exists to recognise and celebrate growers like Tou and farm employees like Kit who want to ensure the success of their people on farm."

Tou's Garden is constantly innovating and finding new ways to grow produce. Recently they started growing a variety of mango called the Maha Chanok.

"It is a sweet and tangy type of mango which is originally from Thailand," Kit said.

"The mango is long-shaped and fibreless with a rich aroma."

For more information about Tou's Garden visit [www.tousgarden.com.au](http://www.tousgarden.com.au), and information about the Fair Farms program visit [www.fairfarms.com.au](http://www.fairfarms.com.au)





## AUSTRALIAN RETIREMENT TRUST WINS BIG AT CHANT WEST AWARDS

Following the largest merger in the Australian superannuation industry, Australian Retirement Trust has cemented its position as one of the largest and most highly awarded funds in Australia at the 2022 Chant West awards.

Australian Retirement Trust was awarded Corporate Solutions Fund of the Year and Best Fund: Member Services for its Super Savings product (heritage Sunsuper product) and Best Fund: Longevity Product for Australian Retirement Trust's QSuper product.

The awards recognise best practice in the super industry and, with this year's theme of raising the bar, Chant West was looking for funds that keep raising the bar to drive better outcomes for their members.

The Best Fund: Member Services award recognises the super fund that is best engaging their members and leading them towards greater involvement with their super.

The Corporate Solutions Fund of the Year award acknowledges the super fund operating in this large and important segment of the industry that is working the hardest in the best interests of their corporate plan members, including by harnessing economies of scale.

The Best Fund: Longevity Product acknowledges funds that have developed new and innovative products for retirees that truly cater for retirees' needs.

Australian Retirement Trust's Chief Executive Officer Bernard Reilly, said these awards were an honour, especially following the fund's recent merger, and reflected the hard work of the whole team who remained focused on the best interests of the funds' members.

"As a profit-for-members fund, Australian Retirement Trust maintains an unwavering commitment to our more than two million members and more than 170,000 employers, and these awards are a testament to this and the work our team do every day to support them," Mr Reilly said.

This is the eighth year out of the past ten that Australian Retirement Trust (formerly Sunsuper) has won Best Fund: Member Services, and the seventh year in a row that the fund has been awarded Corporate Solutions Fund of the Year.

Australian Retirement Trust was also named as a finalist in the following categories: Super Fund of the Year, Pension Fund of the Year, Best Fund: Investments, Best Fund: Integrity, and Best Fund: Advice Services.



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## Identifying your financial risks as a grower

Bentleys Queensland – Business Advisors & Accountants  
**Rohan Dunsdon, Partner**



Looking at completing a Farm Business Resilience Plan? Don't know where to start with financial risks?

As part of your farm business planning, you are required to identify your financial risks. While discussing financial risks can be daunting, it is important to identify goals and assess strategies to manage the risks of being a primary producer. Identifying financial risks can help you go from working in your business to on your business. Below are three key financial pain points that producers face.

### Not having a budget

Not having a budget against which you can scrutinise your business's financial performance can severely impact your ability to plan for the financial year ahead. It can be a huge undertaking to begin the budget process from scratch, but not having a budget is more common than you might think. There are two common types of budgeting for growers. The first is a rolling budget that growers work to every month or quarter. The second type of budgeting is an annual budget which is set in May/June for the new financial year and then reviewed on an annual basis. We know that the budget of primary producers is entirely dependent on the weather, and that can change in an instant. However, having a budget in place creates a baseline to work towards. Budgeting in the event of a tough season can assist in getting financing as it shows the lender that you are active in monitoring your commitments.

### Having no diversity of income or assets

Having diversity of income or assets is easier said than done. Given the nature of horticultural businesses, any spare cash is most likely going back into the business. Having a diverse revenue stream or holding wealth off-farm ultimately reduces the financial impacts of a bad season and reduces the pressure on the business of having to meet regular financial performance levels even in challenging growing seasons. Achieving diversity of income also goes back to planning and budgeting. Putting a plan in place and a budget will allow for greater profit generation, with a goal for diversity in revenue streams going forward. Diversity can be achieved in several ways, including a diversified customer list, diversified products, or diversified growing areas/regions.

### Consider a Succession Plan

This will be on a case-by-case basis, however, not having a succession plan, or even having started the discussions is a huge risk to the operations and structuring of your business and its stakeholders.

These are just some of the financial risks that Bentleys can assist with identifying for your Farm Business Resilience Plan and help you build strategies around for the long-term.

If you'd like help identifying your financial risks, contact Rohan and the team at Bentleys Queensland for a no-obligation discussion.

rdunsdon@bris.bentleys.com.au  
07 3222 9726



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# Farm Business Resilience Program

Growcom is currently working alongside horticultural growers to provide the tools, skills, and knowledge needed to prepare for and effectively manage climate and business risks. Improving your farms long-term business resilience helps you absorb and recover from challenges that have a negative impact on production and financial returns.

Using Growcom's best management practice program, Hort360 our Resilience Officers can help you:

- Complete an online self-assessment against areas of risk in your business including infrastructure, natural resource management and business.
- Develop your farm business resilience plan.
- Apply for support packages through QRIDA (grants and/or loans).

This service is FREE and open to all horticultural growers, and you do not need a drought declaration to participate or access funding.

Recently horticultural growers in Dimbulah, Gayndah and Stanthorpe came together to learn more about the Farm Business Resilience Program and the process of building a Business Resilience Plan.

Growers in attendance were given a first-hand demonstration of Growcom's Hort360 program and how simple it is to develop a plan. Growcom has invested heavily in upgrading Hort360 to make the process as streamlined as possible. At the conclusion of the questionnaire, you will be given an automated report identifying areas of risk and actions to address those risks. Best of all the report is pre-filled with your farm business details making applying for QRIDA funding as stress free as possible.



North Queensland Resilience Officer, Karen George speaks at the Dimbulah Drought Resilience Forum.



Growers at the Gayndah workshop engage in a conversation around QRIDA grants and loans currently available.



Southern Queensland Resilience Officer, Brock McDonald engages his audience in Stanthorpe.



## Contact Growcom today

Growcom has employed three Resilience Officers who are available to help you complete your Farm Business Resilience Plan and access funding. Get in contact today to start your resilience journey:



### Karen George

Project Manager & North Queensland  
0408 135 003

[kgeorge@growcom.com.au](mailto:kgeorge@growcom.com.au)



### John Targett

Central Queensland  
0418 803 997

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### Brock McDonald

Southern Queensland  
0418 893 442

[wmcdonald@growcom.com.au](mailto:wmcdonald@growcom.com.au)



# NATURAL DISASTER ASSISTANCE

It certainly has been a challenging start to the year with growers facing a series of natural disasters in quick succession. Our thoughts continue to be with everyone impacted. Several support packages have been activated and Growcom will continue to communicate any new activations with members as they become available.

Disaster assistance is being administered through QRIDA. You can find more details and eligibility criteria online here: [www.qrida.qld.gov.au/primary-producers](http://www.qrida.qld.gov.au/primary-producers)

## Southern Queensland Flooding (6 – 20 May 2022)

- Disaster Assistance (Essential Working Capital) Loan
- Disaster Assistance Loans

## Northern and Central Western Queensland Rainfall and Flooding event (21 April – 12 May 2022)

- Disaster Assistance (Essential Working Capital) Loan
- Disaster Assistance Loans

## South-East Queensland Rainfall and Flooding, South East Queensland Rainfall and Flooding (22 February - 5 April 2022)

- Extraordinary Disaster Assistance Recovery Grants (\$75,000)
- Disaster Assistance (Essential Working Capital) Loan
- Disaster Assistance Loans
- Ex-Tropical Cyclone Seth (2 - 10 January 2022)
- Extraordinary Disaster Assistance Recovery Grants (\$50,000)
- Disaster Assistance (Essential Working Capital) Loan
- Disaster Assistance Loans

## Individually Disaster Stricken Properties

Primary producers significantly affected during a disaster, but not located in a defined disaster area may be eligible to apply for assistance as an individually disaster-stricken enterprise. In this circumstance, the current commercial lending rate applies unless the concessional interest rate is granted by QRIDA.

To apply on this basis, you should first apply for an Individual Disaster Stricken Property (IDSP) Certificate through the

Department of Agriculture and Fisheries. For further information please visit the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries website ([www.daf.qld.gov.au/business-priorities/agriculture/disaster-recovery/natural-disaster](http://www.daf.qld.gov.au/business-priorities/agriculture/disaster-recovery/natural-disaster)) or call 13 25 23.

## Rural Financial Counsellors

Rural Financial Counsellors are located throughout Queensland and are available to provide free, confidential, and impartial rural business financial advice and support. To locate your nearest RFCS, visit: [www.recovery.gov.au/rural-financial-counselling-service-locations](http://www.recovery.gov.au/rural-financial-counselling-service-locations)

## Building industry resilience

Growcom is currently working alongside horticultural growers to provide the tools, skills, and knowledge needed to prepare for and effectively manage climate and business risks. Improving your farms long-term business resilience helps you absorb and recover from challenges that have a negative impact on production and financial returns.

Using Growcom's best management practice program, Hort360 our Resilience Officers can help you:

- Complete an online self-assessment against areas of risk including production, weather, market and workforce.
- Develop your farm business resilience plan.
- Apply for support packages through QRIDA (grants and/or loans).

This service is FREE and open to all horticultural growers. To find out more, visit: [www.growcom.com.au](http://www.growcom.com.au)

## Protecting your mental health

In times of recovery from natural disasters it is important to look after yourself particularly your mental wellbeing. If you are feeling overwhelmed or having trouble coping, please reach out to one of the many confidential and skilled counsellors at Lifeline (13 11 14) or Beyond Blue (1300 22 46 36).

The Queensland Government also has a range of mental health resources available on their website: [www.qld.gov.au/health/mental-health](http://www.qld.gov.au/health/mental-health)

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Improves water and nutrient-use efficiency.

Results in thriving plants with less crop stress.

Increases marketable crop yields.

FUMIGATION PARTNERSHIPS INNOVATION



# Drought grants and loans now available for primary producers

Drought grants and loans are now available for eligible primary producers to help them prepare for drought or assist with the carry-on finances of their enterprise during drought.

These programs are jointly funded by the Australian Government's Future Drought Fund and the Queensland Government and form part of the drought reform package which was undertaken by the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries to better manage future droughts.

QRIDA Manager of Natural Disasters and Drought, Sheree Finney says two grant options are available.

Farm Management Grants offer primary producers a 50 per cent rebate on the cost of eligible professional advice up to a maximum \$2500 to produce a Farm Business Resilience Plan for their property.

"These plans are intended to assist producers identify risks associated with production, including climate and weather (such as drought), as well as biosecurity and natural resource management and business risks including financial and market factors," Ms Finney said.

Secondly, Drought Preparedness Grants offer up to \$50,000 as a co-contribution grant to assist primary producers undertake on-farm capital improvements that will improve the drought preparedness of their property such as pipes, water tanks and more.

"The three drought loan options available range from \$50,000 to \$250,000 and help producers mitigate the future impacts of drought on their enterprise or assist them with carry-on expenses

if they have significantly been financially impacted by drought," she said.

The Emergency Drought Assistance Loan is an interest-free loan of up to \$50,000 for primary producers to assist in meeting working capital expenses including paying employee wages, creditors, rent and rates or buying goods such as fuel to carry on the business.

The Drought Ready and Recovery Finance Loan offers up to \$250,000 to help primary producers improve the drought resilience of their enterprise by funding important on-farm development projects such as improving water infrastructure, covering contractor costs and more.

"This loan gives producers the opportunity to undertake drought preparation activities on their enterprise to mitigate future impacts of drought which is why they do not need to be drought declared to access the loan," she said.

The Drought Carry-on Finance Loan is a concessional loan of up to \$250,000 for primary producers to assist in meeting carry-on finance including paying employee wages and rent or buying goods.

"QRIDA has a network of Regional Area Managers based across Queensland who are ready to help eligible producers through the application process so don't hesitate to reach out and ask questions if you have them," Ms Finney said.

For more information on the drought grants and loans available, contact your QRIDA Regional Area Manager on 1800 623 946 or visit [www.qrida.qld.gov.au/drought-support](http://www.qrida.qld.gov.au/drought-support)

Advertisement



Queensland Rural and Industry Development Authority

## Drought loans and grants for QLD producers

Wanting to better manage and prepare for future droughts on your property?

Talk to us about the range of grants and concessional loans now available to help primary producers prepare, manage, recover and mitigate the impacts of drought, including\*:

- **Drought Preparedness Grants** of up to \$50,000
- **Drought Ready and Recovery Finance Loans** of up to \$250,000
- **Drought Carry-on Finance Loans** of up to \$250,000
- **Emergency Drought Assistance Loans** of up to \$50,000

For more information contact QRIDA on **1800 623 946** or visit [qrida.qld.gov.au](http://qrida.qld.gov.au)

*\*The information contained herein is for general information purposes only. You should not rely upon this information as a basis for making any business, legal or any other decisions.*

1800 623 946  
[qrida.qld.gov.au](http://qrida.qld.gov.au)

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Authorised by the Queensland Government, Turbot St, Brisbane

## HITTING SUSTAINABILITY GOALS DRIVES HORT360 THROUGH THE NEXT THREE YEARS

With a proactive goal to boost sustainability, Growcom's Hort360 South-East Queensland (Hort360 SEQ) water quality program is set to be refunded through the Queensland Government's Department of Environment and Science (DES), with a \$1.1 million investment over the next three years.

Fresh produce growers have proactively utilised tools available on Growcom's Best Management Practice program, Hort360, to curb fertiliser and sediment runoff into Moreton Bay with the goal of helping preserve South-East Queensland's catchments and improve water quality.

Growcom Acting Chief Executive Officer Richard Shannon said growers undertaking Hort360 can help minimise the impact of farming on the natural environment.

"The real take away from the State's decision to invest in Growcom's Hort360 SEQ program is that it's proving a valuable tool for growers to shape improved business practices, that value-add to their bottom line while helping Moreton Bay and its catchments become more resilient," Mr Shannon said.

"Growcom encourages all growers in the South-East Queensland corridor to use this opportunity to take up Hort360.

"South-East Queensland's waterways and beaches are iconic around the world and the Growcom Hort360 process is kicking goals for sustainable business practices and the preservation of these natural wonders."

The result – cleaner, healthier waterways and more sustainable farming businesses coexisting together.

"The waterways in this region are important to growers and their communities too – it's part of their backyard – and they don't want to harm it," Mr Shannon said.

"That's why I'm glad that growers continue to recognise the benefits of Hort360 as a proactive way to improve the profitability and sustainability of their business."

### Successful outcomes from phase 1:

- Greater stewardship from growers in recognising the issues and implementing best practices to resolve the problems; and
- Greater resilience for growers dealing with extreme weather conditions over the last three years from drought to floods.

### Future goals for Hort360 SEQ:

- Further expand BMP implementation on farm; and
- Greater collaboration between industry and government facilitated by Growcom - resulting in industry having more say in on-ground work and ownership of the outcomes.



Exciting times ahead for Growcom's Hort360 South-East Queensland project, led by Tim Wolens, pictured, which will see a \$1.1 million investment from the Queensland Government's Department of Environment and Science through the next three years.

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Hort360 SEQ is funded by the Queensland Government Department of Environment and Science.





## HIGH-DENSITY ORCHARDS: EVALUATING RESILIENCE AND PROFITABILITY

Diversification of crop production in Northern Australia is crucial in developing an economically sustainable and resilient agricultural sector. Whilst there are numerous tropical tree crops which can be cultivated in the region, plantings are limited due to the susceptibility of orchards to tropical cyclones.

Through the Demonstrating Next-Generation Resilient Orchard Production Systems for Tropical Crops project being led by the Queensland Department of Agriculture & Fisheries (QDAF) and supported by the Cooperative Research Centre for Developing Northern Australia (CRCNA), a range of high-density production systems and trellis planting systems are being assessed for not only their cyclone resilience but also their production capacity and profitability.

Jackfruit is being used as a model tree crop with high-density orchards developed at multiple trial sites across Northern Australia. Each trial site is using a site-specific planting density and a mixture of seedlings, grafted trees, cuttings and marcotts planted under both free standing and supported (trellis) arrangements.

Data on growth rates, fertiliser and irrigation inputs, pest and disease issues canopy development, flowering and harvest dates, yield and fruit aril (flesh) recovery are being collected under the project.

The production strategies being investigated could not only provide growers with a production methodology which mitigates the risks associate with tropical cyclones, but also enable expansion of the horticulture sector through new plantings across Northern Australia.

Whilst specific to jackfruit, the production system can be applied to a broad range of tree crops, most of which are unique to north Australia. Under the project the production systems are also being monitored on a rambutan orchard and existing trellised cocoa plantation.

If you would like to learn more about the project, visit: [www.crcna.com.au/research/projects/demonstrating-next-generation-resilient-orchard-production-systems-tropical-crops](http://www.crcna.com.au/research/projects/demonstrating-next-generation-resilient-orchard-production-systems-tropical-crops)

Alternatively, you can also keep up to date via the Facebook page @NextGenResilientOrchards

This three-year project is funded through the CRCNA as part of the Australian Government's CRC Program, and is being undertaken in collaboration with the Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries (DAF), Northern Territory Department of Industry, Tourism and Trade (NT DITT), Western Australia Department of Primary Industries and regional development (DPIRD), Manbulloo Limited, Zappala Tropicals, Northern Territory Farmers Association (NT Farmers) and Growcom.

Scan the code to learn more about the project





## FOSTERING TOMORROW'S FARMERS



The National Farmers' Federation (NFF) is looking for enthusiastic farmers across Australia to participate as employers and hosts for young Australians participating in the AgCAREERSTART program.

AgCAREERSTART is a future-focused industry program that engages with the next generation of agricultural workers. It is a great opportunity for the industry to attract a new cohort of young Australians to experience farm life and all it has to offer as a career pathway.

Over 10 – 12 months, you will provide an on-farm job for a school leaver, or young Australian under 25. In your role as host, you will encourage your employee to become immersed in the local community and gain an appreciation of the opportunities within the agriculture sector.

As part of the program, the participants receive funding

and support to complete industry training of their choice, attend industry events, and a dedicated support team will assist in their transition to farm and their future career prospects.

NFF are looking for farms with a focus on HR and safety and who are committed to offering a positive and rewarding experience for a young Australian. All host farms will receive a \$2,000 per participant Farm Safety Incentive payment from AgCAREERSTART.

**AGCAREERSTART**  
**WEBINAR**  
**INFO SESSIONS**

Please sign up to one of our live webinar sessions on 26 July, and 31 August 2022, via [agcareerstart.com.au](http://agcareerstart.com.au)

### TO BE A PART OF THE PROGRAM YOU MUST:

- Be able to offer a safe and positive experience for a young Australian
- Have the capacity to teach and support someone who might have limited experience in agriculture
- Be able to offer full-time paid employment for a period of 10 – 12 months in 2023\*
- Offer flexibility to your participant so they can undertake training and attend industry events
- Provide accommodation, or assist in finding accommodation off farm

\*Participants must be paid at – or above – award wages. All host farms must provide a signed employment contract to AgCAREERSTART before the placement commences.

**APPLICATIONS NOW OPEN!** [agcareerstart.com.au](http://agcareerstart.com.au)



# FAQs



## WHAT IS INVOLVED?

Over 10-12 months, you will provide an on-farm job for a school leaver or young Australian under 25. You will mentor and support your participant in order to embed them in the industry and local community.

## WHEN DOES IT START?

The 2023 intake will commence in Jan-Feb. There is some flexibility around commencement and duration of the placements. Speak to the AgCAREERSTART team with any questions.

## WHO CAN PARTICIPATE?

Any Australian farming business can apply. The placement must be farm-based, however their role can involve work in other areas of supply chain or contract work, so long as they spend most of their time on a farm.

## WHAT JOBS CAN MY PARTICIPANT UNDERTAKE?

The participant is your employee and can undertake any job that you feel is safe and warranted for the role. We encourage you to show the diversity of jobs across your farm and allow the participant to try new tasks in line with their capabilities.

## WHAT INDUSTRIES ARE YOU LOOKING FOR?

AgCAREERSTART is looking for farms across all industries in agriculture. This can include cotton, grains, dairy, beef, wool, sheep, forestry, horticulture, aquaculture and viticulture.

## WHO EMPLOYS THE PARTICIPANT?

The host farm is responsible for employing the participant. All employees must be paid at or above industry award wages.

## HOW AM I ALLOCATED A PARTICIPANT?

Farm hosts and candidates all complete a thorough application and screening process. Based on their responses, the AgCAREERSTART team match suitable farmers and participants together.

## HOW MANY PARTICIPANTS CAN I HOST?

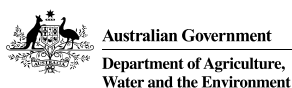
You can host multiple participants. Chat to the AgCAREERSTART team about your capacity to host more than one participant.

## WHAT TRAINING DO THE PARTICIPANTS RECEIVE?

All participants undertake an online FarmSafe induction program before arriving on farm, and receive a training bursary to undertake placement-relevant training throughout the program. Participants also receive a \$1,000 industry engagement grant to attend industry events such as conferences and field days. Host farmers must also properly induct participants according to your relevant obligations.

## HOW CAN I SIGN UP?

Head to [agcareerstart.com.au](https://agcareerstart.com.au) and complete the online application form.





Workers Tom Talen, Alice Lui, John Alim Amet and Simo Tony are now all smiles and are working towards gaining their 'P' plates in six months, which will allow them to drive unsupervised.

## HOW WORKERS AT THIS FARM BUSINESS HAVE TAKEN THE FIRST STEPS TOWARDS GETTING BEHIND THE WHEEL

In an area with no public transport, taxis or rideshare services, St George, Queensland-based business Moonrocks wanted to find a way to help its Pacific Australia Labour Mobility (PALM) scheme workers gain a little independence.

Moonrocks is a family-owned onion and garlic farm run by fifth-generation farmers who are committed to environmentally sustainable farming practices.

Of its 22 current PALM scheme workers, only three had a driver's licence, which limited how many workers could travel the 20km into town for shopping, to run errands or attend social activities.

Thomas Talen, John Alim Amet, Simo Tony and Alice Lui are all smiles after earning their 'L' plates.

Moonrocks felt it was important for its workers to gain mobility and took advantage of funding through the PALM scheme's skills development program to help four Ni-Vanuatu workers receive their learner driver permit.

Workers Tom Talen, Alice Lui, John Alim Amet and Simo Tony are now all smiles and are working towards gaining their 'P' plates in six months, which will allow them to drive unsupervised.

Moonrocks provided practical and computer support to help workers with the training.

A driving course was set up on the farm for supervised driving practice. Moonrocks discussed safe driving tips with the workers, in particular the issues that drivers face in rural and remote areas and when driving long distances.

As well as increasing worker wellbeing and their freedom to enjoy time off work, the upskilling of workers has benefits for the workplace too.

Once workers achieve their drivers licence, they may be interested in further training to drive forklifts or tractors and learn other machinery operations.

This will help them to perform well in their jobs and give them valuable new skills to take home with them at the end of their contract.

### How the skills development program works

The drivers licences can be a boost for the workers in both their private and working life.

Funding through the skills development program is open to employers of Pacific and Timorese workers through the PALM scheme who meet the eligibility criteria.

The program prioritises funding for the development of skills to prepare workers for life and work in Australia, related to their job and for reintegration when they return home.

The programs can include formal qualifications or workplace-related training, but also caters to other life skills such as driving, English language instruction, financial literacy.

These skills can help workers adjust to life in Australia, become more independent and integrate more successfully into local communities, helping to create happier and more productive staff.

The program can be delivered flexibly at times that suit the employer and worker, is catered to the demands of each business and industry, and is value for money, with the costs shared between the parties.

### How to apply for funding

PALM scheme employers can apply using the skills development application form and guide: [www.palmscheme.gov.au/resources/skills-development-application-form-and-guide](http://www.palmscheme.gov.au/resources/skills-development-application-form-and-guide)

Employers will be notified of the Pacific Labour Facility's (PLF's) decision on their funding application within seven working days of submission.

For more information, please visit the PALM scheme website or contact the PLF skills development team on email [training@pacificlabourfacility.com.au](mailto:training@pacificlabourfacility.com.au) or phone 07 3557 7766.





## SUPPORT FOR FARM BUSINESSWOMEN TO WALK THE WIRE OF FINANCIAL SECURITY

The Queensland Farmers' Federation (QFF) has partnered with the Queensland Government through the Investing in Queensland Women grant program to develop an easy-to-use toolkit to support the financial preparedness and security of farm businesswomen.

The e-kit 'Walking the Wire: Strengthening the financial security of rural agribusiness women', aims to raise awareness and provide a catalyst for positive change, identifying the questions to be asked, the assistance, services and resources needed and the considerations that every woman and family business in the agricultural sector should consider.

QFF CEO Jo Sheppard said the resource is bespoke and has been designed 'by rural women for rural women' and works to address the unique and complex circumstances that farm businesswomen face.

"Throughout the development of this e-Kit, we spoke to many women in agribusiness, and we have been inspired by their dedication and their success stories. There are many examples

of women contributing vision and skillsets to farm businesses that have opened new opportunities and diversified industry offerings," Ms Sheppard said.

"Yet we also heard many tales of sadness, loss and inequity that genuinely moved all involved in the project.

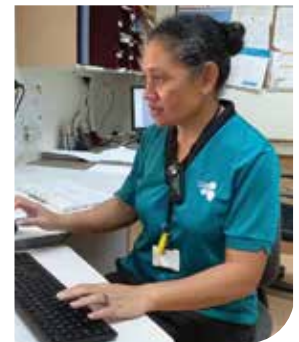
"The financial insecurity of farm businesswomen is a complex and multifaceted issue, and the sector requires structural and regulatory changes, particularly regarding the treatment of off-farm income which often maintains the family and the business during difficult times.

"Business structures often favour male successors over female, leaving women (particularly those marrying into a farming family) with no or a limited voice in the business or decision making."

Statistics on the financial security of women in the rural sector, or lack thereof, only scratch the surface of a very complex and frequently overlooked issue. Some of the issues that impact on the financial security of rural and farm businesswomen include relationship complications (ie. separation, divorce or domestic violence); family transition and succession; family and business communication; complex business structures; business knowledge and understanding; and financial and legal literacy.

Walking the Wire provides direction about which questions to ask, what issues to be aware of, and where to find further information, education and obtain initial advice. It aims to provide guidance to help rural women take the next step in securing their financial future, particularly where they may have had difficulty prioritising their own financial security in the past.

The Walking the Wire e-kit is available at: [www.qff.org.au/resources/](http://www.qff.org.au/resources/)



# SKILLS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

**Pacific Australia Labour Mobility (PALM) scheme employers can apply for funding through the skills development program to support their workers' training needs.**

The skills development program includes accredited and non-accredited training as well as activities to support worker wellbeing and community engagement.

**For more information contact:**  
[training@pacificlabourfacility.com.au](mailto:training@pacificlabourfacility.com.au)  
or phone (07) 3557 7766





## KUHN'S MULTI-PURPOSE PRIMOR 5570 M

For farmers with demanding, large-scale operations, it is now possible to load and distribute high volumes of straw and mulch with KUHN's PRIMOR 5570 M straw blower!

Perfect for distributing a consistent amount of straw and mulch for under tree or vine, this machine is ideal for any producer in the horticulture or viticulture industry.

Increasing efficiency while reducing costs is often an important factor when choosing machinery for large scale farming operations. For producers of fruit or vegetables, the use of mulch in their plant crop helps to keep moisture in the soil and reduces the amount of irrigation needed. It also controls weeds around the bottom of the plant, improving soil health in the long term.

KUHN's PRIMOR 5570 M's 300-degree swivel chute increases efficiency in the mulching process. It allows users to distribute straw to the left, right and rear of the machine. The design of the unroll system allows three round bales to fit into the machine at any one time while distributing straw.

Fifth generation viticulturalists from the Barossa Valley region, Steve Schiller and his family have been putting straw onto their vineyard for over 25 years. After years of trialling different distribution methods and machinery, the PRIMOR 5570 M has become an integral part of their family's viticulture operation. "I can carry three round bales, and a single bale is going 130m, so it is a highly efficient machine. I've put about 1500 bales through the machine with very minimal wear on it. It is a really well-built machine," says Steve.

The in-built turbine consists of eight blades, ensuring that straw and mulch is continually fed through the turbine. This maintains even distribution and enhances operator efficiency.

The PRIMOR 5570 M is built with technological features that improve the ease of use at every step of the straw blowing process. The dual control tailgate allows operators to load round bales from the ground, while the electric control panel can be built into any tractor cab, allowing users full access to their controls from the drivers' seat.

To find out more about the PRIMOR 5570 M straw blower and feeder, visit: [www.kuhn.com.au/livestock/silage-cutters-straw-blowers-feeders/primor-5570-m](http://www.kuhn.com.au/livestock/silage-cutters-straw-blowers-feeders/primor-5570-m)



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**GREAT INFORMATION AND EASY TO LISTEN TO INSTRUCTOR WHO WAS ABLE TO IMPART HIS KNOWLEDGE TO ME EASILY. VERY GOOD COURSE. I LEARNED A LOT. RODNEY W**



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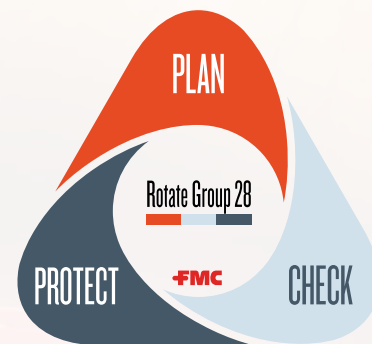
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# FMC

An Agricultural  
Sciences Company



FMC Australasia Pty Ltd  
Phone: 1800 066 355  
[www.fmccrop.com.au](http://www.fmccrop.com.au)



# GREENHOUSE TOMATO PRODUCTION

## VERTICILLUM & FUSARIUM WILT CONTROL



This shows the effects of Wilt Dieback in tomatoes in a greenhouse situation in Virginia South Australia. The tomato plants struggled through to the fruit set stage but succumbed to the diseases curtailing fruit harvest.

### Diseases

Verticillium wilt is a soil-borne fungal disease of many vegetables that enters the plant through the roots. Infection with this fungus causes dieback and the leaves to wilt.

Fusarium wilt is a common vascular wilt fungal disease, exhibiting symptoms similar to Verticillium wilt. The pathogen that causes Fusarium wilt is *Fusarium oxysporum* (*F. oxysporum*).

The wilt pathogens can be sporadic in their infection of individual plants and that infection is soil borne and must travel up the roots. Not all areas of soil have wilt pathogens and this allows some plants to escape unaffected but once the soil is disturbed and cultivated, wilt pathogen spores will be spread throughout the soil profile.



This shows the death of the plant stem material as a result of the wilt pathogen entering from the roots and travelling up the plants vascular system, killing off the healthy leaf and stem material.



This grower had no signs of Verticillium and Fusarium pathogens in his soil and could potentially grow another tomato crop following this crop.

### Grower Experience – Trentham Cliffs, NSW

The grower had previously had total plant deaths of his tomato crop where it was found that Verticillium and Fusarium wilts had killed all of his plants when they reached the growth stage. The grower decided to apply Strike fumigant to greenhouse soil on day 1 that had 4 rows of dripper tubes placed on the soil. Plastic was laid over the whole soil surface area that covered the dripper tubes. The fumigant was applied through the drippers and then flushed with clean water. Irrigation was applied on days 3 and 7 after fumigation for 20 minutes each session. On day 14 the plastic sheeting was removed and the soil was allowed to breathe. On day 15, the tomato seedlings were planted into the soil.

Now the plants are growing vigorously and with large numbers of flowers. The leaves are clean and large and the colour is a healthy dark green with no signs of any dieback. Tomato fruit grown on fumigated soil is uniform in size and colour, with no blemishes and shiny skins.

**This grower had no signs of Verticillium and Fusarium pathogens in his soil and could potentially grow another tomato crop following this crop.** For this to occur, all plant material from the previous crop would need to be removed from the soil and new seedlings planted.

### Soil Fumigation

For successful tomato production, it is recommended that you use Strike products. In this case, the grower used Strike 60 Drip at a rate of 30g/m<sup>2</sup> (300kg/ha) and when applied through the dripper irrigation tubes has been proven to show that both Verticillium and Fusarium wilts can be controlled. This same fumigant and rate has also been demonstrated to control both pathogens when applied as a shanked application in Western Australian tomato crops.

#### Process Involved in Application of Strike 60 Drip

- 1 In greenhouse soils make sure that the soil has been ripped and tilled, and all soil additives have been applied. Lay the dripper tubes in place in the row spacing required for the crop. Cover the dripper tubes with plastic (preferably black plastic) to the width of 50cm. Wet the soil up until it is moist but not flooded.
- 2 Apply Strike 60 Drip at 30g/m<sup>2</sup> soil by injecting this into the irrigation mains that feed the dripper tubes. At the completion of injecting the Fumigant, flush the mains and dripper tubes for a period of 15 minutes.
- 3 Reapplying irrigation 3 days later for a period of 20 minutes and then repeat this step for another 4 days.
- 4 14 days after the application date of Strike 60 Drip, cut the plastic holes at the sites of the tomato seedlings and allow 24 hours for the soil to breathe and after this period plant the seedlings.

Note: Strike Products can only be purchased and applied by suitably accredited and licenced individuals. See your TriCal Australia Distributor.



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Credit Onions Australia

# Fruit & Vegetable news

Vol 93, No 4 July / August 2022

Fruit & Vegetable News is Queensland's premier horticultural magazine, read by Queensland's commercial fruit and vegetable growers and their families.

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#### COVER STORY

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## Ideal timing sparks \$13.7M vegetable, onion and melon trade effort

The nation's melon, onions and vegetable growers have joined forces to develop a \$13.7M export development program through Hort Innovation in a time of rising trade capacity within the industries and strong Australian produce demand.

Being delivered through Hort Innovation using industry levies and funds from the Australian Government, and led by vegetable representative body, AUSVEG, with support from Onions Australia and Melons Australia, the five-year initiative will build the industries' export capability and support their sustainability over time.

Hort Innovation head of trade, Brei Montgomery, said now is the ideal time to launch the effort with various factors informing the approach.

"Now is the ideal time for this program when you look at current movements within our trade markets," she said.

"Covid has presented challenges, but it has also resulted in new ways to engage stakeholders; the strengthening of relationships to eager markets and a desire for businesses to diversify to cater to this demand."

Ms Montgomery said the multi-industry export program is a first for the horticulture industry and will see a collaborative approach for growers in the vegetable, onion and melon industries.

"For the onion, vegetable and melon industries, working together makes sense," she said. "They all share similar objectives to strengthen their overseas trade positions through a strategic, collaborative approach," she said.

"Australia has a reputation for delivering quality produce that has adhered to the most stringent standards across all supply chain stages. This program will leverage and build on that great reputation."

Underpinning the Multi-Industry Export Program is various export capability and market development activities delivered by AUSVEG through Hort Innovation. The new program includes the provision of sophisticated market intelligence data and insights for growers. On top of that, tailored advice on value-adding for export and a comprehensive program will provide growers with opportunities to re-engage with export markets and networks.

AUSVEG CEO Michael Coote said the program focuses on building grower export capability and capacity, collating international market information for decision-making and giving vegetable, onion and melon growers the ability to participate in the highly successful AUSVEG market development program. He said business development functions to uplift the ability of exporting growers to service a wider range of markets and channels and expand international trade opportunities in the future would also be priorities.

"The Australian vegetable industry has invested significantly in export development to help growers successfully export fresh Australian vegetables over the past decade, and as a result has built solid relationships and industry know-how that will benefit vegetable growers, as well as those in the onion and melon industry, which face similar issues with exporting as many vegetable growers," Mr Coote said.

Melons Australia CEO Johnathon Davey said that there were plenty of synergies in the export development work that AUSVEG undertakes for the vegetable industry and the outcomes that the melon industry has identified as priorities in building its capabilities in export.

"The melon industry has identified growing export markets as a key priority for the industry moving forward, and it makes sense for our industry to work with AUSVEG in this project," Mr Davey said.

Onions Australia Executive Committee member and exporter Tim Groom said the multi-industry export program will support a strong history of successful trade and relationship building.

"The Australian onion industry is the second largest vegetable crop exported in Australia with a significant portion of mature growers who have a strong export focus," he said.

"What this program will do is underpin decades of hard work by the industry and offer new insights and approaches that build on our success.

"Onions Australia has been working for several years now to increase our focus on strong export programs and is looking forward to supporting our growers to access this new program."



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