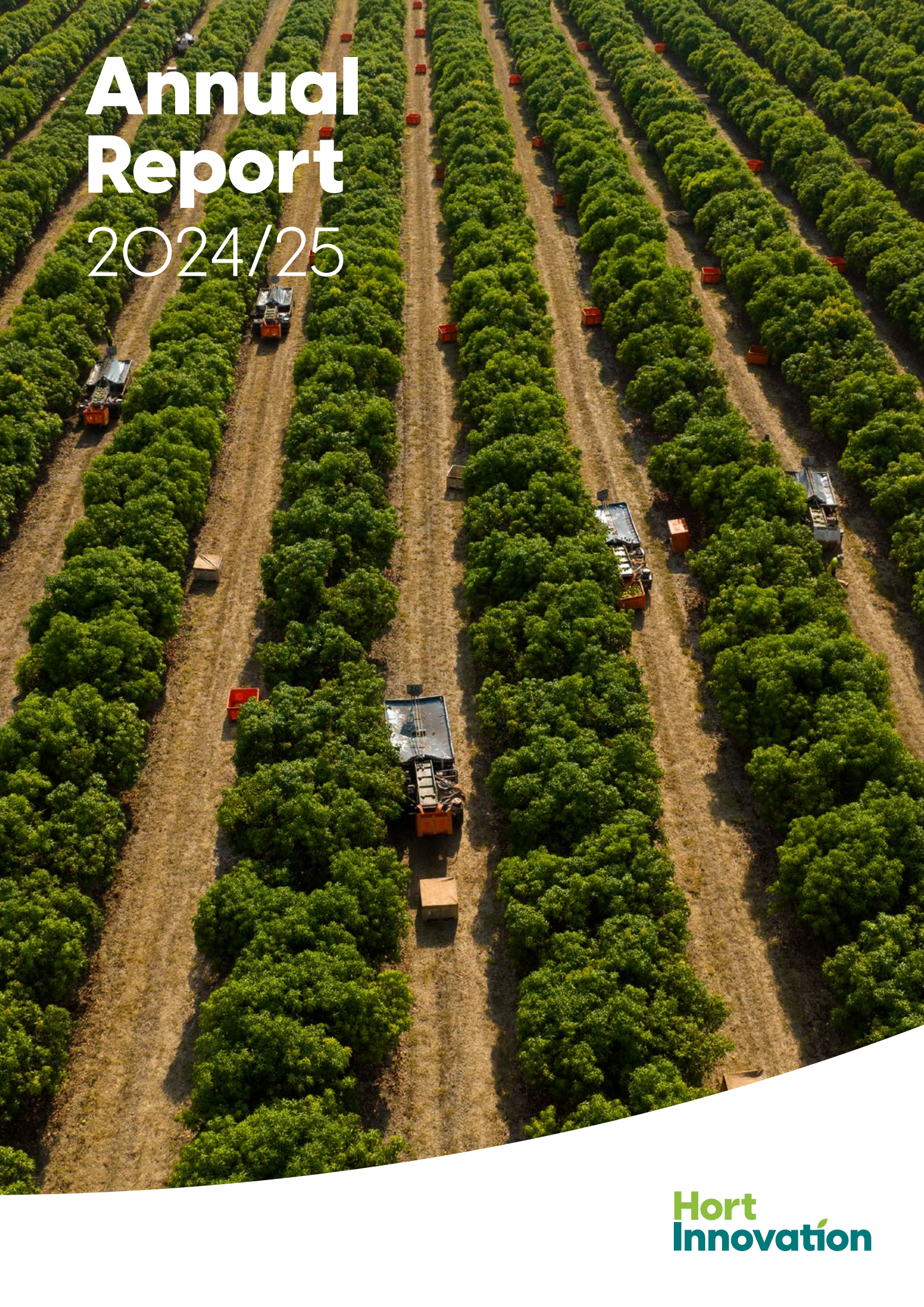




Annual Report 2024/25

Hort Innovation's investments and initiatives drive value for the nation's horticulture sector, now and into the future. The *Hort Innovation Annual Report 2024/25* provides an overview of our progress over the past year and a snapshot of the initiatives delivered.



Overview

This report is for our members, horticulture levy payers, the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) and other horticulture industry stakeholders.

We thank the valued growers, industry representatives and delivery partners who work with us every day to achieve real results. We also thank the Hort Innovation team for its dedication, and the Australian Government, which broadly oversees our activities as a Rural Research and Development Corporation.

Hort Innovation acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands on which we work and their enduring connection to Country. Inspired by their care for land and culture, we commit to fostering an industry that respects and values First Nations' knowledge, traditions and contributions.



On the cover

Australia's largest supplier of Calypso mangoes, Niceforo Farms is a pioneering force in tropical horticulture. Located in the heart of the Northern Territory, the farm blends tradition with innovation, leading trials of robotic mango harvesters and embracing smart farming technologies to boost productivity and sustainability.

Contents

Our 2024/25 Annual Report highlights Hort Innovation’s progress against our company strategy, which you can read more about on [p9](#).

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Introduction

Hort Innovation plays an important role within the horticulture sector and has a clear strategic vision for the future. We take a look back at the year that was 2024/25 and how we are tracking against our goals.

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Enhance and safeguard supply

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Accelerate local and global demand

Our research and development, marketing and trade initiatives help accelerate local and global demand for fresh produce, greenlife and nuts. We drive consumption through high-impact, evidence-based domestic and export marketing campaigns, deliver valuable data and insights that transform decision-making, and advanced solutions to reduce and utilise waste to deliver new revenue streams for growers.

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This Annual Report is complemented by *Hort Innovation’s 2024/25 Performance Statement*, which is a requirement of Hort Innovation’s Statutory Funding Agreement with the Australian Government. The document is available at www.horticulture.com.au/performance-statement.

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Maximise and diversify investments

Through strong industry partnerships, Hort Innovation delivers levy-funded impact, scales bold innovation and creates pathways for new investment and alternative funding.

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Our culture is linked directly to the results we deliver for growers. We are developing a collaborative and customer-centric environment, building a high-performing and inclusive culture, empowering our employees to reach their full potential and continuously investing in industry capability.

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Work simply and effectively

Quality compliance and governance, transparent relationships and minimising complexity all help streamline what we do.

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Plus, see the FINANCIAL REPORT from p97

Hort Innovation's formal reporting includes the Directors' Report for 2024/25 and the company's full Financial Report.



Denbigh Produce
Nichols Point, Victoria

Denbigh Produce is part of Australia's thriving table grape industry. As a grower in one of the country's key production regions, Denbigh Produce reflects the industry's commitment to quality, innovation and export growth with Australian table grapes now reaching premium markets across the world.

Introduction

1

***A prosperous and sustainable
Australian horticulture industry
built on innovation.***

Our vision is clear. See how
we are working towards it.

Who we are



Hort Innovation is the grower-owned, not-for-profit research and development corporation for Australia's horticulture industry. Everything we do is built on our vision for a prosperous and sustainable Australian horticulture industry driven by innovation.

Our role

We advance Australia's \$17 billion horticulture industry by investing in research and development (R&D), marketing and trade to help horticulture thrive.

We partner with Australian and international co-investors including government and leading science, technology and consumer strategy experts to anticipate future challenges and opportunities.

Our role is to capture value from the investments we make to benefit all levy payers.

Delivering our vision

The *Hort Innovation Strategy 2024-2026* guides our approach and reflects our commitment to driving real outcomes for Australian horticulture.

The strategy was shaped through extensive consultation with growers, delivery partners, peak industry bodies and the Australian Government to set a clear direction for how we will deliver on grower priorities.

It builds on existing strengths and focuses our efforts through five strategic imperatives and 18 targeted priorities.

On [p11](#) you can see how we are tracking against these indicators.



Our vision

A prosperous and sustainable Australian horticulture industry built on innovation

Our strategic imperatives

Enhance and safeguard supply

- 🌱 **PRIORITY 1.1**
Lead world-class innovation to ensure Australian horticulture is globally competitive
- 🌱 **PRIORITY 1.2**
Partner with industry on their sustainability priorities and research needs to support social and environmental stewardship
- 🌱 **PRIORITY 1.3**
Excel in breakthrough research to strengthen industry's readiness for existing and emerging opportunities and threats
- 🌱 **PRIORITY 1.4**
Collaborate with industry to bolster resilience and future-proof supply chain disruptions

Accelerate local and global demand

- 🌱 **PRIORITY 2.1**
Access and expand high-value markets to deliver profitability and sustainability for industry
- 🌱 **PRIORITY 2.2**
Drive consumption through high-impact, evidence-based domestic and export marketing campaigns
- 🌱 **PRIORITY 2.3**
Deliver valuable data and insights that transform decision making
- 🌱 **PRIORITY 2.4**
Advance solutions to reduce and utilise waste to deliver new revenue streams for growers

Maximise and diversify investments

- 🌱 **PRIORITY 3.1**
Partner with industry to deliver Annual Investment Plans ensuring industry levy-funded projects deliver impact at scale
- 🌱 **PRIORITY 3.2**
Build strategic partnerships to deliver bigger, bolder investments in innovation for Australian horticulture
- 🌱 **PRIORITY 3.3**
Create a flexible investment framework attracting new partners and alternative funding resources

Make the culture thrive

- 🌱 **PRIORITY 4.1**
Collaborative and customer focused
- 🌱 **PRIORITY 4.2**
High performance, inclusive culture
- 🌱 **PRIORITY 4.3**
Empower our people
- 🌱 **PRIORITY 4.4**
Invest in industry capability

Work simply and effectively

- 🌱 **PRIORITY 5.1**
Quality compliance and governance
- 🌱 **PRIORITY 5.2**
Transparent relationships
- 🌱 **PRIORITY 5.3**
Minimise complexity

Our role

We advance Australia's \$17 billion horticulture industry by investing in research and development, marketing and trade to build a prosperous and sustainable future for growers.

We partner with Australian and international co-investors including government, leading science, technology, and consumer strategy experts to anticipate future challenges and opportunities.

Our role is to capture value from the investments we make to benefit all levy payers.

Our goals

- 🌱 **Foster collaborative relationships** – stakeholder engagement ≥ 66%
- 🌱 **Strong teamwork and shared purpose** – employee engagement ≥ 80%
- 🌱 **Deliver real impact for growers** – benefit-to-cost ratio > 5:1
- 🌱 **Live our values** – focus on our customers and innovation
- 🌱 **Satisfaction with service** – partner rating ≥ 68%
- 🌱 **Execute for industry** – Strategic Investment Plans delivered on time and on budget
- 🌱 **Help grow value** – preference for Australian horticulture in key markets
- 🌱 **Be ambitious** – 100% annual investment target and attract new partners

Our values

- 🌱 **We are focused on the future**
- 🌱 **We work as one team**
- 🌱 **We act with respect and integrity**
- 🌱 **We make a positive difference**

A message from our Chair and CEO

We're pleased to say that this year, Hort Innovation has continued to build momentum, delivering strong investment outcomes and operational performance that reflect our commitment to growers and the broader horticulture sector.

In 2024/25, Hort Innovation invested \$171.2 million across more than 400 projects, supported by levies, Australian Government contributions, grants and co-investment. These investments are delivering real outcomes, from grower-led tech trials and food safety research to new export market access and varietal development. Whether it's improving the sweetness of watermelon through better paddock-to-shelf management or empowering growers with fast on-farm biosecurity testing, we're backing ideas that drive capability and productivity.

Our achievements are underpinned by a clear purpose, deep industry partnerships, and a focus on continuous improvement. These foundations have enabled us to respond to challenges, seize new opportunities, and deliver value where it matters most – at the farm gate.

We are proud to work alongside industry to address horticulture's most pressing challenges, from climate volatility and labour shortages to shifting consumer expectations, while also unlocking the possibilities we know lie ahead.

Horticulture remains Australia's fastest-growing agriculture sector, with the latest figures placing our gross value of production at \$17 billion. This growth is matched by the sector's appetite for innovation – from smarter production systems to new technologies and market expansion.

As we implement the Hort Innovation Strategy 2024-2026, we are excited to share how our work is helping shape a more productive, sustainable and globally competitive horticulture industry.

This Annual Report reflects on the second year of our strategy, and we are pleased to report strong progress against our key performance indicators (see p11). Our team managed a diverse portfolio of more than 400 active R&D projects, 137 delivery partners and \$21.4 million worth of marketing programs across 37 industries – all designed to deliver measurable impact for growers.

Alongside our levy payers, the Australian Government is an important co-investment partner for the horticulture industry. We have continued to work to deliver on both industry and Government priorities as required under our funding agreement.

At Hort Innovation, we believe every challenge presents an opportunity. While the pressures facing horticulture are real, so too is the potential. We continue to listen to and work alongside Australian growers and the horticulture supply chain to ensure our efforts are grounded in what matters most.

We are privileged to serve this industry and act as a platform for collaboration – bringing together the best researchers, growers, partners and investors to solve real problems for the industry, together. Through this shared effort, we are helping cultivate a more innovative, prosperous and sustainable future for Australian horticulture.



Julie Bird
Hort Innovation Chair



Brett Fifield
Hort Innovation Chief Executive Officer

2024/25 performance snapshot

How we are tracking against the Hort Innovation Strategy 2024-2026 goals



Foster collaborative relationships

Goal Stakeholder engagement $\geq 66\%$

Result 67%

See p94 – Annual grower and partner survey



Strong teamwork and shared purpose

Goal Employee engagement $\geq 80\%$

Result 74%

See p81 – Annual employee engagement survey



Live our values

Goal Focus on customers and innovation

Result Values factor uplift from 49% (July 2023 survey) to 94% (July 2024 survey)

See p81 – Company values



Satisfaction with service

Goal Partner rating $\geq 68\%$

Result 62%

See p94 – Annual grower and partner survey



Execute for industry

Goal Investment Plans delivered on time and on budget

Result 2024/25 Plans delivered on time in September 2025

See p44 – Partnering with industry



Help grow value

Goal Preference for Australian horticulture in key markets

Result Export value increased by 7.3% to \$2.9Bn

See p35 – Accelerate local and global demand



Be ambitious

Goal 100% current investment target and attract new funds

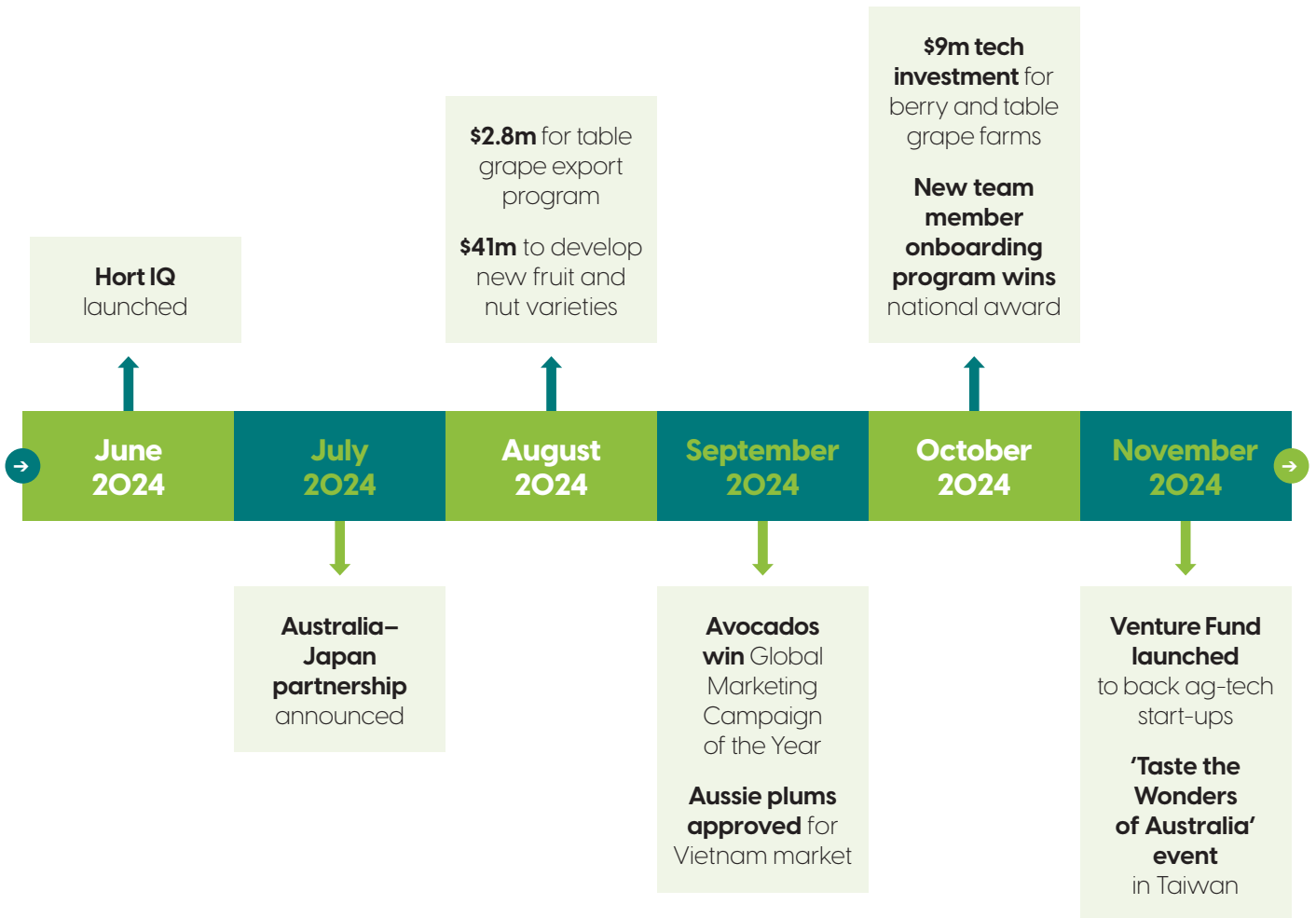
Result Investment target exceeded with \$171.2m invested in 2024/25 (budgeted \$158.4m)

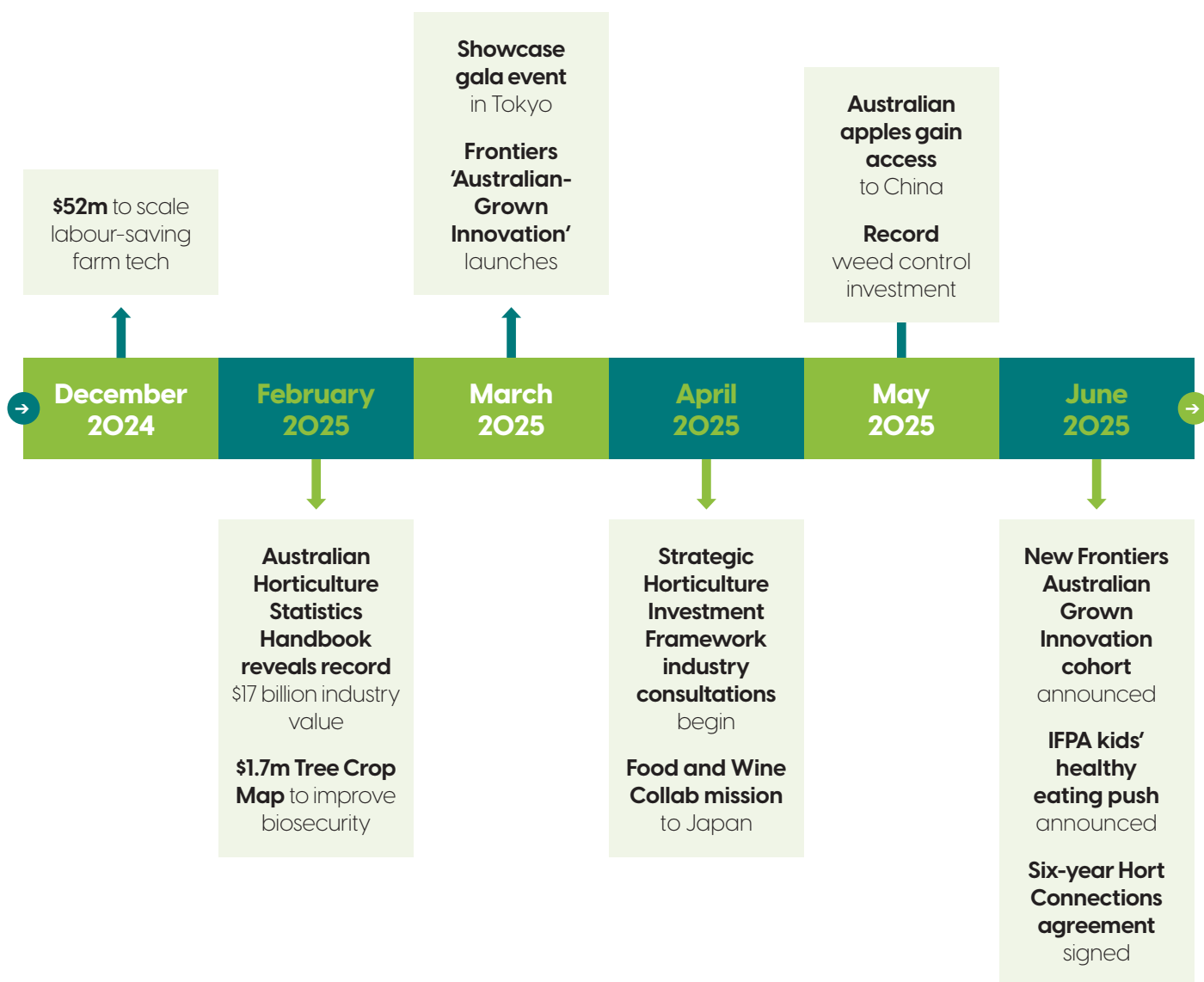
See p59 – Investment in local innovation

Note: Preference for Australian horticulture is measured against the combined market share of Australia's top five export commodities (almond, avocado, citrus, macadamia, table grape) in their respective top five export markets.

The year in review

Here is a look at some of the highlights from 2024/25.





Our stakeholders

Hort Innovation works with a wide range of stakeholders to understand the horticulture sector's challenges and opportunities and deliver results.

Growers, including regional and state-based grower groups across the country

Our project delivery partners

The Australian Government, through the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF)

Horticulture representative bodies, including peak industry bodies and other groups

The wider research community in Australia and overseas



Supply chain participants and partners, such as retailers and Fresh Markets Australia

Australia's other Rural Research and Development Corporations, including initiatives led by AgriFutures such as grow^{AG} and Emerging National Rural Issues (ENRI)

Trade partners, such as Austrade and Australian Horticulture Trade

Collaborative initiatives, such as the Plant Biosecurity Research Initiative and the Australian Food & Wine Collaboration

Associations relevant to horticulture, such as the International Fresh Produce Association and the Australasia-Pacific Extension Network

Industry agencies, such as Plant Health Australia and the government's Cooperative Research Centre network

Co-investors in our research, particularly through Frontiers

Our sector



\$17Bn

total production value of the Australian horticulture sector.



\$7.52Bn

growth in production value since 2012/13.



19%

of Australia's total agricultural production is in horticulture.



3rd

largest agricultural sector in Australia is horticulture.



18%

production value increase for horticulture over the past five years.



\$2.9Bn

Export value increased by 7.3% in 2024/25.

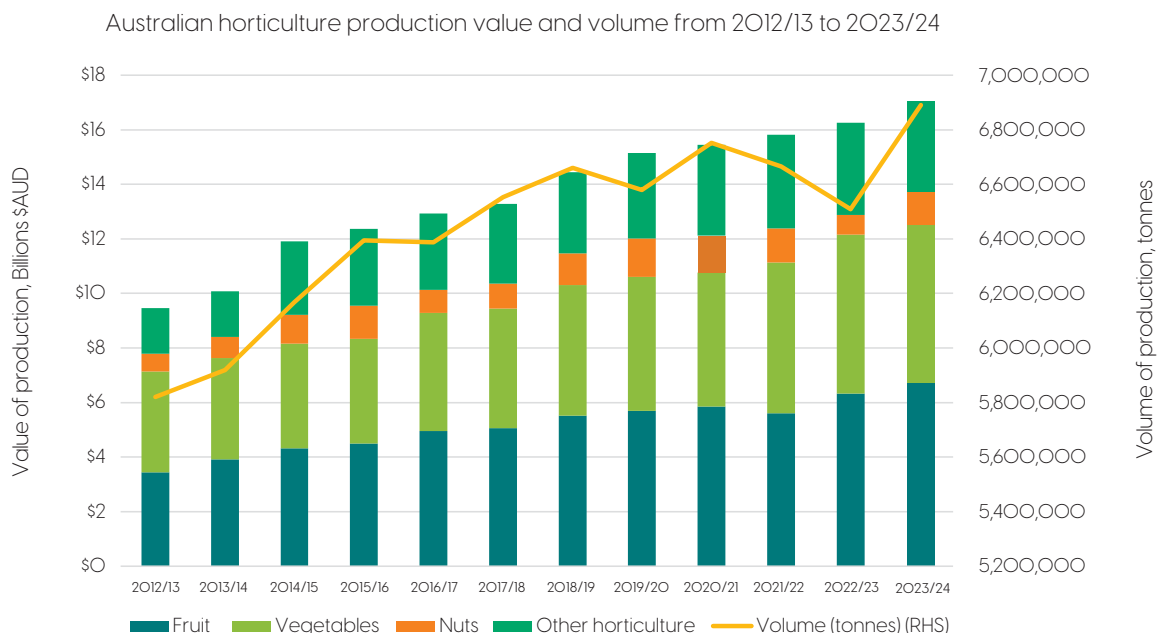


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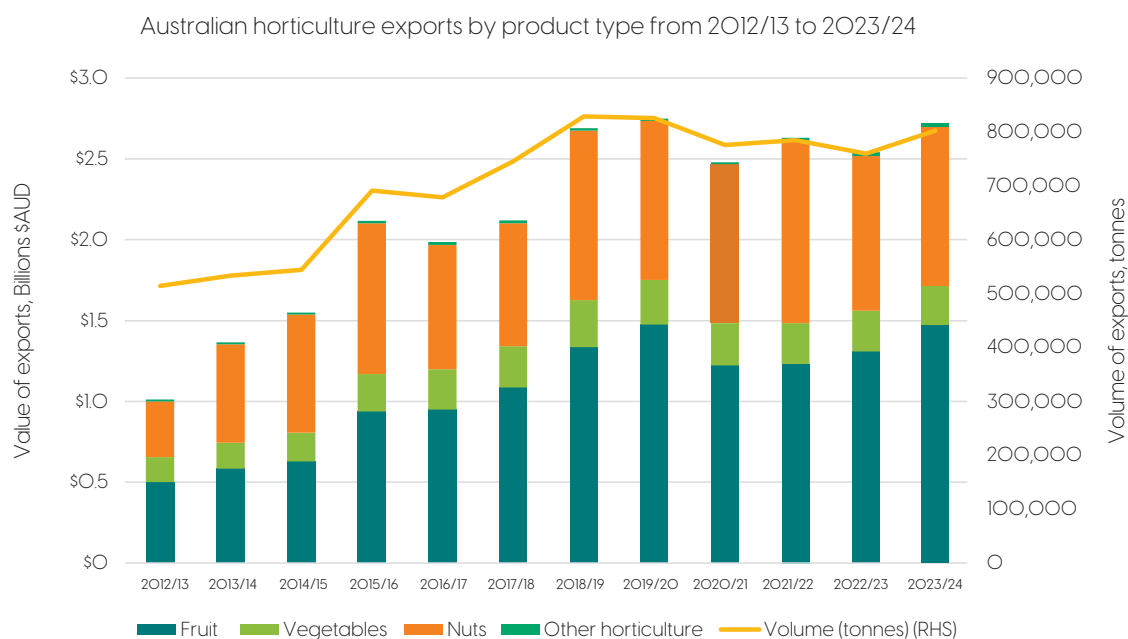
overseas markets exported to, with the top five being China, Hong Kong, Japan, Vietnam and Indonesia.



Industry production value continues to grow in 2024/25



Long-term export performance remains strong



Our funding

Hort Innovation's work is funded by statutory and voluntary industry levies, co-investment funds brokered from a range of partners, grant support and Australian Government contributions.

In 2024/25, Hort Innovation used two primary funding sources: one for strategic levy investments and one for co-investment through our Frontiers investment program.



Levy funding

Levy funding is the core model for Hort Innovation's work, involving the investment of statutory and voluntary industry levies, along with Australian Government matching payments for eligible R&D investments.

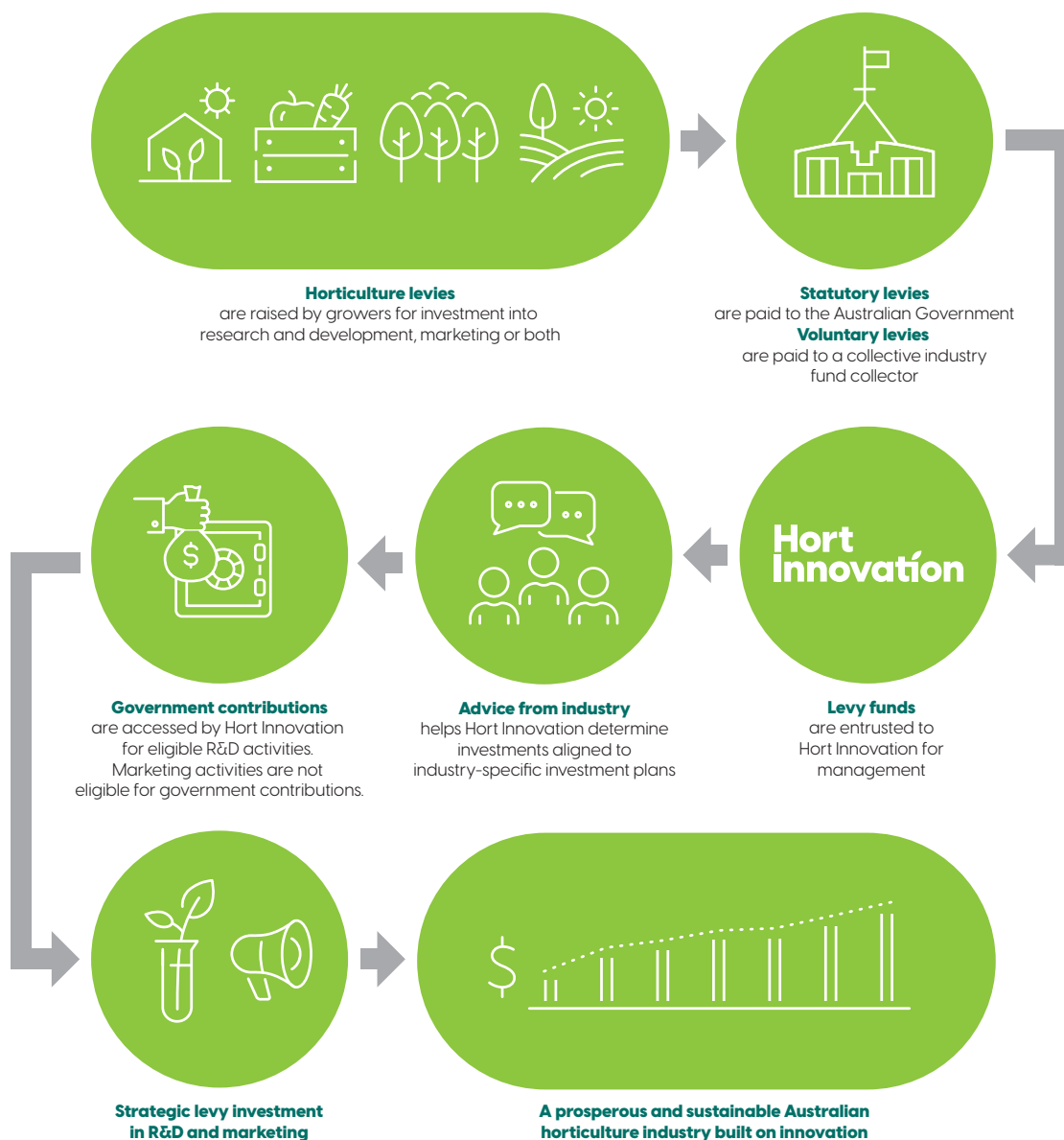
Levy investments are specific to each industry's needs, though multi-industry projects can collaborate across multiple commodities for maximum efficiency and impact.

Hort Innovation does not set or directly collect levies. Individual horticulture industries choose whether to have a levy, what the levy rates are and determine how (or if) their levy is split for investment between R&D and marketing.

Levies can be statutory and administered through DAFF or voluntary and administered through an approved Collective Industry

Fund (CIF) arrangement with Hort Innovation. Industries with a voluntary levy are almond, blueberry, pistachio, processing tomato and pyrethrum.

Industries may have other levies that are not managed by Hort Innovation, such as biosecurity levies that are passed onto Plant Health Australia for investment.



Hort Innovation Frontiers

Frontiers is Hort Innovation's co-investment model, designed to enable longer-term, cross-industry investments focused on complex areas critical for the future of the horticulture sector.

Under the Frontiers model, investments are funded via strategic partnerships with private and commercial partners. Investment from partners is combined with Australian Government contributions for eligible R&D activities.

Frontiers co-investment partners range from commercial businesses to research agencies, education institutions and government departments. Based on industry advice, levy funds can also be invested in Frontiers projects.

Frontiers works alongside rather than in place of levy-funded initiatives. Frontiers investments are designed to extend and amplify levy-funded work, tackling industry-defined themes while avoiding duplication.

In 2024/25, Frontiers launched a number of programs to meet the needs of a rapidly evolving horticulture industry – the fastest growing of the Australian agriculture sectors. These programs included the Hort Innovation Venture Fund, which launched in November 2024, and the Australian-Grown Innovation mentoring program in March 2025. More on both of these programs can be found on [p54](#).



Healthy living



Adaptation and resilience



Market growth and security



Disruptive technologies



Capability building

There are five
Frontiers investment themes



Hort Innovation attracts Australian and international **innovators, co-investors and partners** to collaborate with in each of these research areas



Innovation partnerships



Australian-grown innovation

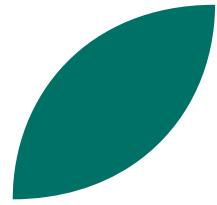


Hort Innovation Venture Fund

Innovative ideas are realised through four investment pathways that are aligned with the Frontiers themes and priorities



For each project, Hort Innovation **brings together funding from all partners** (there may be one or there may be many) and **accesses Australian Government contributions** for eligible R&D activities



Our history

Hort Innovation is an unlisted public company limited by guarantee and the declared industry services body for horticulture. The Australian Government established Hort Innovation in 2014.

We transitioned to a grower-owned company from the former Horticulture Australia Limited (HAL), which operated between 2001 and 2014.

Since 2014, Hort Innovation's company structure has evolved to meet the needs of the horticulture sector, based on consultation with industry. You can view our current organisational structure and learn more about the Hort Innovation team from [p72](#).

From 1 January 2025, a new 10-year Statutory Funding Agreement with DAFF came into effect, which takes a 'principles-based approach' to Hort Innovation's performance. You can read more about the agreement on [p89](#).



Our membership

Hort Innovation membership brings growers and other industry stakeholders closer to their industry's investment activities and results, and to the organisation as a whole.

At the end of the 2024/25 period, Hort Innovation had 2,002 members, including 1,752 grower members (88%).

Hort Innovation membership is free but not automatic – apply at www.horticulture.com.au/membership.

Why join?

Hort Innovation membership is working towards a thriving, engaged and research-active community, in order to deliver better investment decisions and improved research impacts.

Membership delivers:

- Early and direct access opportunities to collaborate on and participate in research and investments
- Pre-registration to Hort IQ – Hort Innovation's one stop shop for consumer insights
- Exclusive event ticket offers; and more.

Members can apply for voting entitlements ahead of each year's Annual General Meeting, giving them a direct say on the leadership at Hort Innovation and the governance of the company.

Who can join?

Membership is open to industry participants who are:

- Carrying on an enterprise within a horticultural industry in Australia
- Holding a registered ABN
- Examples include:
 - growing and harvesting
 - processing
 - packing
 - transporting
 - marketing
 - wholesaling
 - retailing
 - exporting
 - supplying of inputs for horticulture production.

Easier voting for members

We've made it easier for levy payers to receive a vote. One vote can be attained by completing the Annual Levy Return form and simply ticking the horticultural products for which levies have been paid. Members no longer have to submit levy amounts paid. To qualify for one voting right, the member must have been liable for \$200 or more in levies.

One additional vote is provided for every \$10,000 in average levies for the past three financial years (taken as an average over the past three financial years). To secure more than one voting right, the levy amounts paid by horticultural product must be on the Annual Levy Return form.

Voting rights are available to members who are levy payers and/or producers who contribute to a Collective Industry Fund (CIF).

**Fitzroy River Plantation – MacField Farms
South Yaamba, Queensland**

Fitzroy River Plantation is a large-scale macadamia orchard contributing to one of Australia's most popular native horticultural industries. With macadamias now the country's second most valuable nut crop and a key export commodity, Hort Innovation continues to support the industry through strategic R&D and marketing initiatives.



2

Enhance and safeguard supply

Hort Innovation works to enhance and safeguard supply through leading world class innovation. We look at the best ideas from across the globe, and unlock innovation here in Australia to improve sustainability, bolster resilience and future-proof supply chains.



Spotlight:

New varieties, higher yields

New varieties help maximise returns

PRIORITY 1.1

Lead world-class innovation to ensure Australian horticulture is globally competitive



"As we move into the next generation of orchards, we need access to varieties that are designed for the latest production techniques and automation options."

Lindsay Bryen,

Macadamia Industry Variety Improvement Committee chair.

Smaller, higher-density orchards could help address productivity and labour challenges, utilising automation to reduce labour pressure and new varieties for higher yield.

A \$41 million tree crop program delivered through Hort Innovation's Frontiers investment program is helping accelerate development of new almond, apple, citrus, macadamia and mango varieties suited to smaller orchards, and designed for highly desirable traits such as better storage and quality, higher nutritional content and climate resilience.

The five-year initiative is led by a collaboration between Queensland University of Technology (QUT), Murdoch University, University of Queensland (UQ) and Western Sydney University (WSU).

The program builds on more than five years of research in tree genomics and crop physiology.

Macadamia Industry Variety Improvement Committee chair Lindsay Bryen said it is essential for industry to have access to varieties that are productive and profitable.

The program is focused on optimising space and resources in orchards through the development of smaller, less vigorous tree varieties planted at higher densities. These orchards will maximise yield per unit area and support the implementation of automated management tools that will help growers improve their productivity at reduced costs.



Spotlight:

Bringing global farm tech to Australian soil for grower gains

Smarter farming through mechanisation

PRIORITY 1.1

Lead world-class innovation to ensure Australian horticulture is globally competitive



“Growers and technology companies see value in an interactive regional event that demonstrates the technologies in real-world conditions.”

Ian Layden,

Department of Primary Industries
Director of Vegetables, Systems
and Supply Chains.

Two pioneering projects are helping reshape the future of vegetable growing in Australia, with a strong focus on boosting the adoption of advanced mechanisation and ag-tech.

Through the Advanced Vegetable Mechanisation Program, growers are gaining direct access to global innovations that could significantly reduce their reliance on costly inputs such as labour, fuel and chemicals. The program, delivered by Queensland's Department of Primary Industries, includes field days and demonstration trials, international study tours and demonstration sites showcasing cutting-edge machinery. By breaking down barriers to information and fast-tracking access, it helps growers make confident, informed decisions about investing in new technologies.

This project is fast-tracking access to automation, robotics and mechanisation solutions for vegetable growers. By trialling global technologies in Australian conditions, from robotic weeders and harvesters to precision planters and smart sprayers, the program is demonstrating tangible benefits in efficiency, crop quality and pack-out.

Central to this innovation journey is the Gatton Smart Farm, a state-of-the-art facility where new technologies are tested and validated under real-world conditions. It acts as a bridge between research and practice, providing robust evidence and confidence for grower adoption.

Together, these initiatives are accelerating innovation uptake across the industry and strengthening Australia's position in the global ag-tech landscape.



Spotlight:

AI-enabled orchard automation to boost productivity

Bringing proven tech to the nut sector

PRIORITY 1.1

Lead world-class innovation to ensure Australian horticulture is globally competitive

Labour shortages continue to pressure Australian growers, especially in permanent crop industries like nuts where many operations rely on seasonal workforces. A new generation of autonomous tractor technology is offering a smarter, safer and more efficient way to get the job done.

Bluewhite's Pathfinder system retrofits standard tractors with advanced AI, LiDAR and computer vision, enabling them to perform tasks like spraying, mowing and harvesting autonomously. It is already proven on more than 150,000 acres in the United States, giving growers the ability to remotely monitor and control their fleets using a central software platform, reducing reliance on manual labour while increasing productivity.

A new project is customising this technology for Australian nut orchards, where automation could offer multiple advantages, from improving worker safety to reducing operating costs and supporting precision farming practices. Autonomous tractors also operate consistently, even during peak pressure periods and can help growers collect and act on data in real time.

For nut growers managing large orchards and narrow harvest windows, smart automation could be a game changer, bringing greater resilience to the sector and opening the door to future innovations in connected farming.

With support from Hort Innovation, the project will tailor Bluewhite's platform to meet the specific needs of Australian nut growers and deliver a scalable, smart farming solution that boosts productivity and sustainability, while positioning the industry to adopt future innovations with minimal disruption.

Did you know?

The global market for autonomous tractors is due to reach \$11.5 billion (USD) by 2030, as growers face increased pressure to produce more with fewer resources.



Spotlight:

Augmented tech driving productivity

Addressing labour challenges in new ways

PRIORITY 1.1

Lead world-class innovation to ensure Australian horticulture is globally competitive



“Implementing this technology could be a game changer for our industry. It has the potential to increase productivity, boost team culture, reduce labour costs and bring wide-ranging benefits to our businesses.”

Laurie Adams,
Burlington Berries.

A \$9 million initiative is bringing the future of farm labour to Australia's berry and table grape industries. By harnessing the power of augmented and virtual reality, artificial intelligence and real-time data tools, the program aims to tackle one of horticulture's biggest challenges – labour productivity.

The project is trialling cutting-edge technologies including virtual reality training tools. These innovations are designed to help growers reduce waste, improve decision-making and boost efficiency across the supply chain.

Technology providers Clarifresh and Think Digital are leading the charge. Clarifresh is working to automate quality control using AI and augmented reality, eliminating subjective human judgement and helping standardise assessments across the supply chain.

While the project is initially focused on berries and table grapes, it offers a roadmap for scaling these solutions to other crops in the future, laying the groundwork for a more tech-enabled, resilient horticulture sector.



Spotlight:

Tackling weeds in new ways

Record investment in weed management

PRIORITY 1.2

Partner with industry on their sustainability priorities and research needs to support social and environmental stewardship

Weeds are among horticulture's most persistent and costly challenges, capable of slashing crop yields by up to 50% and becoming increasingly resistant to traditional herbicides. Australia's largest-ever investment in horticultural weed management seeks to find new solutions.

The Next Generation Weed Management initiative is delivering practical, sustainable weed management options across three cutting-edge projects. Applied Horticulture Research is working directly with growers to accelerate the adoption of autonomous weeding, planting and spraying robots. By integrating AI-enabled machinery into commercial farms, the project aims to help growers cut weeding costs by up to 90%, while increasing productivity and reducing environmental impact.

In a parallel project, La Trobe University is leading the Australian-first investigation into anaerobic soil disinfestation (ASD), a chemical-free method that uses natural materials and low-oxygen conditions to suppress weeds and pathogens. Trials across multiple climates and crops will test ASD's potential to improve soil health and eliminate reliance on traditional fumigants.

Meanwhile, Nufarm Australia is developing precision smart-spraying technology capable of identifying and treating individual weeds using green-on-green detection and microdroplet application. This approach could cut herbicide use by 95%, while boosting yields and reducing labour costs.

This project is funded through Hort Innovation Frontiers with co-investment from Applied Horticultural Research (AHR), La Trobe University, Nufarm Australia and contributions from the Australian Government.

Where the research is focusing

- **Grower-led adoption of AI-enabled robotics**
- **Anaerobic soil disinfestation**
- **Precision robotic spot-spraying (green-on-green)**
- **Potatoes, onions, garlic, leafy greens**
- **Strawberries, tomatoes, capsicums, melons**
- **Broad application across horticulture crops**

Spotlight:

Fighting hive disease with probiotic innovation

Low-cost and chemical-free supplement to help honey bees fight diseases

PRIORITY 1.3

Excel in breakthrough research to strengthen industry's readiness for existing and emerging opportunities and threats

Honey bee pollination is vital for the viability of Australian horticulture.

Increasing threats from pests, diseases and chemical use means honey bee colonies have been declining in Australia, so new methods of supporting the health of managed honey bees is urgently needed.

A Hort Innovation investment is enabling Macquarie University to develop and implement innovative probiotics as low-cost and chemical-free treatments for honey bee diseases.

Probiotic treatments have recently been developed to increase the resistance of the European honey bee to specific viral and bacterial diseases, but with several diseases infecting hives it is challenging to determine which is responsible for poor hive performance.

The project is looking at methods that improve honey bee resistance to a wide spectrum of diseases, and to increase overall strength of hives.

The research team will:

1. Culture and store probiotic strains and diseases of honey bees in laboratory conditions.
2. Test for the effects of probiotics against a range of infections in laboratory conditions.
3. Test for the effects of probiotics on flower visitation by honey bees in the field.



Spotlight:

Providing access to safe and effective crop protection

PRIORITY 1.3

Excel in breakthrough research to strengthen industry's readiness for existing and emerging opportunities and threats

Hort Innovation supports growers' access to safe and effective crop protection solutions through levy projects, grant funding and additional activities.

Minor use permits

The Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) issues minor use permits so that growers can legally access, and safely use, crop protection products for 'minor uses' that are not covered in a product's registered label. Hort Innovation facilitates the submission of renewals and applications for minor use permits on behalf of the horticulture sector in-line with specific criteria.

Permits by the numbers for 2024/25

- 398 permits currently issued across horticulture, coordinated by Hort Innovation.
- 108 permit applications submitted during 2024/25, including three applications for new minor use permits and uses with residue/efficacy data, five applications for new minor use permits and uses where scientifically sound arguments and previous submitted data was provided, and 100 renewal applications.



- 112 permits issued in 2024/25, including 103 permit renewals, eight new minor use permits, and one permit for emergency use.
- One minor use permit surrendered as uses now covered by a registered label.
- One minor use permit withdrawn – APVMA not renewing permits listing Chlorpyrifos as an active ingredient.

Data generation

The creation of pesticide residue, efficacy and crop safety data is needed to support minor use permit and label registration applications made to the APVMA. Hort Innovation's data generation work is supported by assistance grants, which we seek on behalf of industry each year through the Australian Government's Access to Industry Priority Uses of AgVet Chemicals program.

AgVet grants by the numbers

- \$700,000 in grants awarded to Hort Innovation in 2024/25.
- \$8,873,410 or 136 individual grants, secured by Hort Innovation to date.
- 790 efficacy/crop safety and residue trials supported so far.
- Hundreds of horticulture crops to benefit from new uses for sustainable crop protection.

- These grants have provided funding to support 46 permits and 97 new label registrations.
- 80 of the 136 grant projects have been fully completed and 45 permits and 22 label registrations have been approved and issued by the APVMA.
- In 2024/25, Hort Innovation studies were submitted to the APVMA by the registrants in support of a further five product label extensions for various industries and uses.

Other critical work

To help horticulture industries identify gaps in existing control options for pests, weeds and diseases, Hort Innovation funds Strategic Agrichemical Review Process (SARP) research. This research is used to identify industry priorities in the pursuit of chemical registrations or minor use permits.

Hort Innovation provides the horticulture sector with quarterly Ag Chemical Updates and six-monthly Regulatory Risk Assessments that inform domestic and international regulatory changes and threats and help industry respond to impacts on pesticide access and use.

Spotlight:

A big-picture approach to the pests of today and tomorrow

Rethinking pest management at the landscape scale

PRIORITY 1.3

Excel in breakthrough research to strengthen industry's readiness for existing and emerging opportunities and threats

As pest pressures increase and challenges continue to emerge around the use of chemical pesticides, a new project is assessing how a shift from farm-by-farm control toward a connected, ecosystem-based method could usher in a new era of pest management.

PestREADI (Regionally Enabled Agroecological Decision-Intelligence), led by CSIRO, is working with landholders and Jagun Alliance to co-develop landscape-scale digital tools to support coordinated pest control and build long-term resilience across the sector. The project, based in the Northern Rivers region of New South Wales (Bundjalung Country), unites cutting-edge science, indigenous knowledge and grower insights to tackle pest threats with a strategic, holistic approach.

The initiative uses digital modelling, social network mapping and co-designed tools to deliver real-time decision support for consultants, growers and governments. It identifies key pest risks, highlights gaps in preparedness and creates better pathways for coordination, helping stakeholders respond faster and more precisely to outbreaks while reducing reliance on traditional chemicals.

Through a partnership with Jagun Alliance, the program supports inclusion of traditional perspectives in pest risk planning and the development of modern pest ready management systems.

What PestREADI will deliver

- 🍃 **Indigenous perspectives integrated into pest resilience strategies.**
- 🍃 **Digital tools for real-time pest risk management.**
- 🍃 **Lower economic and environmental costs of pest control.**
- 🍃 **Stronger regional cooperation across the supply chain.**

Spotlight:

Simplifying compliance through RegTech innovation

Identifying challenges and finding solutions

PRIORITY 1.4

Collaborate with industry to bolster resilience and future-proof supply chain disruptions

A new initiative is paving the way for smarter, more streamlined compliance in horticulture by harnessing the power of regulatory technology.

The project aimed to simplify the complexity faced by growers and businesses navigating the many layers of compliance, covering everything from food safety and quality to biosecurity and sustainability claims. A Community of Practice (Hort-COP) was established as part of the project to bring together voices from across the horticulture supply chain to identify pain points and guide solutions.

The objective was to deliver a practical, open-source RegTech framework by mapping and analysing the rules and regulations affecting product claims in both domestic and export markets. This framework hopes to verify claims, reduce duplication and identify where technology can make the greatest impact.

Technology providers were invited to showcase solutions, with the most promising innovations assessed for their cost-effectiveness and efficiency gains. The outcome will be a set of clear recommendations to future-proof compliance processes and support trustworthy traceability in Australian horticulture.

By streamlining compliance, this project has the potential to boost market access, reduce red tape and give growers back valuable time.

The project, Developing a RegTech framework and applications across horticultural value chains, is a collaborative effort between Hort Innovation and Freshcare, funded through the National Agriculture Traceability Regulatory Technology Research and Insights Grant Round.





Australia's macadamia industry continues to thrive with a strong export orientation. Per the Australian Horticulture Statistics Handbook, more than 75% of Australian grown macadamias are exported, reinforcing its global appeal. This image was provided by the Australian Macadamia Society.



3

Accelerate local and global demand

Strong demand is at the heart of a thriving horticulture sector. Hort Innovation supports this by introducing the world to exceptional Australian produce, expanding market opportunities and giving growers new tools to make decisions and build new revenue streams.



Spotlight:

Brand Australia shines in Japan

Strategic opportunities amid global uncertainty

PRIORITY 2.1

Access and expand high-value markets to deliver profitability and sustainability for industry

Australia's counter-seasonal growing cycle and reputation for quality and sustainability have caught the attention of the Japanese market, with extensive relationship-building initiatives from Hort Innovation helping to create opportunity for local growers.

In March 2025, Hort Innovation, Austrade and DAFF hosted The Taste of the Land Down Under in the Land of the Rising Sun event, as part of the Australia-Japan Horticulture Showcase initiative. In June, Hort Innovation was invited to participate in the World Expo Osaka 2025, a global trade showcase in Osaka.

Both high-profile events provided a platform for Australia to present its horticulture sector to Japanese stakeholders, with the latter including a presentation highlighting Hort Innovation's Sustainability Framework and the community checks embedded in every project.

The response from Japanese attendees was overwhelmingly positive, with Australian growers recognised for our leadership on environmental responsibility and circular economy principles.

The ongoing Australia-Japan Horticulture Showcase – funded by Hort Innovation's Frontiers and DAFF's Showcasing Australian Horticulture Grant – is designed to strengthen and expand the trading relationship between Australia and Japan.

- Japan is Australia's third-largest trading partner in horticulture.
- Exports valued at \$175.6 million in 2025.
- Leading categories include oranges (42%), macadamias (13%), and table grapes (13%).
- 2025 is the 10th anniversary of the Japan-Australia Economic Partnership Agreement.



Spotlight:

Taking Aussie fruit to the world

Australian produce centre stage at Asia Fruit Logistica

Priority 2.1

Access and expand high-value markets to deliver profitability and sustainability for industry

Australian growers took the spotlight at Asia Fruit Logistica 2024, Asia's leading exhibition for fresh fruit and vegetable marketing, promoting top-quality produce to 13,000 buyers from more than 70 countries. Under the Grown in Good Nature banner, the largest-ever Australian delegation pitched directly to global markets, driving new export leads and strengthening trade relationships.

Hort Innovation coordinated a bold, unified industry presence where growers showcased avocados, citrus, grapes, stonefruit and more. Businesses of all sizes were supported to connect and explore opportunities.

The Australian Avocados campaign stole the show, winning Marketing Campaign of the Year and proving that strong branding drives real results.



"The biggest benefit from attending Asia Fruit Logistica is that buyers from worldwide markets all congregate at the one venue, which means we can meet with our existing customers at the same time as engaging with potential new ones."

David Flack,
Venus International.



"As a collective industry, we are committed to working with our export partners to deliver our excellent produce reliably all-year round and are continually investing in research and development, marketing and trade initiatives."

John Tyas,
Avocados Australia Chief Executive Officer.



Spotlight:

Fresh ideas for fresh produce

Campaigns driving consumer behaviour

PRIORITY 2.2

Drive consumption through high-impact, evidence-based domestic and export marketing campaigns

Hort Innovation is championing fresh produce consumption through inventive campaigns that combine education, entertainment and strategic media engagement.

At the 2025 Sydney Royal Easter Show, Australian Bananas launched a 'Farm-to-Table' video starring rugby league player Thomas Flegler. Aimed at children, this initiative promotes early food literacy and healthy habits by taking viewers on a fun, animated journey through banana farming. Featuring the adventurous character Anna Goes Bananas, the video creates a lasting connection between kids and fresh food.

Meanwhile, Australian Avocados leveraged cultural moments like the Paris Olympics and King Charles III's visit to drive engagement through its multi-channel Go Green Gold campaign. Large-format outdoor ads reached more than 10.2 million people, while humorous content like *The Adventures of Avo, Cado, and Pip* entertained and educated, reaching 2.8 million people and generating more than 7,000 impressions.

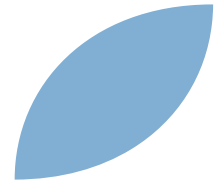
Other standout efforts include Aussie Apples' No Snackgrets campaign targeting 9.5 million snackers with a guilt-free message and the Australian Mushrooms in-store sampling program, which converted 71% of participants into buyers through hands-on culinary inspiration.

Through innovative storytelling, cultural relevance and consumer engagement, these campaigns are reshaping Australia's fresh produce consumption habits.

Key results:

- 🍌 **Bananas: More than 900,000 Easter Show visitors.**
- 🥑 **Avocados: 10.2m reached via outdoor advertising, 62m digital impressions, 5.8m media reach.**
- 🍄 **Mushrooms: 71% sampling-to-purchase conversion.**
- 🍏 **Apples: Campaign targeting 9.5m Australian snackers.**





Spotlight:

One serve, billions in opportunity

Encouraging Aussies to eat more fresh produce

PRIORITY 2.2

Drive consumption through high-impact, evidence-based domestic and export marketing campaigns

Boosting vegetable consumption by just one serve per Australian per day presents a major growth opportunity for the horticulture industry: an estimated \$3.3 billion increase in value to growers and the supply chain, 13,000 new regional jobs and a \$1.4 billion saving in healthcare costs.*

Plus One Serve of Vegetables by 2030, funded by Hort Innovation and led by AUSVEG, is a six-year, cross-sector initiative focused on reversing declining vegetable intake. With Australians currently averaging only 2.2 serves daily, the program uses behaviour change strategies across schools, homes, retail and early learning to normalise vegetable consumption and close a gap of up to 27 billion serves per year.

By 2030, the program aims to increase production by 680,000 tonnes and deliver a total \$4.7 billion in net economic benefit.

With a projected \$12.30 return for every dollar invested, the program offers strong, levy-funded value for growers and the wider industry.



"It's good for growers, the economy and the health of all Australians."

Michael Coote,
CEO, AUSVEG.

* The National Strategy, Baseline and Value Perception Study for the Plus One Serve by 2030 program was developed to support behaviour change initiatives aimed at increasing vegetable consumption across Australia. It provides foundational insights into consumer attitudes, economic modelling, and strategic frameworks to guide communications and interventions.



Driving consumer data insights for the horticulture sector

Priority 2.3

Deliver valuable data and insights that transform decision-making

What do Australians think, feel and do in relation to buying and consuming fresh produce? Hort Innovation's Hort IQ is answering these questions and transforming how the horticulture industry understands and responds to consumer behaviour.

The platform provides growers, marketers and other industry stakeholders with direct access to the latest, most comprehensive data on Australian fruit, vegetable and nut consumption. Users can explore real-time insights into market dynamics, purchasing behaviours and consumer perceptions, helping to inform strategic decisions across production, marketing and product development.

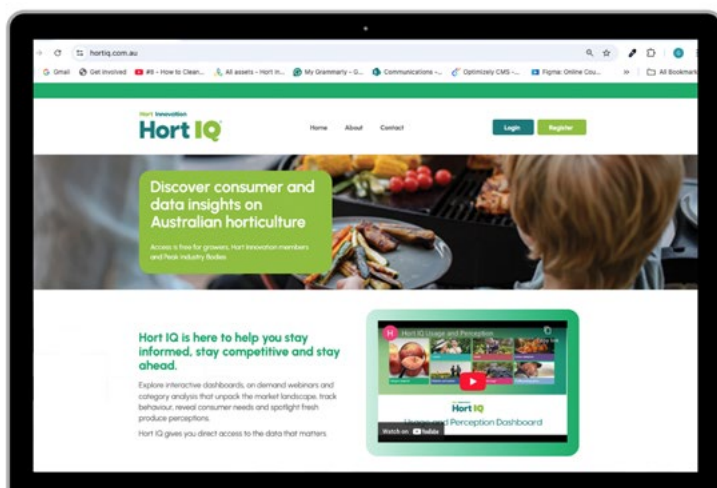
At the heart of Hort IQ is a portfolio of robust data projects, developed in collaboration with leading research partners Fiftyfive5 and Nielsen IQ. Since its launch in 2024, Hort IQ has continued to expand, delivering the critical insights users need to identify opportunities, respond to challenges, and drive growth across the horticulture value chain.

Access to Hort IQ is available to eligible individuals involved in growing, marketing, selling or developing Australian horticulture. To check your eligibility and register, visit hortiq.com.au.

How consumers behaved in 2024/25

According to insights from Hort IQ, among the top social concerns for Australians are cost of living, wellbeing and sustainability, including increasing food prices, utility bills and housing. Consumers continue to buy products they know and enjoy, and online shopping continues to grow.

- 30% eating meals at home more often.
- 75% say dining out behaviour has been impacted.
- More than half of all households shop at 4+ retailers over a quarter.
- The average household shops for produce more than 90 times per year.
- Produce retail volumes up less than 1%.
- Supermarket volumes surged 6%.
- In-store spontaneous purchases drove an additional 15% in purchase volume.
- Households are buying more kiwifruit, mangoes, oranges and blackberries.



Spotlight:

Facts and figures for a data-led future

Statistics provide insights on production trends

Priority 2.3

Deliver valuable data and insights that transform decision-making

Hort Innovation's latest Australian Horticulture Statistics Handbook revealed good news for the horticulture sector, with production value rising 4.3% year-on-year to \$17 billion.

This highly valued industry resource supports strategic decision-making across the supply chain by providing reliable data across 75 categories of fruit, vegetables, nuts and greenlife. The detailed national data ranges from state-level production volumes and values to exports and imports, processing volumes and distribution across fresh supply, retail and food service.

As well as providing objective data to help guide business decisions, the handbook is a powerful showcase of the industry and this year's edition generated strong national

and regional media engagement. The 2023/24 edition of the handbook was produced by a levy-funded project and delivered by our delivery partner Freshlogic.

Key findings:

- Production volume up 6.6% to 6.89 million tonnes.
- Production value \$17 billion, up 4.3%.
- Export values increased 7.3% to a record high of nearly \$3 billion.
- Strong fruit value growth, particularly in berries, bananas and citrus, with citrus reaching more than \$1 billion in value for the first time.
- Domestic supply expands to keep up with demand: Fresh market supply expanded by 4.3%, supported by strong production in watermelons, avocados, strawberries and potatoes.
- Nuts make a comeback: Almond production value rose by 63.3% and macadamias increased by 94.1%.

Spotlight:

Reducing agricultural waste

A collaborative response to a cross-sector challenge

PRIORITY 2.4

Advance solutions to reduce and utilise waste to deliver new revenue streams for growers

With growing global pressures on food, energy and water resources, the entire agriculture industry is increasingly looking to circular economy models,

where waste becomes a resource, as a pathway to reduce emissions and preserve finite resources.

Hort Innovation has partnered with AgriFutures, Australian Eggs and Australian Pork Ltd through the Emerging National Rural Issues program to support a cross-sectoral project focused on advancing circular economy practices in Australian agriculture.

Through stakeholder engagement, literature reviews, systems mapping and case study development, the

Project aims:

- Define what success looks like for a circular economy in Australian agriculture, fisheries and forestry.
- Equip rural industries with practical tools to identify, implement and monitor circular economy initiatives, with a particular focus on organic waste.

project will deliver a decision-making toolkit and video case studies to help businesses explore viable, sustainable solutions for organic waste.



Bartle Frere Bananas
Boogan, Queensland

Bartle Frere Bananas is a 100-hectare, family-run plantation supplying bananas to both boutique markets and major retailers. Through a collaborative project delivered through Hort Innovation Frontiers, the farm is pioneering real-time data use to improve environmental outcomes and drive smarter, tech-enabled decision-making.

4

Maximise and diversify investments

Through strong industry partnerships, Hort Innovation delivers levy-funded impact, scales bold innovation and creates pathways for new investment and alternative funding.



Partnering with industry

PRIORITY 3.1

Partner with industry to deliver Annual Investment Plans ensuring industry levy-funded projects deliver impact at scale

To drive meaningful change across Australian horticulture, Hort Innovation takes a strategic and collaborative approach to our investments.

Our decisions are guided by industry priorities and shaped through consultation with growers, peak industry bodies, and subject matter experts.

This ensures that levy-funded projects not only deliver value at scale but also reflect a balanced portfolio that spans foundational, incremental and transformational investments aligned to both industry and government priorities.

Strategic Investment Plans

Each levied industry has a Strategic Investment Plan (SIP), developed in collaboration with growers and stakeholders. These five-year plans (2022–2026) outline investment priorities and desired outcomes. In 2024/25, Hort Innovation commenced a review of the strategic investment framework, guided by a Stakeholder Engagement Plan aligned to the Best Practice Guide to Stakeholder Consultation and informed by recommendations from the Independent Review of Performance, undertaken in 2024.

To translate SIP priorities into action, Annual Investment Plans (AIPs) are developed for each levy fund. These plans detail how funds will be invested over a 12-month period and are shaped through consultation with industry advisory panels.

This rigorous approach ensures levy funds are used responsibly to generate real impact.

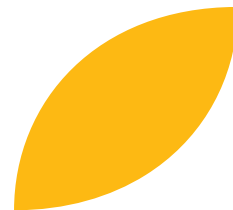
In 2024/25, Hort Innovation facilitated more than 92 Strategic Investment Advisory Panel (SIAP) and ideation meetings, resulting in 212 RD&E project recommendations and 49 marketing investment priorities.

In response to feedback from industry and DAFF, AIPs are now published annually with clear fund priorities and financial positions to support transparency and future planning. All AIPs were delivered by the September 2024 target, using improved templates that enhanced engagement and service delivery.

We continue to take guidance from formal panels of levy-paying growers, industry representatives and subject matter experts when making investment decisions.

For industries with marketing levies, Hort Innovation's marketing team co-designs annual plans with SIAPs, using consumer insights and campaign performance data to guide strategy. This approach ensures greater industry involvement in marketing planning.





Best practice in stakeholder consultation

As part of our commitment to transparency and inclusive feedback, Hort Innovation continued to strengthen its engagement with key stakeholders, particularly growers and delivery partners, through a best practice approach to consultation.

A key focus this year was the Strategic Horticulture Investment Framework (SHIFt), which builds on our Strategic Investment Plans (SIPs). SIPs have long served as the primary tool for planning, evaluating and reporting on levy investments across each industry fund. The current five-year SIPs are set to expire on 30 June 2026, so Hort Innovation is taking the opportunity to review the planning system and explore more ambitious and effective models for future investment.

To ignite a creative and inclusive conversation about the future of strategic investment planning, we published the SHIFt Discussion Guide, which outlines opportunities for stakeholders to contribute feedback in a way that is transparent, accessible and aligned with the principles of our Stakeholder Engagement and Consultation Framework.

Throughout the year, our team gathered insights from growers, delivery partners and industry representatives. We took written submissions, created online forms, held direct conversations with industry service managers and participated in industry meetings to collect as broad a range of feedback as possible. All contributions are being considered.

Consultation on the content of the new framework began in August 2025 and will continue through to May 2026. We look forward to working closely with industry to co-create an investment model that delivers meaningful outcomes for Australian horticulture.



Spotlight:

Protect and grow: collaboration on Australia's horticulture exports

PRIORITY 3.2

Build strategic partnerships to deliver bigger, bolder investments in innovation for Australian horticulture

The Fresh and Secure Trade Alliance (FASTA) is helping Australian horticulture manage two key challenges related to pests: how to manage them and how to document that management to maintain market access.

Insect pests continue to pose a significant threat to Australia's horticultural sector, affecting both production and the ability to maintain and expand market access. International trading partners require rigorous evidence that Australian exports are free from such pests before approving new trade arrangements.

FASTA is a strategic collaboration between key Australian horticultural export stakeholders and government authorities. The eight-year initiative, which commenced in 2023, is being delivered through Hort Innovation and led by the Queensland Department of Primary Industries and is designed to provide the Australian Government with high-quality data to support market access negotiations.

Supporting market access

FASTA is equipping government and industry with the evidence needed to negotiate and maintain international trade. Current activities include:

- Developing phytosanitary data packages with pest and disease management data to support new and existing market access.
- Conducting gap analyses to identify priority research needs.
- Building national databases for host records, pest surveillance and historical data.
- Improving international research standards through targeted studies and literature reviews.

Advancing pest-resistant crops

Research into stress physiology is focused on developing fruit fly-resistant varieties, with the goal of securing recognition as conditional non-hosts. For crops requiring treatment, FASTA is investigating physiological thresholds to refine and optimise disinfestation protocols.

Enhancing pest surveillance and diagnostics

To protect production and trade, FASTA is improving pest detection and identification tools. This includes:

- Advancing morphological and molecular diagnostic methods.
- Developing new surveillance technologies to enable rapid response during pest incursions.
- Strengthening Australia's capacity to detect and manage exotic and endemic pests.



Improving integrated pest management (IPM)

FASTA is delivering new tools and approaches to strengthen pre-harvest pest control, helping growers produce export-quality crops. Current IPM initiatives include:

- Minimising pest damage to improve yield and quality.
- Reducing the risk of pest incursions into pest-free zones.
- Preventing infested produce from entering the supply chain.
- Offering chemical-free alternatives to meet evolving pesticide regulations.

Deploying smart technologies

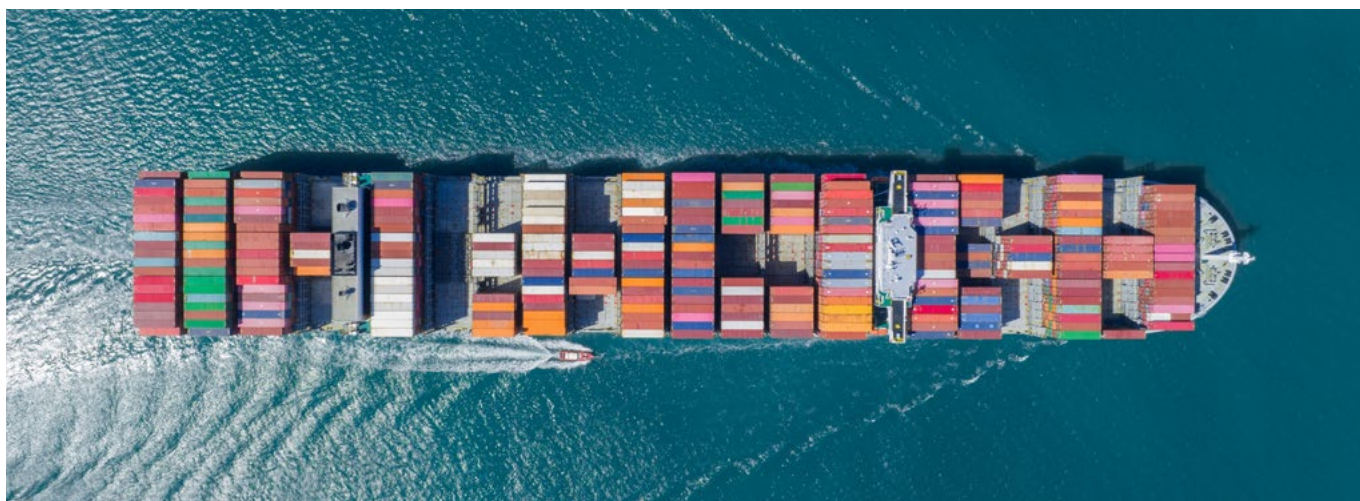
FASTA is supporting industry and government with innovative technologies for pest management and surveillance. These include:

- In-field identification and scanning tools.
- Enhanced pre- and post-harvest pest control systems.
- Supply chain detection technologies that reinforce Australia's reputation as a reliable trading partner.

Building research and industry capability

To ensure long-term success, FASTA is investing in the next generation of scientists and fostering collaboration across the sector. This includes:

- Supporting early-career researchers.
- Strengthening partnerships between industry and research institutions.
- Maintaining Australia's leadership in phytosanitary science and pest management innovation.



Spotlight:

Collaboration drives action on biosecurity

National partnership, global impact

PRIORITY 3.2

Build strategic partnerships to deliver bigger, bolder investments in innovation for Australian horticulture

Overview of Plant Biosecurity Research Initiative

Australia's plant industries are working together through the Plant Biosecurity Research Initiative (PBRI) to tackle shared biosecurity threats.

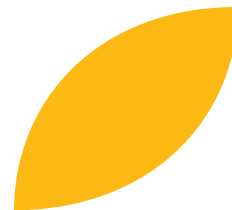
The PBRI, hosted by Hort Innovation, focuses on practical solutions that strengthen national preparedness and protect the future of Australian horticulture and agriculture.

The initiative harnesses the collective insights and capabilities of Australia's seven plant-focused Rural Research and Development Corporations, DAFF, and a range of industry, state and national biosecurity stakeholders. Since it was established in 2017, the PBRI has focused on preparedness,

diagnostics, surveillance and sustainable management technologies, targeting key pests and diseases that put our plant industries at risk.

Through this collaborative approach, Australia's plant-focused research and development corporations efficiently and effectively manage pests and diseases that present a mutual challenge to our industries. The PBRI extends this approach by working with Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) partners such as BetterBorderBiosecurity NZ, Euphresco, Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR), Plant Health Australia and the Plant Health Committee.





2024/25 highlights:

Strengthening national defence through partnership

PBRI partnered with the Department of Defence to identify dual-use technologies that could support both national security and agricultural biosecurity. The partnership kicked off through the Defence Innovation Partnership Activator program, with co-investment planned for new sensor technologies that can detect chemical and biological threats in real time.

Recognising leadership in biosecurity

PBRI Program Director Dr Jo Luck received a special commendation for the DAFF Kim Ritman Award. This recognised her outstanding contribution, leadership and collaborative approach in bringing together researchers, government and industry to address complex plant biosecurity challenges.

Designing the next wave of biosecurity innovation

This year the PBRI led a national collaboration to co-design six cross-industry biosecurity concepts. These were developed with peak industry bodies, RDCs, and Commonwealth, state and territory governments:

- The Biosecurity Trakka tool will combine high-quality genomic data to help researchers and authorities detect and respond to plant pests faster.
- iMapPESTS 2.0 will deliver regional surveillance case studies in four high-risk areas, trialling new tools, improving data sharing and supporting local adoption.
- Fall armyworm RD&E coordinator will lead national coordination of efforts to manage this invasive pest across affected industries.
- Future Resilient Crop Protection will address the declining availability of agrichemicals by identifying sustainable alternatives and understanding barriers to adoption.
- SENTRI will adapt low-cost chemical sensors developed for defence to detect biosecurity threats in the field.
- Boosting Diagnostics 2.0 will improve in-field diagnostic tools, build capacity and upgrade national reference collections.

Bringing global insights to local action

International collaboration continues to be a priority for the PBRI. In December, it co-hosted a 'Global Insights on Fall Armyworm' webinar with Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), featuring practical lessons from pest control programs in the US and Brazil.

The PBRI also participated in the Euphresco III meeting in Madrid, where global plant health researchers explored shared priorities. PBRI's approach to strategic investment planning was highlighted as a model for international coordination.

During a visit to Spain, the PBRI Program Director toured Dr Blanca Landa's lab in Cordoba. Dr Landa leads the EU-funded BeXyl project on *Xylella fastidiosa*, involving partners across 14 countries. Her insights on the disease's spread in olives and grapevines will help shape Australia's preparedness strategy.

Supporting the next generation of biosecurity leaders

The PBRI Plant Health Student Network continues to connect emerging researchers through quarterly global meetings, a new website and professional development opportunities. One of the four Ritman Scholars, Alyssa Martino, was internationally recognised as Euphresco III's Scientist of the Month.



Spotlight:

Food and wine pairing for global success

Strengthening perceptions through collaboration

PRIORITY 3.2

Build strategic partnerships to deliver bigger, bolder investments in innovation for Australian horticulture

Food and wine go perfectly together, not just on the dining table but in promoting Brand Australia to export markets.

Through the Australian Food and Wine Collaboration Group, Hort Innovation and other major agricultural bodies are working to position Australian products as safe, high quality and innovative in the eyes of international buyers and consumers.

The initiative is delivering strong outcomes in target markets, most recently Japan, Australia's third-largest agriculture, fisheries and forestry export destination. The Taste the Wonders of Australia campaign in Tokyo attracted more than 100 local food and trade representatives, showcasing the best of Australian produce at events including market roundtables, industry workshops and a gala dinner.

The program builds on earlier campaigns in Thailand, South Korea, Vietnam, Indonesia and Taiwan. Backed by \$11 million in funding from DAFF's Australian Trade and Market Access Cooperation (ATMAC) grants, it combines the strengths of Hort Innovation, Dairy Australia, Wine Australia, Meat & Livestock Australia and Seafood Industry Australia to amplify Australia's premium offering on the world stage.

Highlights:

- Six key markets reached across Asia, with two more to go.
- More than 1,000 food, trade and government stakeholders engaged.
- \$6.3 billion in agri-food exports to Japan in 2023/24.
- Nearly \$2 million in ATMAC funding through to 2026 across both phases of the project.





Spotlight:

Fruit and veggies, yummy, yummy!

Wiggles campaign inspires healthy habits

PRIORITY 3.2

Build strategic partnerships to deliver bigger, bolder investments in innovation for Australian horticulture

They've sung about fruit salad and hot potatoes for decades. Now The Wiggles are taking their passion for fresh food to a whole new level, teaming up with Australia's fresh produce industry to encourage children to eat more fruit and vegetables.

Backed by Hort Innovation, the Fruit and Veggies Yummy Yummy campaign was launched at Hort Connections in June 2025 by the International Fresh Produce Association Australia and New Zealand (IFPA ANZ). It will run across digital platforms, social media, concerts and colourful resources to inspire a love of fresh produce in a fun and age-appropriate way.

The campaign responds to new research showing that while most Australian parents say healthy eating is important, fewer than half report that fruit and vegetables make up the bulk of their children's snacks. It aims not only to improve the nutritional profile of Aussie kids' diets, but to support an overall increase in fruit and vegetable consumption.



"We're so excited to be part of this campaign and to support the mission of helping children eat more fruit and vegetables. This partnership takes our commitment even further, really showing children just how fun and delicious healthy eating can be."

Anthony Field,
original Blue Wiggle.



Spotlight:

Supporting industry's premier event

Hort Innovation signs on for six more years with Hort Connections

PRIORITY 3.2

Build strategic partnerships to deliver bigger, bolder investments in innovation for Australian horticulture



"Hort Connections is the must-go event in Australian horticulture, actively engaging growers and industry stakeholders to foster direct communication and knowledge sharing."

Brett Fifield,
CEO, Hort Innovation.



It's the biggest event on the horticulture calendar: Hort Connections, which brings together thousands of growers, researchers, retailers and policymakers.

This year, more than 3,000 delegates headed to Brisbane Convention Centre as the event tackled the sector's most pressing challenges head-on, from rising input costs, labour shortages and climate volatility.

Hort Innovation highlighted a suite of levy-funded innovations already in the field, some backed by Hort Innovations Frontiers program – from laser weeders, robotic harvesters to AI-guided smart sprayers in Tasmanian and Victorian vegetable farms.

We also put consumer data centre stage with the launch of Hort IQ 2.0. The updated platform's AI dashboards and four years of trend data were showcased, offering growers a practical tool to align production with shifting buyer behaviour.

The event also reinforced a commitment to long-term collaboration. Hort Innovation signed a six-year agreement to remain Principal Convention Partner until 2031. The partnership with AUSVEG and the IFPA ANZ ensures Hort Connections continues to deliver value by showcasing research outcomes and driving industry capability.





Empowering tomorrow's horticulture through Frontiers

Complex challenges, big opportunities

PRIORITY 3.3

Create a flexible investment framework attracting new partners and alternative funding resources

Hort Innovation's Frontiers program is creating new possibilities for Australian horticulture by unlocking big opportunities and solving complex challenges through bold, collaborative investment.

As a co-investment model, Frontiers attracts private, commercial and government partners to fund and deliver high-impact research and development for the benefit of growers. The program provides a vital platform for innovation, delivering longer-term, cross-industry projects that are aligned to the sector's biggest needs.

With the horticulture sector growing at the fastest rate of all Australian agriculture industries, Frontiers continues to play a key role in shaping a profitable and sustainable future.

A revitalised approach to future-focused investment

The new Frontiers framework is built around five strategic investment themes:

- **Healthy living:** enhancing wellbeing through fresh produce.
- **Adaptation and resilience:** supporting industry through climate and market change.
- **Market growth and security:** expanding trade opportunities and protecting access.
- **Disruptive technologies:** accelerating adoption of game-changing innovations.
- **Capability building:** strengthening skills, networks and resources across the sector.

These themes are brought to life through four investment pathways, each designed to ensure the right support is available to a diverse range of project types and partners:

- **Innovation partnerships:** strategic collaborations using proven procurement approaches to tackle broad-scale challenges.
- **Australian-Grown Innovation:** launched in March 2025, this stream helps growers and the supply chain turn innovative ideas into reality.
- **Hort Innovation Venture Fund:** supporting high-growth start-ups and technologies through early-stage capital and strategic support.



Image credit: Bluewhite



Launching Australian-Grown Innovation

At the 2025 Hort Connections conference, Hort Innovation unveiled the first cohort for the Australian-Grown Innovation program. This stream is designed to fast-track start-up ventures with potential to address critical challenges for growers, including cost reduction, supply chain resilience and improved production efficiency.

The inaugural cohort featured entrepreneurs and researchers working on projects like autonomous machinery, AI-driven decisioning tools and new ways to reduce input costs. The program provides funding and mentoring as well as connecting participants with growers and industry leaders to test and refine their ideas.

Supporting grassroots innovation

In addition to supporting early-stage start-ups and larger-scale commercial partnerships, Frontiers is also actively backing grassroots ideas from within the horticulture community. Through targeted expressions of interest, growers and supply chain participants are empowered to pitch viable, high-impact solutions that can be taken forward with co-investment and expert support.



“The Incubate stream of Australian-Grown Innovation is about taking real-world grower challenges and pairing them with the right minds, capital and commercial pathways. We want to speed up the journey from idea to adoption.”

Jesse Reader,

Head of Investment Growth and Commercial at Hort Innovation.

Driving commercial outcomes and protecting IP

Frontiers is not just about generating great ideas, but ensuring those ideas translate into long-term value for Australian horticulture. Intellectual property (IP) protection and commercialisation are key pillars of the program.

Our dedicated Intellectual Property Policy and Management Framework guides how IP is identified, used, protected and commercialised. This ensures that valuable IP developed through co-investments – such as new technologies, tools, data or plant varieties – is safeguarded and delivers a lasting benefit to industry.

By protecting intellectual property, we help secure the future of industry-led innovation and ensure market access for Australian growers. And when commercial returns are generated, including through improved or preferred market access, licensing or royalties, they're reinvested back into the sector, fuelling the next wave of R&D and ensuring growers continue to benefit from the ideas they helped bring to life.

Bringing global ideas home

Through our Frontiers investments, Hort Innovation continues to connect the Australian sector with international expertise, technologies and partners. Autonomous pollination drones, advanced robotics trials and digital crop monitoring tools are just some of the innovations being tested in Australian conditions thanks to these global collaborations.

By focusing on solutions that are both scalable and grower-ready, Frontiers ensures that the benefits flow through to farms, businesses and communities.

Royalties by industry for 2024/25

Industry	Amount (\$)
Apple and pear	388
Avocado	2,951
Citrus	13,615
Custard apple	–
Dried grape	4,042
Dried tree fruit	–
Lychee	–
Macadamia	17,051
Nursery	3,120
Pineapple	13,789
Sweetpotato	1,335
Strawberry	387,920
Vegetable	11,155
Hort Innovation	10,000
Total	465,366



Spotlight:

Putting biosecurity on the map

Smart maps to strengthen fruit industry

PRIORITY 3.3

Create a flexible investment framework attracting new partners and alternative funding resources



"Being part of the Australian Tree Crop Map provides cherry growers with vital data to not only manage production more effectively but also to stay ahead of potential biosecurity threats and mitigate their impact."

Alison Jones,
Cherry Growers Australia President.

A \$1.7 million mapping initiative is giving Australian fruit growers a powerful tool to combat biosecurity threats. Led by the University of New England and delivered through Hort Innovation, the project invites apricot, cherry, dried fruit, lychee, nectarine, peach and plum growers to log data via an app.

As part of this broader initiative, block-level information such as variety, planting date and management productivity is also being integrated into existing dashboard maps for the banana, macadamia, avocado, citrus and mango industries.

This citizen science approach will expand the existing Australian Tree Crop Map, enabling authorities to quickly locate affected areas and plan rapid responses to pest or disease outbreaks. The map also supports market access, traceability, yield forecasting and more.

Grower groups across the country have welcomed the initiative as a vital step forward in protecting their industries.

The expansion will also add planting dates, varieties and management practices, giving industry better data to tailor biosecurity strategies and improve long-term resilience.



Our work with Government

Australia's Rural Research and Development Corporations (RDCs) were established by the Australian Government to drive innovation and productivity across the nation's primary industries. Through targeted investment in research, development and extension (RD&E), RDCs play a critical role in ensuring the long-term sustainability and competitiveness of Australian agriculture.

As the RDC dedicated to Australian horticulture, Hort Innovation works in close partnership with government at both a national and state level. These relationships are important in helping us ensure that we're able to deliver meaningful outcomes for growers, industry and the community.

This section outlines how Hort Innovation collaborates with government to shape and deliver RD&E that supports a thriving horticulture sector. It highlights our shared commitment to innovation, sustainability, and responsiveness to emerging challenges and opportunities across the supply chain.

Working together for horticulture

As the RDC for the horticulture sector, Hort Innovation maintains a strong partnership with the Australian Government to ensure our investments and initiatives align with national RD&E priorities. This alignment reflects our shared commitment to delivering meaningful outcomes for growers and the broader community. Our strategic direction and investment decisions are guided by the Australian Government's Priorities, ensuring that our work contributes to long-term industry growth and sustainability.

Hort Innovation's investments directly support three key national priorities:

- Australia's National Science Statement.
- The Australian Government's National Agricultural Innovation Policy Statement.
- The National Primary Industries Research Development and Extension Framework Statement of Intent.

Delivering on shared priorities

Hort Innovation's partnership with government is grounded in a shared commitment to delivering meaningful outcomes for the horticulture sector. In 2024/25 our investment portfolio continued to align strongly with key national priorities. As of June 2025, our key investments spanned the following priority areas:

- Export
- Sustainability
- Biosecurity
- Digital technology
- Workforce
- First Nations

To support our shared priorities, Hort Innovation and DAFF hold a performance review each year to track progress against key performance principles. As part of our commitment to transparency, the presentation we share with DAFF is available to view on our website: www.horticulture.com.au/performance-statement.

Collaboration delivering tangible results for growers

This year, the Australian apple industry celebrated a major win for growers with the signing of a new biosecurity protocol that will allow mainland apples to be exported to China starting in the 2026 season.

This landmark agreement was made possible through strong collaboration between industry and government, with DAFF working closely with the General Administration of Customs, China. It represents a pivotal step forward for Australian apple growers looking to expand their international reach and meet growing global demand.

The protocol builds on the successful foundation laid by Tasmanian growers, who have been exporting to China since 2010, and opens the door for mainland producers to access one of the world's largest markets for premium fresh fruit.

This achievement was further supported by Hort Innovation and the apple and pear research and development levy projects: Apple and Pear Trade Development and Market Access Program (AP23003) and Apple & Pear Market Access & Trade Development Project (AP21001). These initiatives have played a critical role in preparing the industry for export growth – focusing on market access, trade education, international engagement and grower readiness.

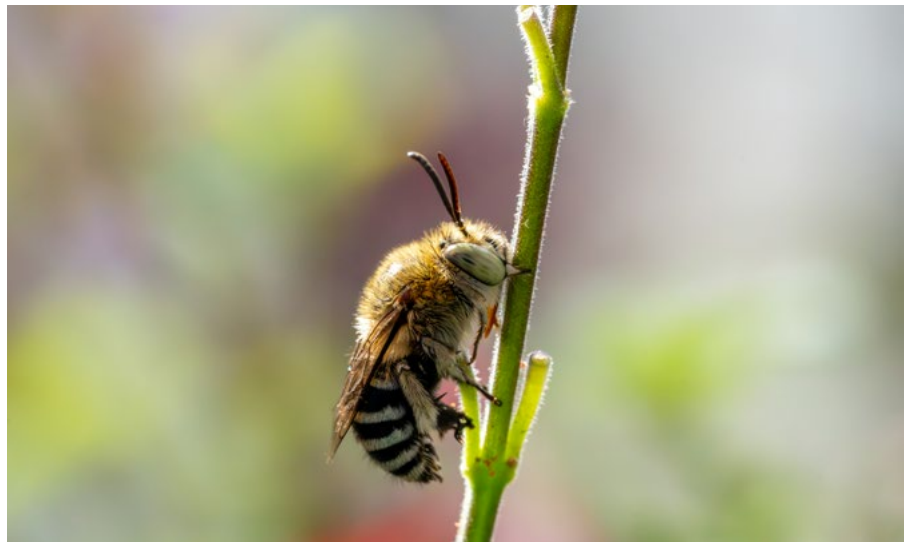
Together, this coordinated effort between government, industry bodies, and growers demonstrates the power of collaboration in unlocking new opportunities and driving long-term success for Australian horticulture.

A whole of industry approach to collaboration

As the Australian horticulture industry continues to evolve, staying connected across the broader agricultural landscape is essential. The Council of Rural RDCs brings together Australia's 15 Rural Research and Development Corporations to collaborate on the shared priorities, trends and challenges facing the sector.

Through this collective approach, the Council drives stronger economic, environmental and social outcomes for rural industries. By working together, RDCs are able to further amplify impact and deliver greater value to levy payers and communities.

In the 2024/25 financial year, Hort Innovation partnered with fellow RDCs to deliver a suite of collaborative projects aligned with national priorities. These included initiatives in sustainability, climate adaptation, digital innovation and biosecurity, with funding contributions reflecting a shared commitment to long-term industry growth and resilience.



Case study: Advancing stingless bee pollination in Australia

This collaborative research initiative is driving the growth and resilience of the Australian stingless bee industry by deepening our understanding of bee nutrition, disease management, reproduction and pollination performance across diverse crops and environments.

Led by Western Sydney University and co-funded with AgriFutures, the project is testing nutritional supplements, pest mitigation strategies and hive deployment techniques to optimise pollination outcomes. It also includes a comprehensive review of pollination efficacy and best-practice guidelines for hive and chemical management.

The project supports strategic goals of both the Hort Innovation Pollination Fund and the AgriFutures Australian Native Bee Strategic RD&E Plan, aiming to enhance crop pollination efficiency and identify alternative pollinators. Ultimately, it will improve stingless bee management on farms and expand their role in pollinating a broader range of established and emerging horticultural crops.

Our 2024/25 investment figures

Levy receipts by industry

Levy receipts by industry 2024/25			
Industry/Fund	R&D (\$)	Marketing (\$)	Total (\$)
Statutory Levy Funds			
Almond	3,063,945	–	3,063,945
Apple and pear	1,909,894	2,126,941	4,036,835
Avocado	3,611,593	5,563,112	9,174,704
Banana	1,971,119	4,197,753	6,168,872
Chestnut	41,419	46,021	87,439
Citrus	2,665,966	411,205	3,077,171
Custard apple	72,241	26,505	98,747
Cherry	885,111	177,175	1,062,286
Dried grape	316,108	139,697	455,804
Dried tree fruit	3,198	–	3,198
Lychee	119,951	50,005	169,957
Macadamia	1,723,907	3,220,508	4,944,415
Mango	561,368	748,489	1,309,857
Melon	823,164	–	823,164
Mushroom	1,151,162	3,112,400	4,263,562
Nursery	1,508,228	1,096,893	2,605,121
Olive	223,864	–	223,864
Onion	771,282	265,960	1,037,242
Papaya	150,834	149,968	300,802
Passionfruit	122,989	122,989	245,978
Pear	–	767,724	767,724
Persimmon	131,376	87,584	218,960
Pineapple	170,344	87,820	258,164
Potato – fresh	729,749	–	729,749

Continued >>

Levy receipts by industry 2023/24 (continued)			
Industry/Fund	R&D (\$)	Marketing (\$)	Total (\$)
Statutory Levy Funds (continued)			
Potato – processing	460,025	–	460,025
Prune	17,059	–	17,059
Raspberry and blackberry	304,256	543	304,799
Strawberry	774,750	–	774,750
Summerfruit	948,622	114	948,737
Sweetpotato	521,862	270,507	792,369
Table grape	969,345	969,343	1,938,688
Turf	423,247	105,812	529,059
Vegetable	12,236,904	–	12,236,904
Total statutory levies	39,384,882	23,745,067	63,129,949
Collective Industry Funds (Voluntary Levies)			
Almond	1,331,267	–	1,331,267
Blueberry	970,000	–	970,000
Pistachio	110,811	–	110,811
Processing tomato	270,112	–	270,112
Pyrethrum	2,748,907	–	2,748,907
Total voluntary levies	5,431,097	–	5,431,097
Total levy receipts	44,815,979	23,745,067	68,561,046

For more financial reporting, see the full Financial Report from **p97**

R&D and marketing expenditure by fund

Expenditure by Fund 2024/25			
Industry/Fund	R&D (\$)	Marketing (\$)	Total (\$)
Almond	7,157,769	–	7,157,769
Apple and pear	2,406,821	1,323,280	3,730,101
Avocado	7,558,622	5,928,810	13,487,431
Banana	3,631,525	3,240,155	6,871,680
Blueberry	884,985	–	884,985
Cherry	891,185	178,663	1,069,847
Chestnut	38,624	32,335	70,959
Citrus	4,358,480	450,345	4,808,825
Custard apple	33,155	4,292	37,447
Dried grape	71,869	83,100	154,969
Dried tree fruit	25,610	–	25,610
Lychee	121,218	60,799	182,017
Macadamia	3,022,023	2,906,727	5,928,750
Mango	700,305	579,855	1,280,161
Melon	1,733,509	–	1,733,509
Mushroom	2,729,231	2,955,129	5,684,360
Nashi	77,898	–	77,898
Nursery	2,042,415	1,047,785	3,090,200
Olive	353,431	–	353,431
Onion	1,443,941	186,255	1,630,196
Papaya	454,871	116,775	571,646
Passionfruit	128,903	42,580	171,483
Pear marketing	–	661,300	661,300
Persimmon	148,139	50,255	198,394
Pineapple	449,171	58,311	507,482
Pistachio	232,353	–	232,353
Potato – fresh	806,529	–	806,529

Continued >>



Expenditure by Fund 2024/25 (continued)			
Industry/Fund	R&D (\$)	Marketing (\$)	Total (\$)
Potato – processing	546,789	–	546,789
Processing tomato	214,852	–	214,852
Prune	4,013	–	4,013
Pyrethrum	1,683,337	–	1,683,337
Raspberry and blackberry	1,195,941	174,000	1,369,941
Strawberry	1,595,517	96,000	1,691,517
Summerfruit	1,283,425	153,884	1,437,309
Sweetpotato	699,398	13,588	712,986
Table grape	1,045,947	975,654	2,021,601
Turf	513,174	81,735	594,908
Vegetable	17,351,934	–	17,351,934
Other			
Grant Funding	2,188,936	–	2,188,936
Centralised Strategic Levy Reserves	–	–	–
Board Strategic Fund	1,474,548	–	1,474,548
Hort Frontiers Funds			
Advanced Production Systems	29,180,994	–	29,180,994
Asian Markets	14,089,777	–	14,089,777
Biosecurity	16,527,548	–	16,527,548
Climate	432,931	–	432,931
Fruit Fly	851,337	–	851,337
Green Cities	3,139,281	–	3,139,281
Health, Nutrition and Food Safety	2,983,611	–	2,983,611
Leadership and People	3,515,943	–	3,515,943
Hort Venture Fund	402,063	–	402,063
Pollination	7,404,107	–	7,404,107
Levy collection cost	938,555	324,727	1,263,282
Total	150,766,540	21,726,337	172,492,877

New R&D agreements in 2024/25

New R&D investments in 2024/25			
Project code	Project name	Key delivery partner	2024/25 Spend (\$)
AL21000	Pathway to carbon neutral whole orchard recycling in almond orchards	South Australian Research and Development Institute (SARDI)	96,124
AL23003	Growing almond leaders	Almond Board of Australia	273,289
AL23004	Almond industry international study tours	Almond Board of Australia	90,000
AM24003	Asia Fruit Logistica – FY25/26 (R&D)	Bastion Amplify	150,000
AP23003	Apple and pear trade development and market access program	Apple and Pear Australia Ltd	342,537
AP24001	Apple and pear in-store quality and education program FY25	Strikeforce AMC Pty Ltd	68,386
AS23002	Driving on-farm productivity with augmented technologies for fruit growers	Think.Digital	106,200
AS23003	Genetics for next generation orchards	Queensland University of Technology (QUT)	2,547,258
AS23006	Digital remote monitoring to improve horticulture production and environmental performance	Applied Horticultural Research	463,948
AS23008	Automating the nuts industry in Australia: a pathway to smarter orchards and labour optimisation	Blue White Robotics	1,092,543
AS23009	Evaluating on farm water and nutrient recapture in Western Australia	Western Australian Agriculture Authority (WAAA)	483,394
AS23010	Robotic UV-C system for sustainable powdery mildew control	Department of Primary Industries QLD	324,943
AS24001	Hort Frontiers – Australian-Grown innovation	Startupbootcamp Australia	576,340
AS24006	AI-driven tree nut yield forecasting	University of New England (UNE)	84,000
AV23003	Avocado market access and trade development project (2024–29)	Avocados Australia	866,001
AV23017	Pest and disease management program for the Australian avocado industry	Macquarie University	337,360
AV24001	Avocado claims testing – domestic research 2024/25	Accenture Australia	22,000
AV24003	Optimising market engagement through business models	Bond University	141,468
AV24004	Causes and management of avocado ridging, netting and stretch marking	Department of Primary Industries QLD	11,495
AV24007	Evaluation of methyl bromide fumigation on avocado quality	NSW Department of Primary Industries (NSW DPI)	77,537

Continued >>

New R&D investments in 2024/25 (continued)			
Project code	Project name	Key delivery partner	2024/25 Spend (\$)
AV24008	Carbohydrate management in avocado production systems	CSIRO	239,838
AV24010	Avocado industry virtual reality training program	Reservoir Partners	161,110
AV24011	Optimising avocado yield with region-specific canopy management: insights from light interception and canopy modelling	Department of Primary Industries QLD	14,885
AV24012	Avocado packaging research	Accenture Australia	22,500
AV24013	Global foodservice opportunities for Australian avocados	Avocados Australia Ltd	25,200
AV24014	Woolworths avocado retail education, training and merchandising FY25	Direct 2 Consumer (D2C)	188,379
BA24002	Australian Banana Industry Congress 2025	Australian Banana Growers' Council Inc	80,000
BA24003	Enhancing pest surveillance, grower engagement and banana biosecurity resilience	Australian Banana Growers' Council Inc	343,582
BB23000	Understanding the cause of blueberry root wrapping and associated root crown disorders	University of Queensland	329,915
BY23002	Next-generation weed management	Nufarm Australia	900,000
BY23002	Next-generation weed management	La Trobe University	948,099
BY23002	Next-generation weed management	Applied Horticultural Research Pty Ltd (AHR)	8,155,400
BY24002	Management of bacterial blight of walnut	Applied Horticultural Research Pty Ltd (AHR)	349,650
CL24001	Application of crushed rocks to sequester CO ₂ and improve soil fertility	University of Sydney (USYD)	432,931
CT23007	Australian Citrus Congress	Citrus Australia	100,466
CT23009	Citrus postharvest program phase 2	Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development NSW	285,945
CU24001	Custard apple industry development	NSW Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (NSW DPIRD)	67,452
CY24001	International cherries launch events – FY25	Bastion Amplify	140,000
CY24002	Cherries domestic retail quality education program FY25 R&D	D2C (Direct 2 Consumer)	176,957
CY24003	International Cherries Tradeshow FHC – FY25	Bastion Amplify	35,000

Continued >>

New R&D investments in 2024/25 (continued)			
Project code	Project name	Key delivery partner	2024/25 Spend (\$)
CY24OO4	Optimising protected cherry production	NSW Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (NSW DPIRD)	144,957
DT23OO2	Dried tree fruit industry communications program	Australian Dried Tree Fruits	26,202
HA24OO3	Developing a capability based horticulture leadership framework	RuralScope	42,560
HA24OO4	Factors driving horticulture productivity	Centre for International Economics	217,070
HN24OO4	Increasing the provision and consumption of vegetables in secondary school canteens	University of Melbourne	214,713
HN24OO6	Plus one serve: digital application to support increased vegetable intake in rural communities	Deakin University	–
HN24OO7	Food security in remote First Nations communities (Phase 1 - national strategy and consultation)	University of Queensland (UQ)	150,000
HN24OO8	Plus one serve: primary schools vegetable provisioning model	The George Institute	200,974
LP23OO1	Developing orchardists of the future pilot	Apple and Pear Australia (APAL)	1,124,486
LP24OO1	RD&I Strategy for the Australian organic horticulture sector	Southern Cross University (SCU)	115,697
LP24OO4	Building capability in Australian horticulture through Hort Connections	AUSVEG Ltd	1,313,981
MC24OO1	Macadamia usage and attitude research study	Focus Insights	179,900
MC24OO2	Macadamia pollination gap analysis and industry opportunities	Australian National University (ANU)	35,496
MC24OO3	Maximising macadamia yield	Department of Primary Industries QLD	418,296
MC24OO5	Mid-term review: independent evaluation of project MC21OOO	Impact Innovation	18,375
MC24OO7	Mid-term review project MC22OOO	Ag Econ	24,750
MC24OO8	Independent review of the macadamia industry innovation and adoption project	Clear Horizon Consulting Pty Ltd	24,855
MT24OO1	Optimising trade in the Australian vegetables industry	KPMG	170,000
MT24OO2	Mid-term evaluation of project MT21OO9	Impact Advisors	85,000
MT24OO3	Valuing the sustainability story of the Australian vegetable and onion industries	Corporate Value Associates	249,275
MT24OO4	BerryQuest International 2025	Berries Australia	100,000

Continued >>

New R&D investments in 2024/25 (continued)			
Project code	Project name	Key delivery partner	2024/25 Spend (\$)
MT24OO5	Horticulture impact assessment program 2023/24 to 2025/26	ACIL Allen Consulting	96,107
MT24OO7	Chemical residue report to support Australia's Country Recognition Arrangement (CRA) with Indonesia (2024–2029)	Fresh Markets Australia (FMA)	51,000
MT24OO8	Regulatory support and response co-ordination (pesticides)	DTS Pty Ltd	241,470
MT24OO9	Improving management of chilli thrips in blueberry and Rubus	Murdoch University	75,236
MT24OI1	Improving biosecurity preparedness in the Australian mango industry	Australian Mango Industry Association	123,366
MT24OI2	Accelerating adoption of area wide-integrated crop management in vegetable, onion and potato growing regions	CSIRO	80,257
MT24OI3	Accelerating early access to emerging tech for vegetable growers	Department of Primary Industries QLD	111,964
MT24OI5	One survey for vegetable, onion and potato levy funded projects	Focus Insights Pty Ltd	18,554
MT24OI6	Independent mid-term review of MT22OO4 and VG22OO6	GHD Pty Ltd	14,428
MT24OI1	Consumer usage and attitude tracking 25/26	Accenture Australia Ltd	147,600
MU23OO7	Mushroom packaging specifications and options	The Growth Drivers	196,810
MU24OO1	Alternate mushroom casing substrate/blends with alternative materials	Australian Mushroom Growers Association Ltd	370,436
MU24OO2	Ethylene and mushroom quality	Department of Agriculture & Fisheries	58,803
MU24OO4	Mushroom health and nutrition research, development and extension strategic plan	Consulting & Implementation Services (CIS)	16,733
MU24OO5	Marsh Lawson: elevating mushroom excellence through continual research	University of Sydney (USYD)	125,360
NY22OO1	Nursery sustainability – undertaking a lifecycle assessment	thinkstep	35,467
NY24OO1	Business case to review the nursery products levy	ACIL Allen Consulting Pty Ltd	35,190
NY24OO4	Nursery emerging leaders program	Jeanette Gellard Enterprises	32,720
OL23OO1	Protecting our groves: the olive industry biosecurity project	Plant Health Australia	57,670
PH24OO1	Optimisation of fungal bio-control agent for Varroa mite	Macquarie University	439,604

Continued >>

New R&D investments in 2024/25 (continued)

Project code	Project name	Key delivery partner	2024/25 Spend (\$)
PI22OO1	Australian pineapple breeding and evaluation program	Department of Primary Industries QLD	219,731
PI23OO2	Pineapple industry biosecurity plan	Plant Health Australia	68,152
PP23OO1	Better understanding of papaya phytophthora rot	RMIT University	75,000
PP23OO3	Supporting innovation in the Australian papaya industry	Department of Primary Industries QLD	116,290
PR23OO3	Persimmon industry communications and extension program	Persimmons Australia Inc	-
PT23OO2	An integrated disease management program for the Australian potato industry	Western Sydney University	263,450
PT23OO2	An integrated disease management program for the Australian potato industry	University of Tasmania	354,891
PT24OO1	Potato sustainability – undertaking a life cycle assessment	Life Cycle Strategies	45,596
PW21OOO	Sweet potato industry communications program	Australian Sweetpotato Growers' Association	34,000
PY23OO2	Next-gen pyrethrum project to address industry disease challenges	Botanical Resources Australia	1,103,773
RB23OO3	Rubus industry – barriers to best practice across diverse communities	Pinion Advisory Pty Ltd	80,395
SF23OO5	Determining harvest maturity for peaches and nectarines	Fruitful Insights	207,562
SF24OO1	Stone fruit retail quality education program FY25 R&D	D2C (Direct 2 Consumer)	245,088
TU24OO1	TIDE independent mid-term review	GHD Pty Ltd	31,602
TU24OO2	Knowledge sharing and capability building for future generations of turf producers	Turf Australia Ltd	56,036
TU24OO3	Plant growth regulators in on-farm turf establishment	University of Adelaide	47,400
TU24OO4	Usage, attitudes, and contribution of natural turfgrass	Greenfields Consulting	67,010
VG23OO2	Vegetable industry study tours	AUSVEG Ltd	686,245
VG23OO4	Antimicrobial resistance in the vegetable industry	SAAFE Ltd	30,000
VG23OO7	Guava root knot nematode identification and management	Department of Primary Industries QLD	320,000
VG23OO9	Growing leaders	Affectus	440,655
VG23OI4	Addressing key challenges in Australian baby leaf production	Applied Horticultural Research Pty Ltd	592,836

Continued >>



New R&D investments in 2024/25 (continued)			
Project code	Project name	Key delivery partner	2024/25 Spend (\$)
VG23O15	Management of nematodes: a workshop to identify industry needs	Impact Innovation Group	39,980
VG23O16	Plus one serve of vegetables by 2030: program coordinator	AUSVEG Ltd	1,475,310
VG24OO1	Management of viral diseases for the Australian vegetable industry	University of Queensland (UQ)	113,872
VG24OO2	Optimising capsicum and chilli quality	Central Queensland University (CQU)	337,329
VG24OO3	Annual vegetable industry seminars	AUSVEG Ltd	126,632
VG24OO4	Plant-based protein for sustainability and healthy aging	Deakin University	337,860
VG24OO6	Evaluating mechanical harvest solutions in Australia	Department of Primary Industries QLD	33,434
VG24OO8	Exploring AI applications for the vegetable industry	RMCG	16,400
VG24O11	Foundational data for farm gate and mobile farm projects	VEG Education	108,772
VM24OO1	Melon food safety monitoring and support – phase 2	NSW Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (NSW DPIRD)	270,721
VM24OO2	Melon industry technical market access plan	VDM Partners Pty Ltd	4,200
VM24OO3	Building biosecurity resilience in the Australian melon industry	Melons Australia	87,267
VN24OO2	Future proofing onion health: management of rot diseases of onions	University of Adelaide	168,364

Our marketing partners in 2024/25

Supplier	2024/25 Expenditure (\$)
Thinkerbell Pty Ltd	12,217,795
Bastion Australia Pty Ltd T/A Bastion Amplify	1,994,086
D2C	1,394,667
Australian Table Grape Association Inc.	921,000
Australian Macadamia Society	766,468
Hopscotch Japan K.K.	434,580
Hopscotch Network SAS	365,264
South Pole Australia Pty Ltd	342,000
Papaya PR Pty Ltd	329,000
Four Pillars Trading Pty Ltd	326,000
Berries Australia	270,915
Go Future Media	232,090
Republic of Everyone	218,336
Ink Spiller Communications Pty Ltd	181,231
Coles Supermarkets	158,750
Strikeforce AMC Pty Ltd	132,647
Australian Mango Industry Association Ltd	100,000
Life Education NSW Ltd	90,000
Australian Banana Growers' Council	87,500
Dried Fruits Australia Inc.	82,000
Turf Australia (Project Account)	80,000
Australian Nut Industry Council	74,842
Ma Cher (Aust) Pty Ltd	59,593
Queensland Fruit & Vegetable Growers Ltd	57,911
No Time to Lose Print Management	57,704



**GV Independent Packers
Goulburn Valley, Victoria**

GV Independent Packers is a fifth generation family owned business, supplying all major retailers within Australia. They operate more than 600 hectares of orchard, predominantly varieties in pears, apples and stone fruit. Having a fully integrated business model has allowed them to grow, store, pack, market and transport their product to their customers.

According to the Australian Horticulture Statistics Handbook 2023/24, Australia's pear production is valued at \$125.6m.

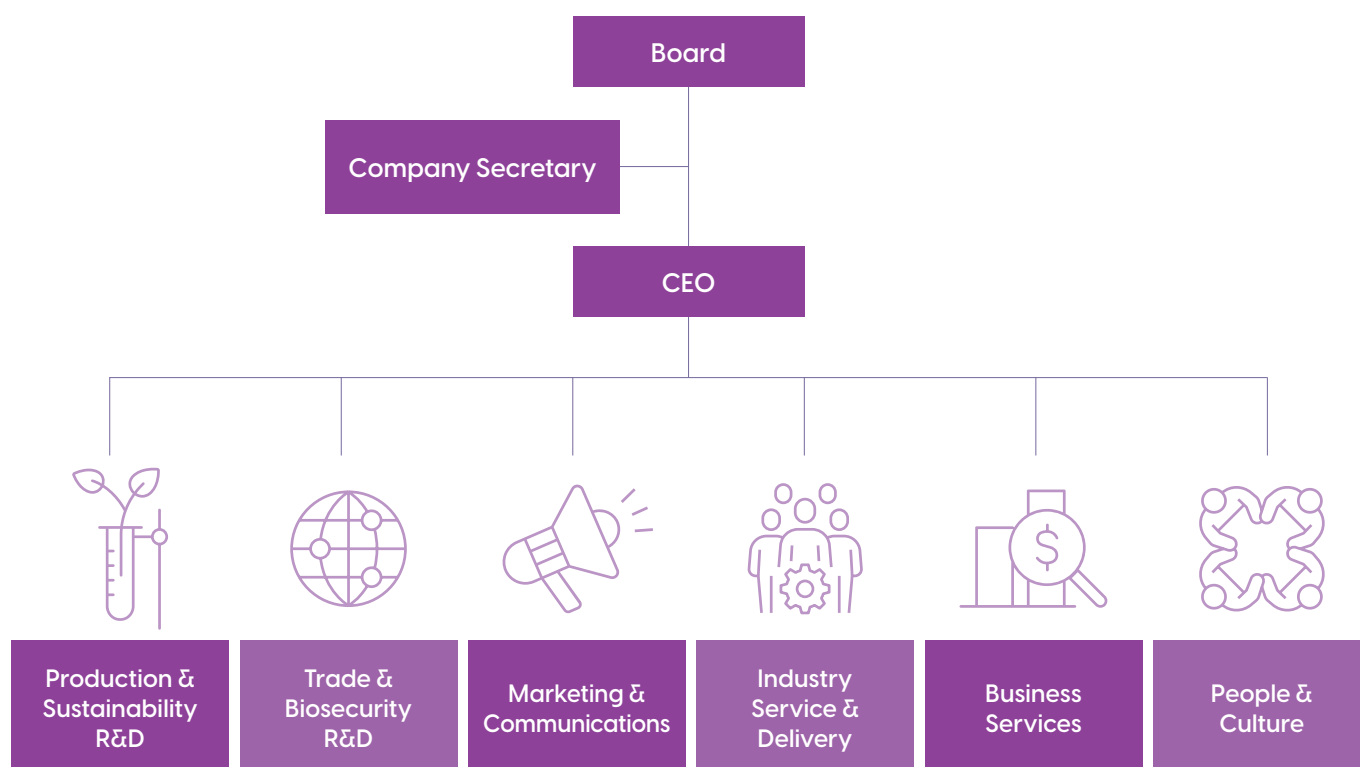
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Make the culture thrive

How we operate inside Hort Innovation directly impacts our ability to deliver to growers. We have a strong focus on building a vibrant and thriving culture, developing a customer-centric environment and empowering our employees to engage deeply and successfully with industry for the good of the sector.

Our organisational structure

Hort Innovation's structure is set up to deliver on the *Hort Innovation Strategy*.



This chart represents Hort Innovation as at June 30, 2025.

Hort Innovation's head office is in Sydney, with satellite offices in Brisbane and Melbourne, plus team members located in regional areas. Our structure is regularly reviewed to ensure we have the right skills and resources to deliver on the *Hort Innovation Strategy 2024-2026*.

Our leadership

Meet the Hort Innovation Executive team



Brett Fifield
Chief Executive Officer

Brett joined Hort Innovation as CEO in 2022 and believes Hort Innovation has a firm responsibility to deliver real impact for growers and those across the supply chain.

Brett has more than 20 years' experience in agriculture, including 10 years in senior executive roles working across agriculture, biosecurity, food safety, fisheries, policy and cabinet, business performance, communications and engagement. He grew up on a mixed farm near Wagga Wagga, NSW, and spent the early part of his career as a country journalist.

In 2025, Brett became a Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.



Andrew Philpotts
Chief Financial Officer

Andrew has an extensive career in resources, packaging and building products including more than a decade as Chief Financial Officer (CFO) of Orica's Australia Asia business. Andrew has experience across strategy, business management, operations management and senior business partnering. Andrew has a Bachelors and Masters degree in Commerce, is a CPA and a Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.



Andrew Francey
General Manager
Industry Service & Delivery

Andrew has more than 20 years' experience in horticulture in commercial, operations and supply chain executive roles. Before joining Hort Innovation, Andrew was Chief Commercial Officer at OneHarvest and was Chair and Non-Executive Director with PMAANZ. Andrew has formal qualifications in Business, Applied Finance and is a Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.



Dr Mila Bristow
General Manager
Trade & Biosecurity R&D

Mila has more than 25 years' experience as a plant scientist and manager, with a passion for complex questions about how we can improve sustainable production and trade outcomes for Australia's plant industries. Before joining Hort Innovation, Mila was the GM Partnerships and Innovation at Plant Health Australia.



Dr Anthony Kachenko
General Manager
Production & Sustainability R&D

Anthony has lived and breathed Australian horticulture for more than 20 years, with extensive experience along the agribusiness value chain. Anthony joined Hort Innovation in 2014 and has held several senior roles during his time at the company. Before Hort Innovation, Anthony held senior policy and leadership roles at Greenlife Industry Australia.

Continued >>

Our leadership (continued)

Meet the Hort Innovation Executive team



Karina Keisler
General Manager
Marketing & Communications

Karina joined Hort Innovation in 2024 with a wealth of leadership experience in marketing, communications and stakeholder engagement. Karina has been at the forefront of reputation turnarounds for Cricket Australia, NBN Co, Vodafone Australia and Telstra. Karina has a Master of Communication, postgraduate degrees in Marketing and Human Resources Management and is a Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.



Mona Maidment
General Manager
People & Culture

Mona has worked in the people and culture space for more than 20 years, with experience across telecommunications, healthcare, media and entertainment. Before joining Hort Innovation, Mona was Head of HR at Foxtel. Mona brings a strong passion for organisational culture, employee engagement and leadership development.

Read our Executive's full bios on the Hort Innovation website at www.horticulture.com.au/leadership.

Our Board and Committees

Board of Directors

Hort Innovation's Board is responsible for governing the company and ensuring that we act on behalf of our members and other stakeholders.

The following decisions and outcomes are highlights from 2024/25:

- ✔ Undertook a Board Performance Review, facilitated by an independent facilitator.
- ✔ Finalised and launched the Hort Innovation Frontiers Venture Fund with a goal for \$500 million investment over the next decade.
- ✔ Entered into a new Statutory Funding Agreement with the Commonwealth Government, for the period 2025–2034.
- ✔ Approved a new Risk Management Framework, Risk Appetite Statement and Risk Management Policy.
- ✔ Instigated the Strategic Horticulture Investment Framework (SHIFt) program to grow impact and streamline investment planning.
- ✔ Focused on engagement with industry, attending regional events (Mildura and Brisbane), the national showcase – Hort Connections – in Brisbane in June 2025, and also engaged with research partners.
- ✔ Completed a comprehensive Board Skills assessment to support the annual process undertaken by the Director Nomination Committee (DNC) and to inform the skills needs of the Board going forward.

Investment Committee

The Investment Committee (IC) assists the Board by advising about investment strategy, performance and risk. It is also tasked with reviewing high-value proposals before they are tendered or contracted.

The following decisions and outcomes are highlights from 2024/25:

- ✔ Development and oversight of Hort Innovation's Annual Investment Plan: Strategic Levy and Frontiers Co-Investment.
- ✔ Consideration of how Artificial Intelligence (AI) might be leveraged to support R&D.
- ✔ Oversight of a review of the organisation's policy on ownership of intellectual property rights.
- ✔ A refresh of the Evaluation Framework.
- ✔ Visits to research partners and growers in Tasmania
- ✔ Reviewing and approving a number of projects.

Audit & Risk Committee

The Audit & Risk Committee (ARC) is integral to Hort Innovation's proactive risk management strategy, meeting quarterly to enhance and ensure the integrity of our financial and non-financial risk management frameworks and systems.

The following decisions and outcomes are highlights from 2024/25:

- ✔ Ongoing oversight of the action plan to implement the recommendations from the Independent Performance Review 2024.
- ✔ Preparation of the Modern Slavery Statement.
- ✔ A strategic review of the organisation's position regarding ownership of intellectual property rights, and development of a new policy regarding intellectual property.
- ✔ Governance of investment decision making.
- ✔ Oversight of the implementation of AI at Hort Innovation.
- ✔ Horizon scanning for new and emerging risks.
- ✔ The finalisation of four internal audits conducted by an external firm.
- ✔ Governance for the Frontiers Venture Fund.
- ✔ Oversight of testing of the organisation's Business Continuity Plan.
- ✔ The presentation of the 2024/25 financial statements to the Board and regular review of year-to-date financial performance.

Get to know Hort Innovation's Board of Directors by reading their profiles from p100.

Continued >>

Our Board and Committees (continued)

People & Performance Committee

The People & Performance Committee (PPC) provides strategic advice and assistance for the Hort Innovation Executive team regarding Hort Innovation's people.

The following decisions and outcomes are highlights from 2024/25:

- Development of a Capability Framework for Hort Innovation employees.
- Comprehensive review of governance policies relating to people.
- Ongoing enhancement and strengthening of the organisation's Work Health & Safety (WH&S) governance including incorporating additional safeguards for lone workers and those driving long distances in the course of their employment.
- Oversight of the results from the Employee Engagement Survey, and development of an action plan to address feedback received via the survey.
- Launch of the Reconciliation Action Plan.
- Oversight of the work undertaken by the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Working Groups.

Director Nomination Committee

The Director Nomination Committee (DNC) undertakes the process of candidate nominations for the Hort Innovation Board, in accordance with the constitution.

In 2024/25, the DNC engaged a recruitment firm to carry out a national search for new directors, assessed applications for the Board vacancies taking into consideration the Hort Innovation Board Skills Matrix, conducted interviews of short-listed candidates and nominated appropriate and highly skilled candidates for consideration at the 2024 Annual General Meeting. Four candidates were nominated for two Board vacancies.

In 2024, the DNC comprised: Julie Bird, Chair, Hort Innovation, Professor Robert Clark, independent eminent person, Paul Denny, Representative of DAFF and Shane Kay, levy payer representative nominated by DAFF.

Snapshot of the Hort Innovation team

	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Gender split (Executive)	 44% Female 56% Male	 40% Female 60% Male	 35% Female 65% Male	 44% Female 56% Male	 41% Female 59% Male
FTE	85	86	83	90	97
Gender split	 60% Female 40% Male	 60% Female 40% Male	 62% Female 38% Male	 64% Female 36% Male	 64% Female 36% Male
Generation split	 9% Boomers 44% Gen X 44% Gen Y 3% Gen Z	 8% Boomers 48% Gen X 39% Gen Y 5% Gen Z	 8% Boomers 55% Gen X 30% Gen Y 7% Gen Z	 7% Boomers 49% Gen X 37% Gen Y 7% Gen Z	 7% Boomers 49% Gen X 32% Gen Y 12% Gen Z

Impact through collaboration

PRIORITY 4.1

Collaborative and customer focused

Collaboration is key to the success of a prosperous horticulture sector. Through meaningful partnerships and ongoing dialogue, our team members work closely with industry to co-create solutions, share expertise, and deliver outcomes that add tangible value to the horticulture sector.

Working with industry on shared commitments through the Peak Industry Body Forum

Representatives from horticulture's peak industry bodies joined Hort Innovation team members at the Peak Industry Body Forum in Melbourne in July 2024. The forum focused on strengthening partnerships and enhancing ways of working together through open dialogue on key industry issues and opportunities.

A highlight of the forum was a presentation by Jesse Reader, Head of Investment Growth and Commercial at Hort Innovation, who outlined the potential of the Frontiers initiative to drive transformational R&D projects in Australian horticulture. The forum also welcomed Assistant Secretary Paul Denny from DAFF, who shared insights into the Australian Government's priorities for the year ahead.

Driving collaboration and clarity: a milestone forum for delivery partners

In May 2025, Hort Innovation hosted its first Delivery Partner Forum, marking a significant step in strengthening collaboration and transparency across its delivery network. The forum was designed to encourage open dialogue and shared understanding with delivery partners, outlining how recent organisational changes, strategic programs, and streamlined ways of working will shape future engagement and delivery.

The event featured seven Hort Innovation panellists who provided a full and engaging overview of key initiatives, including the current state of horticulture in Australia, the introduction of a supplier code of conduct, and new approaches to improving the partner experience.

Enhancing shared information

In 2024/25 Hort Innovation designed and introduced an interactive Strategic Investment Plan gap analysis dashboard which is housed through the SIAP Portal.

The dashboard provides a point in time analysis of how each industry has invested against their Strategic Investment Plan (SIP) to help identify investment areas (Outcomes & Strategies) that may require further investment.

Through the dashboard, users can see:

- Overview of their projects including: the total number of active, draft and cancelled projects and endorsed investments.
- Financial insights: this includes life-of-project values and expenditure breakdowns against outcomes and strategic priorities.
- Project data: timeliness, delivery partners and links to project reports.
- Strategic alignment: aggregated data is mapped out according to SIP outcomes and strategies.

Expert guidance to help shape levy investment

Across Hort Innovation's R&D stream, team members play a key role in shaping the direction and delivery of levy-funded projects. In 2024/25, Hort Innovation staff participated in more than 120 Project Reference Groups, offering expert input to guide project outcomes and ensure alignment with industry needs.

In addition, team members contributed to external committees, sharing subject matter expertise and strengthening collaboration across the horticulture sector. These contributions help ensure that levy investments are informed, strategic, and grounded in real-world insights.

Communicating and connecting

PRIORITY 4.1

Collaborative and customer focused

Hort Innovation's communications activities connect growers and stakeholders with the outcomes of industry investments, as well as bringing the story of Australian horticulture to life across multiple platforms.

Hort Innovation's communication channels

- Growing Innovation is our monthly newsletter, sharing real-world stories that reflect the value of investment outcomes.
- Our social media channels reach a combined audience of more than 40,000 followers with updates, grower profiles and project highlights.
- The Hort Innovation website provides access to articles, resources, and project pages, making it easier for growers to explore and benefit from the work being done across the sector.
- Impact Updates provide clear, accessible summaries of how investments are delivering value, so growers can see the tangible outcomes of levy-funded work.
- Targeted media releases and industry outreach amplify increased awareness about Australian horticulture to the wider agriculture sector and beyond.
- Our Events Sponsorship Program supports events that bring growers together to share knowledge, build networks and celebrate innovation. In FY25, the program supported 14 events.

Supporting industry communication delivery partners

The majority of horticulture's leviable industries, through their respective R&D levy fund, have a dedicated communications program.

These industry communications programs are delivered by a range of delivery partners with Hort Innovation oversight. They are responsible for communicating to growers and the broader industry the outcomes of levy-funded research and development and marketing (where applicable) investments to inform potential practice change.

In many cases, the industry communications programs involve events such as conferences, field days and workshops that keep growers up to date with the latest research advances and provide a valued platform for networking.

Each communications program is designed specifically around industry needs and grower preferences in terms of channels, content type and frequency of outputs.

Delivery partners are actively involved in the SuppHORT industry communications community of practice which was established by Hort Innovation to facilitate collaboration, workshop challenges, and share insights and achievements.

Supporting industry communication delivery partners

Hort Innovation invests in a range of levy-funded communications programs to ensure growers are kept up to date with the latest information on their investments, as well as other relevant news and industry developments. In 2024/25:

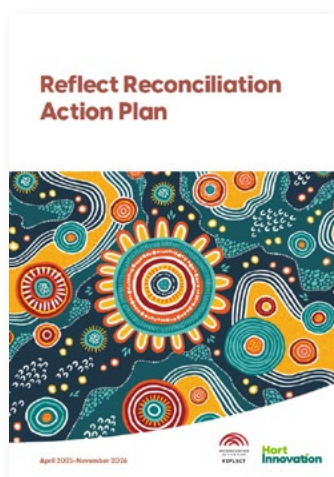
- \$5.16 million was invested in industry communications.
- 23 levy paying industries with a dedicated communications program.
- 64 grower information magazines per year.
- 362 e-newsletters per year.
- 21 websites.
- 48 social media platforms.
- 450,000 industry stakeholders reached each year.

Diversity drives innovation

PRIORITY 4.2

High performance, inclusive culture

Collaboration is key to the success of a prosperous horticulture sector. Through meaningful partnerships and ongoing dialogue, our team members work closely with industry to co-create solutions, share expertise, and deliver outcomes that add tangible value to the horticulture sector.



A workforce that reflects the diversity of the communities we serve is essential to creating an innovative and sustainable future for the Australian horticulture industry.

We want all employees to feel supported, respected and valued regardless of race, ethnicity, religion, age, ability, gender or sexual orientation.

A 2023 revision of our Equal Employment Opportunity, Bullying and Harassment Policy formally embedded our commitment to DE&I and we launched our first DE&I Plan in March 2024. Throughout 2024/25, we have continued to bring this plan to life through targeted initiatives, cross-functional collaboration, and employee-led engagement.

Led by our DE&I Working Groups (Age, All abilities, Culture, First Nations People, Gender and Pride), teams have come together to celebrate and champion diversity through awareness campaigns, events and strategic partnerships.

International Women's Day

In March 2025, Hort Innovation marked International Women's Day with a hybrid event that connected staff across Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane. We were delighted to host guest speakers Georgia Beattie

(Bulla Park) and Alison Jones (Wandin Valley Farms), who shared insights on leadership, gender equity, and inclusion in agriculture. This event fostered connection and reflection, reinforcing the importance of inclusive engagement across all offices.

Towards reconciliation

In 2025, Hort Innovation launched its Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP). The RAP was delivered in partnership with Hort Innovation's First Nations Working Group.

The RAP symbolises our commitment to reconciliation and our recognition of the importance of acknowledging and honouring the cultures, histories, and contributions of Australia's First Nations peoples. It is a testament to our dedication to working towards a future where all Australians, regardless of their background, can thrive and succeed.

Through this RAP, we aim to deepen our understanding of First Nations cultures, histories and perspectives, and to actively promote reconciliation within our organisation and beyond. We will strive to create opportunities for meaningful collaboration and engagement with First Nations communities and businesses and to ensure that our practices and policies support this goal.



Empowering our people

PRIORITY 4.3 Empower our people

Hort Innovation strives to foster a culture where team members feel engaged, supported, and proud to be part of the organisation. Our annual staff surveys demonstrate the success of initiatives aimed at strengthening team connection, improving workplace culture and ensuring that Hort Innovation remains a place where people feel valued and empowered to do their best work.

Team engagement score:

- 2022 July: **55%**
- 2023 February: **56%**
- 2023 July: **64%**
- 2024 February: **74%**
- 2024 July: **77%**
- 2025 February: **72%**
- 2025 July: **74%**

We are also committed to supporting our team with access to an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) to help them deal with any challenges, concerns or issues affecting them at work or home and our Work Health and Safety (WH&S) Management System enables us to continuously improve our work systems.

Hort Innovation's WH&S Committee recently finalised an ergonomic assessment of the Sydney,

Brisbane and Melbourne offices, and remote assessments for regionally located team members. All recommendations from the ergonomic assessment have been, or are being, implemented.

Hort Innovation also engaged ORANGES Toolkit to deliver a 12-month Resilience and Wellbeing training program for our team members. The ORANGES program, first delivered in 2023/24, is aimed at building skills in seven areas: Optimism, Resilience, Attitude, Now, Gratitude, Energy, Strength.

Living our values

Hort Innovation's values represent a shared commitment to delivering outcomes for the Australian horticulture sector.

To celebrate and recognise individuals who consistently embody these values, Hort Innovation presents the Values Awards three times a year. These awards are aligned with our refreshed values and are announced at our all-staff Team Forum events, where recipients are acknowledged for their outstanding contributions.

Our refreshed company values have been well received by team members, with the overall Values factor increasing by 45% to reach 94%.

Cultivating tomorrow's leaders, today

PRIORITY 4.4

Invest in industry capability

A thriving, successful future for the Australian horticulture industry demands a new generation of skilled and confident leaders well-equipped to adapt to a dynamic and evolving environment. Setting up the next generation of industry leaders for success is vital to the future of every grower, which makes it a high priority for Hort Innovation.

By investing in leadership and capability-building initiatives, we aim to equip growers and emerging professionals with the tools, knowledge, and networks they need to succeed.

Supporting flagship initiatives

Hort Innovation has supported initiatives such as:

- Nuffield Australia Farming Scholarships
- AgriFutures Horizon Scholarships
- NFF Diversity in Agriculture Leadership Program

Hort Innovation's 2025 Nuffield Scholarships

Investing in the next generation of leaders is essential for creating an innovative future in Australian horticulture. The Nuffield Scholarship, which awards primary producers with a life-changing scholarship to travel overseas and study an agricultural topic of choice, has been created to support continued learning in emerging horticulture leaders.

Hort Innovation proudly supports the Nuffield Scholarship program to empower these leaders with global insights and skills to drive the industry forward.

In 2025, Hort Innovation proudly sponsored Iain MacLennan, who manages his family's 27-hectare apple orchard, St Albans, in Orange.

As part of his scholarship, Iain will investigate how apple orchards can operate profitably and sustainably, and how carbon accounting can be integrated into orchard management.

Hort Innovation's 2025 Horizon Scholarships

Hort Innovation continues to invest in the future of horticulture by supporting three emerging leaders through the 2025 AgriFutures Horizon Scholarship program.

The Horizon Scholarship program provides financial support, professional development and industry placement opportunities to university students pursuing careers in agriculture. Through this program, scholars gain exposure to real-world challenges and insights across the entire horticulture value chain.

In 2025, Hort Innovation is proud to sponsor Chris Partridge, Ella Wightman and James Haslett, whose diverse backgrounds and aspirations exemplify the leadership potential needed to drive sustainability and growth in the sector. Each scholar brings a unique perspective to the program, ensuring a commitment to innovation and future focused ideas and solutions.

Grassroots leadership skills

Hort Innovation also supports a range of commodity specific programs that are designed to support growers with technical and leadership focused skills. These programs play a key role in strengthening capability across our sector, ensuring that skills development and leadership opportunities are accessible and relevant across all areas of the industry.

Growing leadership within industry communities

Beyond national initiatives, Hort Innovation is proud to support leadership development programs tailored to the unique needs of individual horticulture industries.

■ Growing Almond Leaders (AL23003)

Supporting the next generation of almond industry leaders with the knowledge, skills and confidence to take on leadership roles.

■ Growing Leaders (VG23009)

Leadership capacity building program for participants from across the vegetable supply chain.

■ Masterclass in Macadamia Management (MC23001)

Hands-on, industry-focused training that enhances macadamia management skills and supports professional growth within the sector.

■ Next-Gen Turf Leadership (TU24002)

Annual event for emerging turf producers, fostering leadership, professional development, and industry connections.



Case study:

Cherry-picking global insights

A group of 10 emerging leaders from Australia's cherry industry had the chance to see some of the global sector's newest innovations firsthand as part of an international study tour to the USA, funded by Hort Innovation. The study tour, led by the NSW Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD), included visits to key cherry-growing regions and participation in the 10th International Cherry Symposium. The program exposed participants to large-scale production systems, advanced orchard management techniques and global best practices in quality control and export readiness, all aimed at strengthening the capabilities of Australia's next generation of cherry growers.

The tour highlighted innovative approaches such as trellis systems, reflective ground covers, and the use of gibberellic acid to improve fruit quality. Participants engaged with international researchers and industry leaders, gaining knowledge that will help enhance productivity and competitiveness back home. This initiative forms part of the Emerging Cherry Leaders Program under the CY22002 extension and communication project, funded by Hort Innovation through the cherry R&D levy and contributions from the Australian Government.

A strategic commitment to development

At Hort Innovation, we know that our people are our greatest asset, and the most important factor in delivering high quality outcomes for growers and industry.

We are focused on equipping our teams with the skills, knowledge and confidence they need for today and to continue to support our goals into the future. We do this through comprehensive training and a robust capability framework. This year, we've launched initiatives that support individual capability building while strengthening our collective ability to deliver on Hort Innovation's strategic goals. Key highlights include:

- **Leadership development program**
– Now entering its second year, this 12-month program continues to build leadership capability across the business. Another cohort of 20 leaders is set to complete the program, further strengthening our leadership competencies.

- **Wellbeing program** – Delivered 2–3 times annually, this program remains a core part of our training offering, supporting the holistic wellbeing of our people.

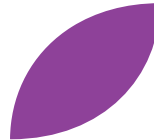
- **External learning opportunities**
– Approximately 30% of our team members participated in external certifications, technical and industry-related workshops this year, ensuring we stay connected to best practices and emerging trends.

- **Team dynamics and collaboration**
– We continue to embed and strengthen team dynamic sessions focused on collaboration and team working skills.

New capability framework

Our 2025 strategic priorities saw the development of our new capability framework. This framework is now being embedded into our performance evaluation and development planning processes, ensuring a consistent and targeted approach to capability growth across the organisation.

Importantly, the framework was co-designed with input from every member of the organisation, through interviews, focus groups, and company-wide exercises. We identified the capabilities that will make Hort Innovation a strong and impactful organisation over the immediate and longer term, ensuring the framework reflects the real strengths, aspirations and needs of our people.



Expanding career pathways through Hort Innovation's Internship Program



Hort Innovation's Internship Program, designed to help with the transition from study to career, continued in 2025 with five students from a range of universities placed in our Marketing, CRM, Events, Investment Management and Sustainability teams.

As part of their placements, students completed 100–150 hours of work, undertaking tasks aligned to their areas of focus:

- **Events Intern** – Supported projects related to the Team Forum, Hort Connections, events calendar management, and supplier sourcing.
- **Marketing Intern** – Contributed to creative and media presentations, consumer data analysis, and e-newsletter content.

- **CRM Intern** – Assisted with survey creation, template development, data segmentation, and identifying process gaps and improvement opportunities.

- **Sustainability Intern** – Reviewed requests for proposals (RFPs) and mandatory response tables (MRTs) and shadowed mentors during evaluation panel processes.

- **Investment Management Intern** – Conducted IM reconciliation and manually examined MRTs for PIB projects.

100% of interns expressed interest in future roles with the organisation and reported that the experience had positively shaped their perception of the agriculture industry, viewing it as a viable and exciting career pathway.



“This program reflects Hort Innovation’s commitment to nurturing future talent by giving students meaningful, real-world experience, often their first in the industry. For many, it opened their eyes to the breadth of careers in horticulture and showed them it’s a viable and rewarding career path.”

Mona Maidment,
GM People & Culture.



**Laurel Park Avocados and
Macadamias**
Alstonville, NSW

Laurel Park spans roughly 15 hectares in the Northern Rivers region of NSW, and farms 2,000 avocado trees, both Hass and Shephard, 500 macadamias and 140 beehives.

They're pioneering orchard innovation to improve productivity and soil health in subtropical horticulture.

6

Work simply and effectively

Good governance, transparency and truly listening to what growers and research partners want us to hear are the elements that underpin Hort Innovation and allow us to work simply and effectively with stakeholders.

Our corporate governance

PRIORITY 5.1

Quality compliance and governance

Hort Innovation's corporate governance practices underpin our commitment to integrity, accountability, and high performance across the organisation.

The following pages provide a comprehensive overview of the key processes and initiatives that shape our approach to governance and ensure ongoing compliance.

Our Constitution

Hort Innovation is guided by our Constitution, which outlines our broad priorities as Australian horticulture's Research and Development Corporation, which are to:

- Provide leadership to, and to promote the development of, the Australian horticulture sector.
- Increase the productivity, farmgate profitability and global competitiveness of horticulture industries by:
 - The strategic allocation and investment of levies, Australian Government contributions, producer contributions (also known as 'voluntary levies') and monies received from investors in research, development, extension and marketing funds, programs and services.
 - Providing information, services and products related to research, development, extension and marketing activities or outcomes.

- Support capacity building by maintaining a diverse range of research, development, extension and marketing services providers.
- Promote and further the interests of Australian horticulture industries overseas including in relation to export, sale, distribution and consumption of horticultural products in countries other than Australia.
- Be accountable to levy payers, producer contribution payers, investors and the Australian Government for the company's use of levies, producer contributions and payments from investors.
- Engage in any other activities for the benefit of members, levy payers, producer contribution payers, Australian horticulture industries, co-investors and the general Australian community.
- Do any activities that are incidental, convenient or conducive to the attainment of all or any of the above.

Hort Innovation's Constitution can be read online at www.horticulture.com.au/governing-documents.





Our legislation and governance principles

Hort Innovation operates within the requirements of legislation and governance principles relevant to a research and development corporation, a not-for-profit and registered charity and a corporate entity, including:

- *Primary Industries Levies and Charges Disbursement Act 2024 (Cth)*
- *Primary Industries Levies and Charges Disbursement (Declared Bodies) Rules 2024*
- *Primary Industries Levies and Charges Disbursement (Horticultural Industry Body) Declaration 2024*
- *Corporations Act 2001 (Cth)*
- *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012 (Cth)*
- *The Australian Institute of Company Directors (AICD) Not for Profit Governance Principles 3rd Edition*
- *Our Code of Conduct*

Hort Innovation is also an organisation subject to the reporting requirements under the *Modern Slavery Act 2018 (Cth)*. Under this legislation, Hort Innovation is required to submit a modern slavery statement outlining the steps we have taken to mitigate the risk of modern slavery in our operations. Hort Innovation submits its Modern Slavery Statement on an annual basis in accordance with the Act.

In our latest statement, we acknowledged there was a moderate risk of modern slavery in the Australian horticulture industry, but there was a low risk of it occurring in either Hort Innovation itself or in our supply chains given the nature of our business and the systems and processes we have in place.

Our funding agreement with the Australian Government

Hort Innovation's previous funding agreement with the Australian Government was reviewed and a new 10-year agreement is in place (the *Statutory Funding Agreement 2024-2035*). The funding agreement provides for a principles-based approach to the reporting and accountability of Hort Innovation. As part of the funding agreement, Hort Innovation is required to demonstrate its performance to DAFF against five key performance principles and 14 key performance indicators each financial year. The five key performance principles are:

- 1. Stakeholder engagement:** to engage stakeholders to identify research and development activities and associated priorities that provide benefits to the industry.
- 2. Research and development and marketing activities:** to ensure research and development activities, marketing activities and associated priorities are strategic, collaborative and targeted to improve profitability, productivity, competitiveness and preparedness for future opportunities and challenges through a balanced portfolio.
- 3. Collaboration:** to undertake strategic and sustained cross-industry and cross-sectoral collaboration that addresses shared challenges and draws on experience from other sectors.
- 4. Governance:** for governance arrangements and practices to fulfil legislative requirements and align with contemporary Australian best-practice for open, transparent and proper use and management of funds.

5. Monitoring and evaluation:

to demonstrate positive outcomes and delivery of research and development activities, marketing activities and associated benefits to levy payers, charge payers and the Australian community in general, and continuous improvement in governance and administrative efficiency.

One of the requirements under the funding agreement is that Hort Innovation participate in a meeting with DAFF to demonstrate our performance against the five performance principles and 14 KPIs each financial year. To support improved transparency for our stakeholders of the Australian Government's governance requirements, we publish information about this performance meeting process on our website [available here](#).

Hort Innovation's funding agreement can be read online at www.horticulture.com.au/governing-documents.

Further information about the performance principles and the KPIs is available in the [Guidelines for Statutory Funding Agreements](#).

Continued >>



Our corporate governance (continued)

Our approach to risk and compliance

Hort Innovation is committed to building trust with all stakeholders through quality compliance and governance processes.

Compliance Management Framework

Hort Innovation's Compliance Policy sets out the expectations and aspirations of the Board for our compliance culture. At its core, the policy is built on a culture of acting lawfully, ethically and responsibly. This approach necessitates a clear statement of adherence to relevant legal requirements including legislative and contractual obligations, and also internal codes of conduct and policies, principles of good governance, and ethical and community standards.

Hort Innovation maintains policies and procedures to support our compliance obligations under Commonwealth and state legislation and regulatory requirements. Hort Innovation's employees have access to an online portal that hosts company policies and procedures. When new team members join, they are required to complete the full suite of onboarding modules, and current employees must undertake a refresher annually. In 2024/25 a significant continuous improvement project has been undertaken to review and refresh the suite of company policies to ensure they are fit for purpose, easy to understand and that accountabilities are clear.

Critical business support services such as human resources, information technology, intellectual property, communications, and finance are well established with skilled knowledge, processes and systems to ensure the ongoing management of financial and non-financial risk and compliance.

To further our commitment to a compliance culture, Hort Innovation's compliance management system has been uplifted into an improved format, increasing its accessibility and enabling more streamlined reporting to management and the Board. A Letters of Assurance process is undertaken annually. Under these arrangements,

each General Manager attests to the CEO in relation to the compliance obligations for which they are responsible. The CEO then provides his own assurance to the Board Chair who takes it into account when finalising the Directors' Report.

Hort Innovation is committed to our partnership with all of our suppliers as we strive to deliver impactful R&D and marketing investments for growers. In 2024/25, Hort Innovation introduced a new Supplier Code of Conduct (the Code). Although suppliers operate independently, their actions can affect Hort Innovation's reputation. The Code outlines key requirements in ethical business practices, anti-corruption, workers' rights and conflicts of interest. It also reinforces the usual prohibition against agri-political activity in connection with the services provided to Hort Innovation, which is a requirement under our funding agreement. Information about the policies that apply to all our suppliers, including the Code, Bribery, Fraud and Corruption Control Policy, Whistleblower Policy and Privacy Policy is available on [our website](#) for existing and new suppliers.

Risk Management Framework

Hort Innovation is committed to efficient and consistent risk management to protect and create value for our members and the wider Australian community. Hort Innovation's Risk Management Framework is aligned with ISO 31000:2018 and continues to mature. This process is overseen by the Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) which reviews the framework annually and ensures it remains appropriate for the level of risk the company chooses to accept.

As part of our continuous improvement, further improvement efforts have been made in 2024/25 to uplift our Risk Management Framework to improve its effectiveness and design, embedding a greater understanding of managing risk at all levels in the company and supporting a positive risk culture and behaviours in the company through training and tools.

Risk Appetite Statement

At Hort Innovation, we embrace a culture which recognises and manages risk. To achieve our strategy and to create impact for growers, Hort Innovation must be willing to take and accept risk.

Our Risk Appetite Statement considers the most significant risks Hort Innovation is exposed to in the pursuit of our strategy. This statement is approved by the Board annually and sets out the Board's appetite for risk and tolerance limits in identified key risk areas.

These risk expressions are used for consistency with general risk management practice and do not suggest that Hort Innovation welcomes or desires the risk outcomes potentially flowing from identified risks.

Hort Innovation considers risks in three categories – company risks, investment risks and external risks:

- **Company risks** are risks that could impact delivering our strategic objectives. The Risk Appetite Statement includes key risk areas for the company such as strategy, conduct of People & Culture, WH&S, compliance, financial, operations and reputation.
- **Investment risks** are risks associated with projects and programs. The Risk Appetite Statement includes key risk areas for investment risks such as delivery partner performance, Frontiers, strategic levy and the investment process.
- **External risks** are from external sources and are beyond the reach of risk appetites set by the Board as there are no current controls or treatments that can mitigate them. However, given these risks may become either company, investment or WH&S risks, they are still monitored and considered by Management with regular reporting to the Board.

The full Risk Appetite Statement, a cornerstone of our Risk Management Framework, guides employees in their roles and is supported by policies, guidelines, reporting, and training.

The Hort Innovation Executive team is responsible for compliance with this Risk Appetite Statement, the Risk Management Policy and related guidelines.

The Risk Management Committee (RMC), including senior management and the Governance and Risk team, meets quarterly and reports to the ARC. The principal objective of the RMC is to ensure the company is operating within the risk tolerances set out by the Board and expressed in the Risk Appetite Statement. The RMC also assists the ARC in many ways including more regular reviews of the risk register and compliance requirements, and the assessment of the adequacy of the various risk controls in place. A WH&S committee meets regularly to advise RMC on reducing people related risks to as low as reasonably practicable.

Our internal audit processes

Our program of internal audits further supports our compliance and continuous improvement at Hort Innovation and the program approach continues to mature. The Board approves an annual internal audit plan based on the recommendation of the ARC.

In 2024/25, our internal audit partner, BDO Services P/L, carried out audits on levies and co-investment, travel and entertainment and payroll as well as facilitating the response to a cyber security incident simulation. The findings, recommendations and management response to each of these audits were presented to the ARC. The Board received a quarterly report on each recommendation's implementation status.

Our approach to managing conflicts of interest

It is vital that Hort Innovation adheres to the principles of fairness and impartiality in its investment, service provider and project review decision-making processes. Hort Innovation has a Conflict of Interest Policy and Procedure to ensure all Hort Innovation employees act honestly in their business dealings and carry out their duties free from unmanaged conflicts of interest. All employees are required to act in good faith towards, and in their employment with, Hort Innovation. The onus is on individuals to identify and declare conflicts of interest as soon as conflicts arise. This policy applies to all Hort Innovation employees. Our Directors must also follow a process to declare any actual or perceived conflict of interest they may have. Hort Innovation regularly updates our policies and procedures, as well as training for team members; new training regarding management of conflicts of interest was rolled out to all employees (including members of the Board) in 2025.

As part of our commitment to building trust with all stakeholders through quality compliance and governance processes, Hort Innovation implemented new training and tools for managing conflicts of interest in our investment advisory mechanisms in 2024/25.

Our approach to managing data and privacy

In line with the *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth.), any organisation with an annual turnover of more than \$3 million has responsibilities under the *Privacy Act*. As such, Hort Innovation is bound by this legislation and the 13 Australian Privacy Principles (APP) that it encompasses. Hort Innovation will continue to strengthen our policy and procedures to ensure they are robust, effective and appropriate. There were no notifiable privacy breaches during the reporting period.

Our approach to business continuity

Hort Innovation's Business Continuity Plan (BCP) is managed through the Recovery Management team to respond to matters such as major technology disruption, significant office service issues, international travel issues and pandemics. Training and third-party testing is conducted annually. The BCP was successfully tested in October 2024. Observations and recommendations from that test have informed a workplan focused on areas for continuous improvement.

Independent external financial report

In line with the requirements set out under the *Australian Charities and Not for-Profits Commission (ACNC) Act 2012* (Cth.) Part 3-2, Div 6O, 6O-5 (1), 6O-10 (1) and 6O-25, Hort Innovation prepares annual financial statements and reports which are audited prior to submission to the ACNC. As per the requirements of our funding agreement, these are provided to DAFF and included in this Company Annual Report.



Measuring the performance of our investments

Hort Innovation undertakes a range of monitoring and evaluation (M&E) activities related to our investment portfolio. Our Evaluation Framework guides our M&E efforts and supports us to responsibly oversee the investments we fund, ensuring they are tracking well and delivering impact effectively and efficiently for the horticulture sector.

We continue to review and improve the way we evaluate the impact of our investments in line with guidelines from the Council of Rural Research and Development Corporations (CRRDC), and as per a recommendation from our Independent Review of Performance, our evaluation Framework was reviewed and refreshed in 2024/25.

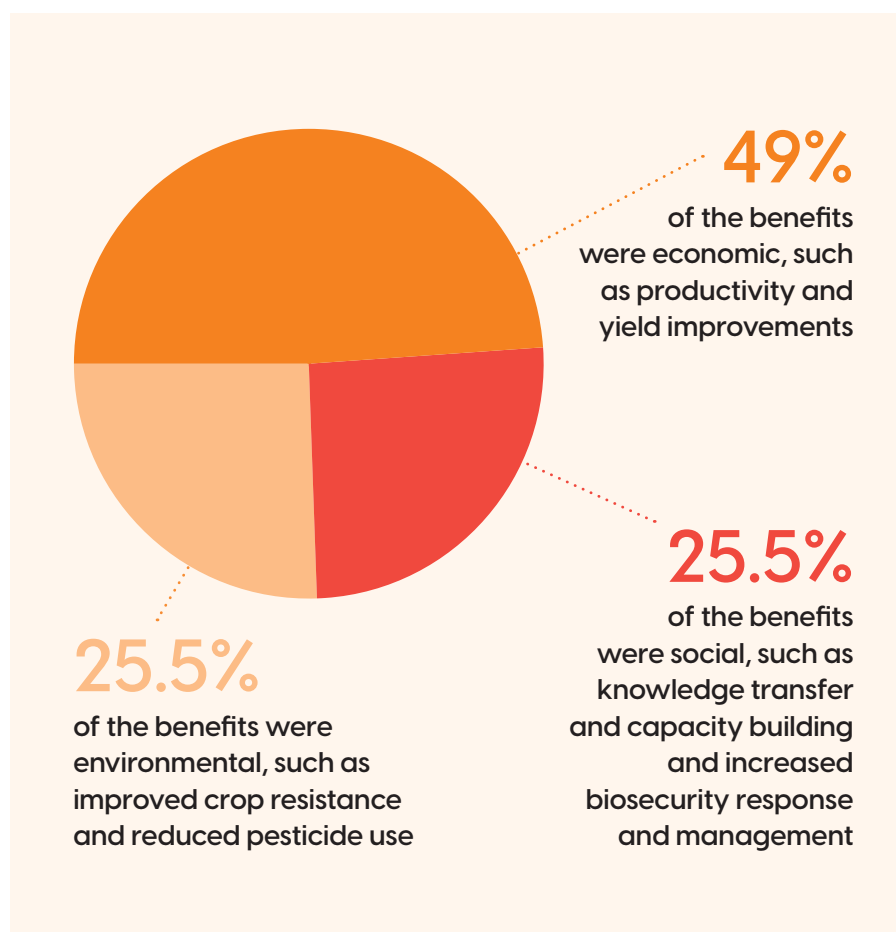
As part of our strengthened approach to M&E, this year we incorporated the assessment of governance impacts to further enhance our evaluation capabilities and increase the robustness of the impact assessments undertaken.

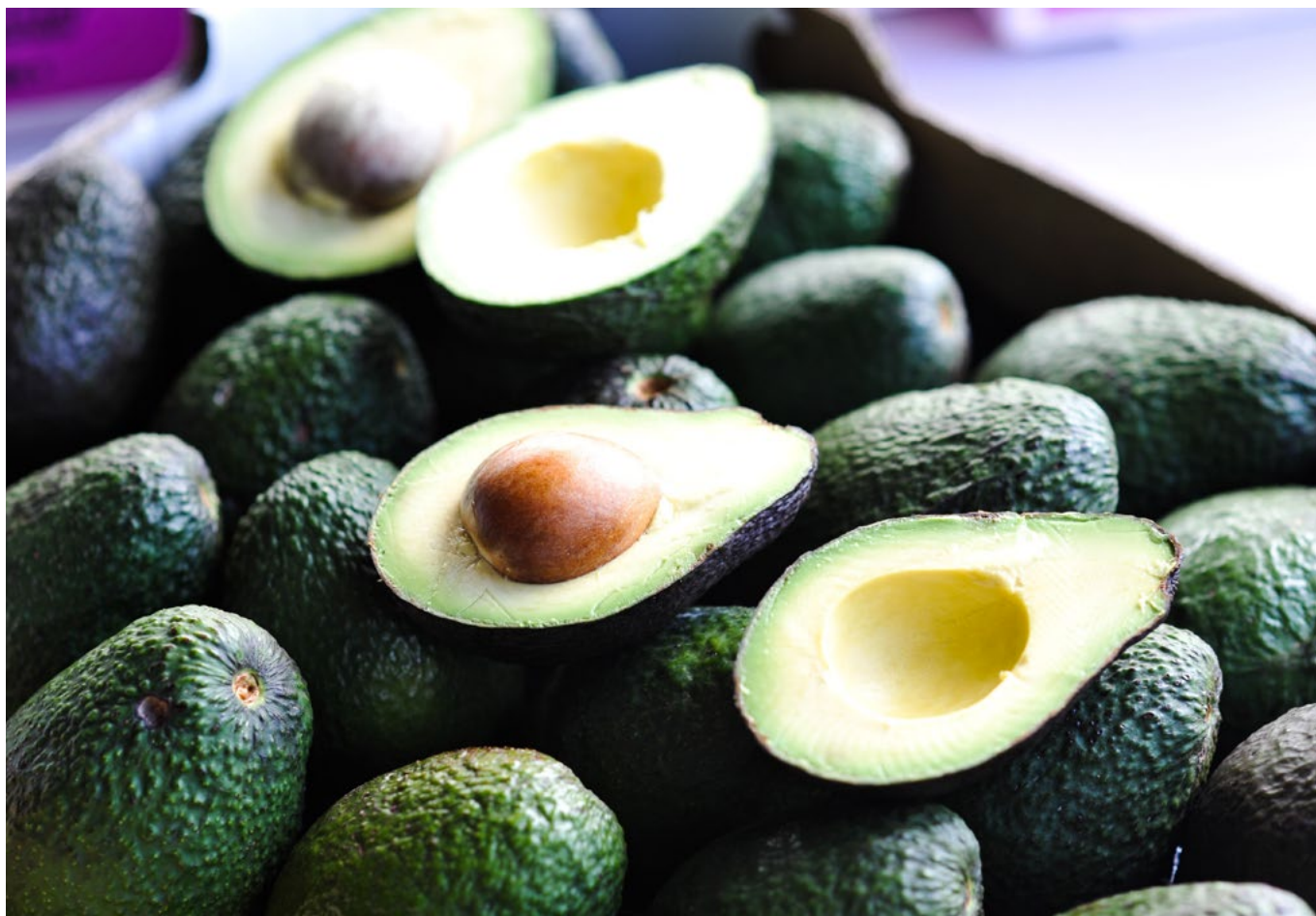
At a project-level, M&E plans are produced for the majority of investments and maintained for all ongoing investments to provide a clear logic and pathway to impact between a project's related activities, outputs and outcomes. M&E plans help delivery partners report the progress and success of their projects and consider areas of potential improvement.

Independent project evaluations are undertaken for a sample of projects to assess the efficiency, effectiveness, relevance and process appropriateness. This helps Hort Innovation work with delivery partners to continuously improve investment delivery and make changes where required. This work also informs the development of new investment recommendations for industry.

As part of our commitment to continuous improvement, Hort Innovation is reviewing its impact measurement process. Investment expenditure analysis work continues to track investments against industry strategic priorities (as identified in Strategic Investment Plans), with performance reporting published on our website.

- 🔴 **Independent audits: \$12.4 million**
The estimated value of benefits the sampled projects are expected to generate over 30 years (in present value terms)
- 🔴 **1.0 – 2.8** The benefit-to-cost ratio of the 2024/25 sample.
- 🔴 **Eight** The number of levy-funded projects randomly sampled.





Case study:

Independently assessed project

AV16007, one of the levy-funded projects independently reviewed as part of our continuous improvement framework, looked at improving avocado orchard productivity through disease management.

The project itself focused on improving orchard productivity through disease management. The independent assessment found:

- The project generated a benefit-to-cost ratio of 2.75:1.
- Four economic and three environmental impacts were identified. These benefits ranged from increased crop yields and fruit quality to reduced prevalence and diseases and a substitution away from less effective pesticides.
- Improved biosecurity practices.
- Information generation across the industry.

2.75 to 1
benefit-to-cost ratio



Turning feedback into action

PRIORITY 5.2

Transparent relationships

At Hort Innovation, we continue to embed a culture that values and acts on feedback from across the horticulture ecosystem. By listening to growers, delivery partners, and peak industry bodies (PIBs), we gain critical insights that help us improve how we deliver value and outcomes.

Grower and Partner Survey

Our Grower and Partner Survey (GaPs) is an important instrument to support Hort Innovation's continuous improvement, gathering feedback on how the organisation is engaging with and delivering outcomes for the horticulture sector.

In 2024, Hort Innovation established a baseline for stakeholder engagement and satisfaction. This marked the beginning of a more structured approach to tracking performance and informing future planning.

In 2025, we continued this work by distributing the survey again, inviting feedback from a broad range of stakeholders. This helped us build on the 2024 foundation and ensure our investment decisions and engagement efforts remain aligned with industry needs. Results indicated progress in grower and PIB engagement, with clear areas for improvement in the engagement with delivery partners. We are now acting on what we heard through the survey through our continuous improvement and work program.

Measuring the performance of our company

At Hort Innovation, we are also committed to monitoring and evaluating our operational performance and our performance in delivering the company strategy.

- A quarterly strategy performance review is undertaken and reported to the Board to monitor progress and action taken to achieving Hort Innovation's Strategy. Company performance is also monitored by Management each month.
- The company invested in systems to allow us to better manage data to measure performance.
- Our CRM reporting helps us to report on the engagement and satisfaction of our customers.
- Our new finance system, known as FinOps, allows for real-time reporting capabilities.



51%

Grower engagement
Increase from 50%



62%

Delivery partner engagement
Decrease from 72%



88%

Peak industry body engagement
Increase from 71%

See the full results

on the Hort Innovation website at www.horticulture.com.au/grower-and-partner-survey:

Driving continuous improvement

PRIORITY 5.3

Minimise complexity

Throughout 2024/25, the Hort Innovation team remained focused on enhancing how we work, reducing complexity, streamlining processes and improving transparency across the organisation.

These efforts are part of our ongoing commitment to delivering greater value for our stakeholders. Here are a few examples of how we've continued to evolve:



Improved Delivery Partner Portal integration

Enhancements to our Delivery Partner Portal and its alignment with our investment management system (HIVE) have increased transparency and usability. New user access options, clearer guidance and timely notifications help partners navigate the system more effectively.



Refined tender submission templates

We've introduced a hybrid model using both Microsoft Word and Excel formats to simplify milestone and budget calculations. These updates improve accuracy and make the submission process more intuitive for respondents.



Faster investment management processes

By streamlining our internal workflows, we've reduced the average time it takes to approach the market, identify the right delivery partner, and contract an investment, cutting the process by nine business days.



Enhanced business planning and milestone management

Our integrated planning cycle now offers greater visibility across the business, enabling better prioritisation and faster review of reports and payments. This ensures we remain responsive and accountable in our delivery.





Cordoma Farm
Robinvale, Victoria

The Cordoma family has been farming table grapes for three generations in the beautiful Sunraysia region of Victoria.

Valued at almost \$1 billion – the Australian table grape industry is one of the most valuable horticultural industries in the country.



Financial Report

For the year ended June 30, 2025

Horticulture Innovation Australia Limited
(A company limited by guarantee)
ACN 602 100 149

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General information

The financial statements cover Horticulture Innovation Australia Limited as an individual entity.

Horticulture Innovation Australia Limited is a not-for-profit unlisted public company limited by guarantee, incorporated and domiciled in Australia. Its registered office and principal place of business is:

Level 7, 141 Walker St
North Sydney
NSW 2060

A description of the nature of the Company's operations and its principal activities are included in the Directors' Report, which is not part of the financial statements.

The financial statements were authorised for issue, in accordance with a resolution of Directors, on September 16, 2025. The Directors have the power to amend and reissue the financial statements.

Directors' Report

The Directors present their report, together with the financial statements, on the Company for the year ended June 30, 2025.

The following persons were Directors of the Company during the whole of the financial year and up to the date of this report, unless otherwise stated:

- Julie Bird (Chair) (Re-appointed Chair – November 2024)
- John Said (Deputy Chair) (Appointed Deputy Chair – November 2024)
- Victoria Taylor (Deputy Chair – November 2023 – November 2024)
- Michael Nixon
- Robert Mullins (Re-elected – November 2024)
- Jan Vydra
- Elke Cleverdon
- Stephen McCutcheon
- Cameron Mackay (Elected – November 2024)
- Catherine Oates (Retired – November 2024)

Chief financial officer and acting company secretary

Andrew Philpotts, Chief Financial Officer, joined the Company in October 2023. In December 2023, Andrew took up the additional role of Company Secretary and served in that role until November 18, 2024.

Company secretary

Emma Braun joined the Company on November 18, 2024 as the Company Secretary.

Meetings of directors

Directors	Role	Board		Audit and Risk Committee		People and Performance Committee		Investment Committee	
		Attend	Eligible	Attend	Eligible	Attend	Eligible	Attend	Eligible
Julie Bird	Chair	8	8	–	–	4	4	–	–
John Said	Deputy chair	8	8	–	–	2	2	3	3
Victoria Taylor	Director	7	8	–	–	4	4	–	–
Michael Nixon	Director	8	8	–	–	4	4	6	8
Robert Mullins	Director	8	8	–	–	–	–	8	8
Jan Vydra	Director	7	8	4	4	–	–	–	–
Elke Cleverdon	Director	8	8	4	4	–	–	8	8
Stephen McCutcheon	Director	8	8	4	4	–	–	–	–
Cameron Mackay	Director	5	5	–	–	–	–	4	4
Catherine Oates	Director	3	3	–	–	2	2	–	–

Director bios



Julie Bird

Chair

BTeach, MBA (Exec), GAICD

Julie Bird is current Chair of the Hort Innovation Board, a position she has held since 2020 after first being elected as a Director in 2018 and re-elected in 2021.

An experienced agribusiness leader and non-executive director, Julie brings more than 30 years of experience across Australian horticulture, with expertise spanning nuts, summerfruit, citrus, apples and pears. She also serves as a Non-Executive Director of the Cotton Research & Development Corporation and Grain Producers SA. Since 2012 she has been business owner of Say It With Flowers, a retail florist based in Malvern, Victoria.

Julie's prior leadership roles include CEO of the Almond Board of Australia and Manager of Quality Fruit Marketing, as well as board positions with Plant Health Australia, United Almonds Limited, and the Australian Nut Industry Council. She has held independent chair positions with Australian Seafood Industries, the Apple and Pear Industry Advisory Committee, and the South Australian Apiary Industry Advisory Group. Julie brings a strong background in governance and finance, complemented by practical industry knowledge and experience in marketing, biosecurity and stakeholder engagement.

Julie is a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors' Company Directors Course, holds a Master of Business Administration (Executive) and a Bachelor of Teaching.



John Said

Director (Appointed Deputy Chair – November 2024)

John was elected as a Director of Hort Innovation in 2023, and appointed Deputy Chair in 2024.

John is currently the CEO of Fresh Select (Aust) Pty Ltd and Executive Chairman of Nutri V Pty Ltd. He is a former director of the Australian Fresh Produce Association and is an alumnus of the Australian Rural Leadership Program.

John has had years of experience as a member and Chair of various Boards across both national and global horticultural associations, equipping him with high level skills and knowledge in governance and compliance. Having established and successfully managed a thriving fresh produce company for the last 30 years, John brings great strength in strategy and business management. His visionary leadership approach has seen the Fresh Select business grow and diversify into not only a fresh produce farming and distribution business, but it has commercialised nutraceuticals to deal with food waste and ensure sustainability.

John has a thorough understanding and expertise in all aspects of supply chain, research and development, technology and systems across both the Australian and international landscapes, having travelled extensively over his 30 years in the industry and developed key stakeholder relationships all over the world including England, America, Europe, and Asia.

John has devoted the majority of his working life to the horticulture industry. Prior to this, he spent some early years as an aircraft maintenance engineer.



Victoria Taylor

Director (Deputy Chair – November 2023 – November 2024)

Grad Cert (Water Policy and Governance), GAICD

Victoria was elected as a Director of Hort Innovation in 2020 and re-elected in 2023.

Victoria is an experienced Board member and is the current Chair of the Agrifood Innovation Institute at the Australian National University and a Non-Executive Director of WaterNSW.

She is currently the part-time Head of Sector Building and Advocacy at Cellular Agriculture Australia.

She is a former Chair of the Rice Marketing Board for the State of New South Wales, a former Independent Director of Australian Dairy Farmers Ltd., and was Executive Officer of the National Horticulture Research Network between 2015-2019.

She holds a Graduate Certificate in Water Policy and Governance from Charles Sturt University and is a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors' Company Directors Course.





Elke Cleverdon

Director

BAcc (equiv), MBA, FCPA, GAICD

Elke was elected to the Board of Hort Innovation in 2022, bringing over 25 years of leadership experience across horticulture, agriculture, banking, and public health. She has a strong track record in financial oversight, strategic risk management, and governance. Elke's deep connection to horticulture stems from her work with growers across regional NSW and her co-ownership of a broadacre farming operation in Harden since 1993, focused on dryland cropping and irrigated horticulture.

Her 16-year executive career in banking, including her role as CFO of a regional mutual bank, complements her eight years in the dairy sector and underpins her expertise in audit and financial stewardship. Elise currently serves as a non-executive director at Charles Sturt University Agriculture Institute, NSW Health Pathology, and the NSW Rural Assistance Authority. She also chairs multiple Audit & Risk Committees and contributes to AgriFutures Australia's Diversity in Ag Leadership Program, supporting the next generation of industry leaders.



Cameron Mackay

Director

MAICD

Cameron was elected to the Board in November 2024.

He spent 12 years on the board of the Australian Banana Growers' Council, with two years as Chairman. He has also completed the Mt Eliza Produce Executive Program and has been a Member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors since 2009.

He is a non-Executive Director of his family business, Mackay Group Holdings, which has been running for almost 80 years, being a third-generation member of the Board. After completing qualifications as a mechanical engineer (automotive), he joined the family business and after five years' work in all aspects of operations, he progressed through a range of management positions. During the last 30 years, he has been an integral contributor as the business has grown to a vertically integrated agri-business with more than 500 employees, growing bananas, papayas, avocados, lychees, passionfruit, cocoa and coffee.

His role has also been closely involved in research collaborations in Central America, together with the development of sustainability programs the business has committed to as a significant agricultural operation in the Wet Tropics catchment of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park.



Stephen McCutcheon

Director

BEcon, Grad.Dip.Public Law, GAICD

Steve was elected to the Board of Hort Innovation in 2022.

He is currently a Governing Board Member of the Joint Accreditation System for Australia and New Zealand and is Chair of the Australian Government's Nature Repair Committee.

He has extensive experience working with agriculture and food industries in private and public sector settings. This includes several years in rural lending with major banks and a 20 year career with the now Australian Government DAFF working initially with a number of horticultural industries to implement economic reforms and later, in senior executive roles, leading the Australian Government's role in national biosecurity and food safety policy and programs.

Steve served as Chief Executive Officer of Food Standards Australia New Zealand from 2007-2017 and was a Non-Executive Director and Chair of Plant Health Australia Limited from 2017 to 2023.

Steve has a Bachelor of Economics degree from the University of Sydney and a Graduate Diploma in Public Law from the Australian National University. He is a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors' Company Directors Course.

Continued >>

Director bios (continued)



Bob Mullins

Director

BSc Agr, MTechMgt, PhD, GAICD

Bob was elected as a Director of Hort Innovation in 2021 and re-elected in 2024.

Bob is an experienced director of commercial and not-for-profit businesses in Australia and internationally. Currently, he is a non-executive director of Future Food Systems Ltd, New Edge Microbials Group Pty Ltd and InterGrain Pty Ltd.

Bob was raised on a wheat farm and has enjoyed an international career in technology-based businesses supporting high-value horticulture. He has broad business experience having held senior commercial and technical leadership roles in Australia, Malaysia, Korea, Singapore and the United States.

Bob is motivated by the challenge of leveraging research and technology to deliver practical, profitable, and sustained innovation for growers. After early roles as a plant breeder and R&D manager in sugar cane, he joined a plant biotech and robotics start-up before moving to Asia to join Syngenta Seeds. Bob led vegetable seeds businesses across APAC and the Americas, contributing to extended periods of profitable growth, business development, and commercialisation of innovative technologies.

Bob is a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors Course and has degrees in Agricultural Science, Technology Management, and Plant Breeding.



Michael Nixon

Director

Michael was elected as a Director of Hort Innovation in 2020 and re-elected in 2023.

He is passionate about Australian horticulture and grew up in agriculture, with his family farming sheep, cattle and wheat.

Michael has grown a broad range of horticultural crops suited to the climate as part of his Carnarvon-based business, River Lodge. He's been involved in several industry organisations and committees at a national level and is a former board member of both AUSVEG and the Australian Banana Growers' Council.

Michael is the previous Chair of the Gascoyne Food Council and part of the team that created its 'Better Practice' arm. He was heavily involved in community organisations in marketing and promoting the wellbeing of the horticultural industry in his region. Realising the importance of the role he has since retired his work in community organisations to focus on his directorship at Hort Innovation.



Cath Oates

Director (Retired in November 2024)

BBus (Hort), GDip (Oen), GAICD

Cath is an experienced Non-Executive Director with 20 years of international senior management experience in the wine sector. She has a strong understanding of agri-business, ESG and sustainability, stakeholder engagement, RD&A, global marketing and market access.

She currently serves as a Non-Executive Director of Wine Australia and is Deputy Chair. She was appointed Acting Chair by the Minister during a transition period in 2020. She chairs the Australian Grape and Wine National Sustainability Advisory Committee, which provides expert advice on emerging sustainability issues.

Cath has previously served as President of both the Great Southern Wine Producers Association and Margaret River Wine Association and as Vice President of Wines of Western Australia. She served on the Advisory Board of Sustainable Winegrowing New Zealand.

She has most recently held Senior Management roles with Mud House Wine Group (NZ) and Plantagenet Wines (WA). She currently runs her fine wine brand Oates Ends from the inter-generational family farming property in Margaret River and a winemaking and sustainability consultancy business.

Cath holds a Bachelor of Business in Horticulture from Curtin University and a Post Graduate Diploma in Oenology from the University of Adelaide and is a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.



Jan Vydra

Director

GAICD

Jan was appointed to the Hort Innovation Board in 2019 and elected to the Board in 2022.

Jan is a dynamic leader in the agribusiness sector. As a first-generation farmer, he co-founded a leading fresh herb business in 2008, where he developed a passion for innovation and sustainable farming. Prior to this role, Jan led the operations of one of Australia's most well-known fresh fruit and vegetable distributors.

Jan's leadership has been widely recognised, earning him the Australian Young Farmer of the Year award in 2011 and the Rabobank Emerging Leader of the Year Award in 2016. In 2016, he was also a recipient of a prestigious Nuffield Scholarship.



Emma Braun

Company Secretary

Emma is Hort Innovation's Company Secretary and joined the company in November 2024.

Emma has worked as an in-house lawyer and company secretary for over 30 years and has private and public sector experience across multiple jurisdictions and sectors in developing and mature markets.

Emma has a Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Laws (with Honours) and a Master of Laws from the University of Melbourne, and a Diploma of Applied Corporate Governance from the Governance Institute of Australia. She has also undertaken postgraduate studies in executive leadership and is a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

She is admitted to practice in the Supreme Courts of Victoria and New South Wales, the High Court of Australia, and is a Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Secretaries and Administrators (UK) and of the Governance Institute of Australia.



Other information

Members

As at June 30, 2025, Hort Innovation was owned by 2,002 members, 87.5% being Australian horticultural growers, with the remaining 12.5% carrying on another form of enterprise in the Australian horticulture industry supply chain.

Contributions on winding up

In the event that the Company is wound up, each member has undertaken to contribute an amount not exceeding \$2.00.

Corporate governance

Hort Innovation adopts best corporate governance practice drawing upon the ASX Corporate Governance Principles and Recommendations, as appropriate for its governance structure as a non-listed, not-for-profit corporation.

The Company has in place a number of governance documents and practices in respect of the Directors, the Board and its operations, including but not limited to the following:

- Constitution
- Board Charter
- Audit and Risk Committee Charter
- Investment Committee Charter
- People and Performance Committee Charter
- Charter of the Committees of the Board
- Director Nomination Committee Charter
- Committee Compensation Guidelines
- Code of Conduct and Business Ethics
- Delegations of Authority (Financial and Non-Financial)
- Conflicts of Interest Declaration Procedure and Form
- Risk Management Plan
- Fraud Control Plan

- Modern Slavery Policy
- Intellectual Property Policy and Intellectual Property Management Plan
- Corporate policies such as Whistleblower Policy, Conflict of Interest Policy, IT policies
- HR policies such as Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination Policy, Health and Safety Policy
- Procurement Manual
- Privacy Policy and Privacy Manual
- COVID Safety Plan.

A lens on governance in day-to-day operations

Risk Management

A Risk Management process exists within Hort Innovation addressing Strategic, Emerging, Operational Risks, with update reports provided to the Audit and Risk Committee at each of the Committee meetings.

Business Continuity

Hort Innovation's Business Continuity Framework has been developed and is managed through the Recovery Management Team to respond to matters such as major technology disruption, major office service issues, international travel issues, and pandemics.

Modern Slavery

Hort Innovation is an organisation subject to the reporting requirements under the Modern Slavery Act 2018 (Cth). Under the legislation, Hort Innovation is required to disclose in a Modern Slavery Statement the steps it has taken to mitigate the risk of modern slavery in its operations and that supply chains are free from modern slavery. Hort Innovation submits its Modern Slavery Statement on an annual basis in accordance with the Modern Slavery Act 2018 (Cth).

Nature of operations and principal activities

The principal activities of the Company during the period were investment in R&D and marketing programs for the Australian horticulture industry. These activities are expected to continue into the future.

Significant changes in the state of affairs

There have been no significant changes in the state of affairs of the Company during the year.

Objectives and performance goals

The Company invests in R&D, marketing, international trade and extension programs all working towards outcomes, recommendations and resources to help increase the productivity, profitability and global competitiveness of Australia's horticulture sector.

Other information (continued)

Environmental regulation

The Company is not subject to any particular or significant environmental regulations under the law of the Commonwealth or of a state or territory.

Insurance of officers

During the period, the Company incurred an insurance premium in respect of a contract insuring Horticulture Innovation Australia Limited Directors and Officers against liabilities arising as a result of work performed in their capacity as Directors and Officers of the Company. Details of the nature of liabilities covered, or the amount of premium paid in respect of the insurance contract, are not detailed here, as the disclosure of the details is prohibited under the terms of the contract.

Indemnification of auditors

To the extent permitted by law, Hort Innovation has agreed to indemnify its auditors, RSM Australia Partners, as part of the terms of its audit engagement agreement against claims by third parties arising from the audit (for an unspecified amount). No payment has been made to indemnify RSM Australia Partners during or since the financial year ended June 30, 2025.

Review of operating results

The operating surplus for the year ended June 30, 2025 was \$8,573,609 (2024: \$17,559,274).

Events subsequent to balance sheet date

No matter or circumstance has arisen since June 30, 2025 that has significantly affected, or may significantly affect the Company's operations, the results of those operations, or the Company's state of affairs in future financial years.

Auditor's independence declaration

A copy of the auditor's independence declaration as required under section 307C of the *Corporations Act 2001* is set out immediately after this Directors' Report.

This report is made in accordance with a resolution of Directors, pursuant to section 298(2)(a) of the *Corporations Act 2001*.

On behalf of the Directors,



Julie Bird, Chair

Dated this 16th day of September 2025



John Said, Deputy Chair

Dated this 16th day of September 2025

Horticulture Innovation Australia Limited

Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income

for the year ended June 30, 2025

	Note	Year ended June 30, 2025 \$	Year ended June 30, 2024 \$
Levies, Commonwealth matching, Co-investment, grants and other	3	210,565,572	202,662,188
Expenses			
Occupancy expenses		(536,674)	(555,979)
Employee benefits expense	4	(18,488,410)	(16,532,598)
Research and development programs		(150,766,540)	(138,962,865)
Marketing programs		(21,726,337)	(20,601,836)
Depreciation and amortisation expenses	4	(1,728,097)	(1,633,579)
IT expenses		(2,657,859)	(2,573,298)
Travel expenses		(1,504,865)	(1,263,726)
Other expenses		(4,583,181)	(2,979,033)
Net surplus for the year	15	8,573,609	17,559,274
Other comprehensive income for the year		–	–
Total comprehensive income for the year		8,573,609	17,559,274

The above statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Statement of Financial Position

for the year ended June 30, 2025

	Note	Year ended June 30, 2025 \$	Year ended June 30, 2024 \$
Assets			
Current assets			
Cash and cash equivalents	5	45,608,954	71,156,438
Trade and other receivables	6	682,108	5,444,988
Contract assets	7	10,483,586	30,097,015
Financial assets	8	61,945,220	1,939,462
Prepayments		564,428	615,003
Total current assets		119,284,296	109,252,906
Non-current assets			
Plant and equipment	9	1,243,600	2,174,198
Intangibles	10	751,125	1,450,795
Total non-current assets		1,994,725	3,624,993
Total assets		121,279,021	112,877,899
Liabilities			
Current liabilities			
Trade and other payables	11	5,343,565	7,243,344
Contract liabilities	12	4,099,424	2,049,919
Provisions	13	1,240,939	942,880
Lease liabilities	14	660,273	610,281
Total current liabilities		11,344,201	10,846,424
Non-current liabilities			
Provisions	13	656,890	666,884
Lease liabilities	14	55,303	715,573
Total non-current liabilities		712,193	1,382,457
Total liabilities		12,056,394	12,228,881
Net assets		109,222,627	100,649,018
Funds			
Retained surpluses	15	109,222,627	100,649,018
Total funds		109,222,627	100,649,018

The above statement of financial position should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Horticulture Innovation Australia Limited

Statement of Changes in Equity

for the year ended June 30, 2025

	Retained Surplus			
	Research and development	Marketing	Corporate	Total funds
	\$	\$	\$	\$
Balance at July 1, 2023	61,135,013	15,676,540	6,278,191	83,089,744
Surplus for the year	12,051,079	1,539,442	3,968,753	17,559,274
Other comprehensive income for the year	—	—	—	—
Total comprehensive income for the year	12,051,079	1,539,442	3,968,753	17,559,274
Balance at June 30, 2024	73,186,092	17,215,982	10,246,944	100,649,018

	Retained Surplus			
	Research and development	Marketing	Corporate	Total funds
	\$	\$	\$	\$
Balance at July 1, 2024	73,186,092	17,215,982	10,246,944	100,649,018
Surplus for the year	8,305,482	(1,760,498)	2,028,625	8,573,609
Other comprehensive income for the year	—	—	—	—
Total comprehensive income for the year	8,305,482	(1,760,498)	2,028,625	8,573,609
Balance at June 30, 2025	81,491,574	15,455,484	12,275,569	109,222,627

The above statement of changes in equity should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Horticulture Innovation Australia Limited

Statement of Cash Flows

for the year ended June 30, 2025

	Note	Year ended June 30, 2025 \$	Year ended June 30, 2024 \$
Operating activities			
Other income		4,715,433	3,611,944
Levies received		68,434,302	64,827,283
Receipts from Commonwealth matching and government grants		107,025,944	81,594,050
Receipts from co-investment		53,527,093	43,977,817
Payments to suppliers and employees		(26,645,951)	(23,801,481)
Payments to research and development providers		(153,810,891)	(135,082,118)
Marketing program payments		(21,800,524)	(20,906,291)
Interest received		3,761,209	3,792,858
Net cash from operating activities		35,206,615	18,014,062
Investing activities			
Payments for investments in term-deposits		(60,005,758)	62,444
Purchase of plant and equipment	9	(117,304)	(520,026)
Purchase of intangibles	10	(20,759)	(868,465)
Net cash used in investing activities		(60,143,821)	(1,326,047)
Financing activities			
Principal repayments of lease liability		(579,284)	(531,085)
Interest on lease liability		(30,994)	(30,994)
Net cash used in financing activities		(610,278)	(562,079)
Net increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents		(25,547,484)	16,125,936
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the financial year		71,156,438	55,030,502
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the financial year	5	45,608,954	71,156,438

The above statement of cash flows should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
for the year ended June 30, 2025

Note 1. Material accounting policy information

The accounting policies that are material to the Company are set out either in the respective notes or below. The accounting policies adopted are consistent with those of the previous financial year, unless otherwise stated.

New or amended Accounting Standards and Interpretations adopted

The Company has adopted all of the new or amended Accounting Standards and Interpretations issued by the Australian Accounting Standards Board ('AASB') that are mandatory for the current reporting period.

Any new or amended Accounting Standards or Interpretations that are not yet mandatory have not been early adopted.

Basis of preparation

The financial report is a general purpose financial report, which has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of AASB 1060 General Purpose Financial Statements – Simplified Disclosures for For-Profit and Not-for-Profit Tier 2 Entities and other authoritative pronouncements of the Australian Accounting Standards Board and the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profit Commission. The financial report has also been prepared on a historical basis, except for financial assets and liabilities, which have been measured at fair value. The financial report is presented in Australian dollars, which is Horticulture Innovation Australia Limited's functional and presentation currency.

Where an amendment to policy has resulted in a reclassification of expenses, comparatives have been restated to present a true comparison.

Statement of compliance

The Company is a not-for-profit entity which is not publicly accountable. Therefore the financial statements comply with AASB 1060 General Purpose Financial Statements – Simplified Disclosures for For-Profit and Not-for-Profit Tier 2 Entities and the Corporations Act 2001.

Income tax

The Company is registered with the ACNC and is exempt from income taxation under section 50-40 of the Income Tax Assessment Act 1997.

Other taxes

Revenues, expenses and assets are recognised net of the amount of GST except:

- When the GST incurred on a purchase of goods and services is not recoverable from the taxation authority, in which case the GST is recognised as part of the cost of acquisition of the asset or as part of the expense item as applicable.
- Receivables and payables, which are stated with the amount of GST included.

The net amount of GST recoverable from, or payable to, the taxation authority is included as part of receivables or payables in the Statement of Financial Position. Cash flows are included in the cash flow statement on a gross basis and the GST component of cash flows arising from investing and financing activities, which is recoverable from, or payable to, the taxation authority is classified as part of operating cash flows. Commitments and contingencies are disclosed net of the amount of GST recoverable from, or payable to, the taxation authority.

Current and non-current classification

The Company has presented current and non-current assets, and current and non-current liabilities, as separate classifications in the statement of financial position. The Company classifies an asset as current where it is cash or a cash equivalent or when it expects to realise the asset within twelve months of the reporting date. The Company classifies a liability as current where the liability is due to be settled within twelve months after the reporting date.

Note 1. Material accounting policy information *(continued)*

Investments and other financial assets

Investments and other financial assets are initially measured at fair value. Transaction costs are included as part of the initial measurement, except for financial assets at fair value through profit or loss. Such assets are subsequently measured at either amortised cost or fair value depending on their classification. Classification is determined based on both the business model within which such assets are held and the contractual cash flow characteristics of the financial asset unless an accounting mismatch is being avoided.

Financial assets are derecognised when the rights to receive cash flows have expired or have been transferred and the Company has transferred substantially all the risks and rewards of ownership. When there is no reasonable expectation of recovering part or all of a financial asset, its carrying value is written off.

Financial assets at fair value through profit or loss

Financial assets not measured at amortised cost or at fair value through other comprehensive income are classified as financial assets at fair value through profit or loss. Typically, such financial assets will be either: (i) held for trading, where they are acquired for the purpose of selling in the short-term with an intention of making a profit, or a derivative; or (ii) designated as such upon initial recognition where permitted. Fair value movements are recognised in profit or loss.

Impairment of assets

The Company assesses at each reporting date whether there is an indication that an asset may be impaired. If any such indication exists, or when annual impairment testing for an asset is required, the Company makes an estimate of the asset's recoverable amount. An asset's recoverable amount is the higher of its fair value less costs to sell and its value in use and is determined for an individual asset, unless the asset does not generate cash inflows that are largely independent of those from other assets and the asset's value in use cannot be established to be close to its fair value. In such cases the asset is tested for impairment as part of the cash-generating unit to which it belongs. When the carrying amount of an asset or cash-generating unit exceeds its recoverable amount, the asset or cash-generating unit is considered impaired and is written down to its recoverable amount.

Impairment losses relating to continuing operations are recognised in those expense categories consistent with the function of the impaired asset unless the asset is carried at revalued amount (in which case the impairment loss is treated as a revaluation decrease).

Other financial assets

The classification and measurement requirements of IFRS9 did not have a significant impact on the Company. The Company continued measuring at fair value all financial assets previously held at fair value under IAS 39.

Economic dependency

The Company is economically dependent on levies, voluntary contributions, R&D co-investment and Commonwealth Government contributions.

Comparatives

Where necessary, comparative figures have been reclassified to conform with changes in presentation of income statement and balance sheet but resulting in no impact to the overall profit for both current year and prior year.

Note 2. Critical accounting judgements, estimates and assumptions

The preparation of the financial statements requires management to make judgements, estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts in the financial statements. Management continually evaluates its judgements and estimates in relation to assets, liabilities, contingent liabilities, revenue and expenses. Management bases its judgements, estimates and assumptions on historical experience and on other various factors, including expectations of future events, management believes to be reasonable under the circumstances. There are no critical accounting judgements, estimates and assumptions that are likely to affect the current or future financial years.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
for the year ended June 30, 2025

Note 3. Levies, Commonwealth matching, Co-investment, grants and other

	2025 \$	2024 \$
Research and development income		
Proceeds from levies	39,384,882	37,786,316
Revenues from Commonwealth matching	86,970,215	81,953,351
Co-investment – recognised at a point in time	48,532,374	46,151,516
Grant income	1,890,293	5,095,058
Collective industry funds	5,431,097	1,937,787
Royalty income	465,366	406,697
Interest received	3,151,010	2,776,190
	185,825,237	176,106,915
Marketing income		
Proceeds from levies	23,745,067	25,342,829
Interest received	472,263	632,510
Royalty income	–	141,180
Other income	–	82,800
	24,217,330	26,199,319
Other		
Corporate interest received	453,492	153,707
Revenue	69,513	202,247
	523,005	355,954
Total revenue	210,565,572	202,662,188
Total interest received	4,076,765	3,562,407

Note 3. Levies, Commonwealth matching, Co-investment, grants and other (continued)

Accounting policy for revenue and contributions

The Company has applied AASB 1058 *Income of Not-for-Profit Entities* and AASB 15 *Revenue from Contracts with Customers*.

An assessment of all government grants received has been undertaken and revenue from these contracts is deferred until performance obligations are met when the grant is captured by AASB 15. Grant income is recognised upon achievement of milestones and no grant income recognised has unfulfilled conditions or other contingencies attached.

For revenue streams to which AASB 15 does not apply, revenue is recognised to the extent that the economic benefits will flow to the Company and the revenue can be reliably measured.

AASB 1058 clarifies and simplifies the income recognition requirements that apply to not-for-profit (NFP) entities, in conjunction with AASB 15. The income recognition requirements shift the focus from a reciprocal/non-reciprocal basis to a basis of assessment that considers the enforceability of a contract and the specificity of performance obligations. The core principle of the income recognition requirements in AASB 1058 is that when a NFP entity enters into transactions where the consideration to acquire an asset is significantly less than the fair value of the asset principally to enable the entity to further its objectives, the excess of the asset recognised (at fair value) over any 'related amounts' is recognised as income immediately.

The following specific recognition criteria must be met before revenue is recognised:

Revenue from the rendering of a service

Revenue from the rendering of a service is recognised upon the delivery of the service to customers.

Interest revenue

Interest revenue is recognised on a proportional basis taking into account the interest rates applicable to the financial assets. Other revenue is recognised when the right to receive the revenue has been established.

Research and development Co-investment and voluntary contributions

Contributions are recognised as revenue upon receipt.

Levy receipts

DAFF collects statutory levies on behalf of the Company. Revenue from levies are recognised as revenue when the levy amount is collected by DAFF.

Commonwealth Co-investment funds

The Commonwealth Government provides co-investment funding on a fifty cent on the dollar basis on approved R&D projects, up to a level of 0.5% of the gross value of horticultural production. Commonwealth co-contribution funds are recognised as revenue upon incurring the eligible R&D program expenditure.

Industry reserve interest

Interest earned on contributions received in advance from levies to meet future marketing and R&D expenditure is allocated to the respective levy account.

Royalties

Royalty income is recognised upon receipt. All revenue is stated net of the amount of goods and services tax (GST).



NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

for the year ended June 30, 2025

Note 4. Expenses

	2025 \$	2024 \$
<i>Included within expenses are the following significant amounts:</i>		
Employee expenses	16,677,853	15,101,285
Superannuation	1,810,557	1,431,313
Depreciation and amortisation expenses		
Depreciation of property, plant and equipment	449,990	352,144
Depreciation of right-of-use assets	571,137	572,311
Amortisation	706,970	709,124

Note 5. Cash and cash equivalents

	2025 \$	2024 \$
Current assets		
Cash on hand	476	–
Cash at bank	45,608,478	71,156,438
	45,608,954	71,156,438

Accounting policy for cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents in the balance sheet comprise cash at bank and on hand and short term deposits with an original maturity of three months or less. For the purposes of the Cash Flow Statement, cash and cash equivalents consist of cash and cash equivalents as defined above, net of outstanding bank overdrafts.

Bank overdrafts are carried at the principal amount. Interest is charged as an expense as it accrues.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
for the year ended June 30, 2025

Note 6. Trade and other receivables

	2025 \$	2024 \$
Current assets		
Trade receivables	682,108	2,625,392
Less: Allowance for expected credit losses	–	(50,000)
	682,108	2,575,392
Other receivables	–	2,869,596
	682,108	5,444,988

Other receivables are recognised at amortised cost, less any allowance for expected credit losses.

Note 7. Contract assets

	2025 \$	2024 \$
Current assets		
Contract assets	10,483,586	30,097,015

Accounting policy for contract assets

Contract assets represent amounts recognised as income but not yet collected from the Commonwealth Government.

Note 8. Other assets

	2025 \$	2024 \$
Current assets		
Short-term deposits	61,945,220	1,939,462

Accounting policy for short-term deposits

Short term deposits relate to temporary surplus funds, mainly from levies, voluntary and co-investment contributions and Commonwealth co-contributions which are placed in either a term deposit or cash deposit account. For funds deposited in at call accounts, interest is earned on the daily balance at the prevailing daily rate and is paid at the end of the month. Term deposits are held with the Company's bank with interest payable upon maturity of the deposits.



NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
for the year ended June 30, 2025

Note 9. Plant and equipment

	2025 \$	2024 \$
Non-current assets		
Leasehold improvements – at cost	1,443,905	1,445,229
Less: Accumulated depreciation	(1,196,681)	(979,191)
	247,224	466,038
Furniture, fixtures and fittings – at cost	138,813	128,989
Less: Accumulated depreciation	(33,831)	(17,765)
	104,982	111,224
Office equipment – at cost	304,662	270,761
Less: Accumulated depreciation	(207,046)	(123,778)
	97,616	146,983
Hardware – at cost	736,404	743,317
Less: Accumulated depreciation	(559,395)	(481,270)
	177,009	262,047
Right of use – leases	3,965,813	3,965,813
Less: Accumulated depreciation	(3,349,044)	(2,777,907)
	616,769	1,187,906
	1,243,600	2,174,198

Reconciliations

Reconciliations of the written down values at the beginning and end of the current financial year are set out below:

	Leasehold improvements \$	Furniture, fixtures and fittings \$	Office equipment \$	Hardware \$	Right of use – leases \$	Total \$
Balance as at July 1, 2024	466,038	111,224	146,983	262,047	1,187,906	2,174,198
Additions	–	18,528	40,099	58,677	–	117,304
Disposals	(1,085)	(7,195)	(280)	(18,215)	–	(26,775)
Depreciation expense	(217,729)	(17,575)	(89,186)	(125,500)	(571,137)	(1,021,127)
Balance at June 30, 2025	247,224	104,982	97,616	177,009	616,769	1,243,600

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
for the year ended June 30, 2025

Note 9. Plant and equipment *(continued)*

Accounting policy for plant and equipment

Plant and equipment is stated at historical cost, or fair value if the asset is donated to the entity, less accumulated depreciation and any accumulated impairment losses. Such cost includes the cost of replacing parts that are eligible for capitalisation when the cost of replacing parts is incurred. Similarly, when each major inspection is performed, the cost is recognised in the carrying amount of the plant and equipment as a replacement only if it is eligible for capitalisation. All other repairs and maintenance are recognised in the profit and loss as incurred.

The assets' residual values, useful lives and amortisation methods are reviewed, and adjusted if appropriate, at each financial year end.

The depreciation rates used for each class of assets are:

Class of fixed asset	Depreciation rates	Depreciation basis
Leasehold improvements	Based on life of lease	Straight line
Furniture, fixtures and fittings	12.5%	Straight line
Office equipment	50%	Straight line
Hardware	33.3%	Straight line
Right of use – leases	Based on life of lease	Straight line

Disposal

An item of plant and equipment is derecognised upon disposal or when no further future economic benefits are expected from its use or disposal.

Any gain or loss arising on derecognition of the asset (calculated as the difference between the net disposal proceeds and the carrying amount of the asset) is included in profit and loss in the year the asset is derecognised.

Leases

AASB16 Leases has been applied for the reporting year and the Company has applied a single recognition and measurement approach for all leases for which it is the lessee, except for short term leases and leases of low value. Right of use assets are measured at cost, less any accumulated depreciation and impairment losses. They are depreciated on a straight line basis over the term of the lease. At the commencement date of the lease, the Company recognises lease liabilities measured at the present value of lease payments to be made over the lease term.



NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

for the year ended June 30, 2025

Note 10. Intangibles

	2025 \$	2024 \$
Non-current assets		
Software – at cost	98,386	121,431
Less: Accumulated amortisation	(95,554)	(86,822)
	2,832	34,609
Project management system – at cost	3,112,048	3,091,289
Less: Accumulated amortisation	(2,363,755)	(1,675,103)
	748,293	1,416,186
	751,125	1,450,795

Reconciliations

Reconciliations of the written down values at the beginning and end of the current financial year are set out below:

	Software \$	Project management system \$	Total \$
Balance as at July 1, 2024	34,609	1,416,186	1,450,795
Additions	–	20,759	20,759
Disposals	(13,459)	–	(13,459)
Amortisation expense	(18,318)	(688,652)	(706,970)
Balance at June 30, 2025	2,832	748,293	751,125

Accounting policy for intangible assets

Intangible assets acquired are initially measured at cost. Following initial recognition, intangible assets are carried at cost less any accumulated amortisation and any accumulated impairment losses.

The useful lives of intangible assets are assessed to be either finite or indefinite. Intangible assets with finite lives are amortised over the useful life and tested for impairment whenever there is an indication that the intangible asset may be impaired. The amortisation period and the amortisation method for an intangible asset with a finite useful life is reviewed at least at each financial year-end. The amortisation expense on intangible assets with finite lives is recognised in profit or loss in the expense category consistent with the function of the intangible asset.

A summary of the policies applied to the Company's intangible assets is as follows:

Software and program management system

Intangible assets include software which is being amortised over 1–3 years and the Company's program management system which is being amortised over 3–5 years from the go live date.

Useful life: Finite

Amortisation method use: Amortised over the period of expected future benefit from the related project on a straight-line basis.

Internally generated or acquired: Acquired

Impairment testing: When an indication of impairment exists. The amortisation method is reviewed at each financial year end.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
for the year ended June 30, 2025

Note 11. Trade and other payables

	2025 \$	2024 \$
Current liabilities		
Trade payables	52,536	850,380
Other payables	5,291,029	6,392,964
	5,343,565	7,243,344

Fair value

Due to the short-term nature of these payables, their carrying value is assumed to approximate their fair value.

Accounting policy for trade and other payables

Trade payables and other payables are carried at amortised costs and represent liabilities for goods and services provided to the Company prior to the end of the financial year that are unpaid and arise when the Company becomes obliged to make future payments in respect of these goods or services. The amounts are unsecured, interest free and are usually paid within 30 days of recognition.

Note 12. Contract liabilities

	2025 \$	2024 \$
Current liabilities		
Contract liabilities	4,099,424	2,049,919

Accounting policy for contract liabilities

Contract liabilities represent grants received but not yet recognised as income. Grant terms and conditions require performance and return of unspent portions.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

for the year ended June 30, 2025

Note 13. Provisions

	2025 \$	2024 \$
Current liabilities		
Annual leave	950,183	755,797
Long service leave	108,359	33,609
Employee oncosts	182,397	147,152
Purchased leave	–	6,322
	1,240,939	942,880
Non-current liabilities		
Long service leave	244,291	261,683
Make good provision	412,599	405,201
	656,890	666,884
	1,897,829	1,609,764
	2025 No.	2024 No.
Number of employees at year end (Full time equivalent)	97	90

Movements in provisions other than employee benefits

2025	Make good provision \$
Balance as at July 1, 2024	405,201
Accrued provision	7,398
	412,599

Accounting policy for employee benefits

Wages and salaries and annual leave

Liabilities for wages and salaries, including non-monetary benefits and annual leave expected to be settled within 12 months of the reporting date are recognised in respect of employees' service up to the reporting date. They are measured at the amounts expected to be paid when the liabilities are settled.

Long service leave

The liability for long service leave is recognised and measured as the present value of expected future payments to be made in respect of services provided by employees up to the reporting date using the projected unit credit method. Consideration is given to expected future wage and salary levels, experience of employee departures, and periods of service. Expected future payments are discounted using marketing yields at the reporting date on corporate bonds with terms to maturity and currencies that match, as closely as possible, the estimated future cash outflows.

Defined contribution superannuation expense

Contributions to defined contribution superannuation plans are expensed in the period in which they are incurred.

Termination benefits

Termination payments include leave entitlements due at termination date, as well as redundancy payments in line with the Company's of Employment and Redundancy policy.

Note 14. Lease liabilities

	2025 \$	2024 \$
Current liabilities		
Lease liability	660,273	610,281
Non-current liabilities		
Lease liability	55,303	715,573
	715,576	1,325,854

	2025 \$	2024 \$
Right of use assets		
At the beginning of the financial year	1,325,854	1,887,933
Lease payment	(641,743)	(611,064)
Accretion of interest	31,465	48,985
At the end of the financial year	715,576	1,325,854

The lease liability includes one lease for office premises as well as one lease for office equipment. At balance date the terms of these leases range from 36 to 48 months.

	Total lease payments		Present value of lease payments	
	2025 \$	2024 \$	2025 \$	2024 \$
Lease liability				
Within one year	672,731	641,744	660,273	578,546
After one year but not more than five years	55,442	728,173	55,303	747,308
	728,173	1,369,917	715,576	1,325,854

Accounting policy for lease liabilities

A lease liability is recognised at the commencement date of a lease. The lease liability is initially recognised at the present value of the lease payments to be made over the term of the lease, discounted using the interest rate implicit in the lease or, if that rate cannot be readily determined, the Company's incremental borrowing rate. Lease payments comprise of fixed payments less any lease incentives receivable, variable lease payments that depend on an index or a rate, amounts expected to be paid under residual value guarantees, exercise price of a purchase option when the exercise of the option is reasonably certain to occur, and any anticipated termination penalties. The variable lease payments that do not depend on an index or a rate are expensed in the period in which they are incurred.

Lease liabilities are measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method. The carrying amounts are remeasured if there is a change in the following: future lease payments arising from a change in an index or a rate used; residual guarantee; lease term; certainty of a purchase option and termination penalties. When a lease liability is remeasured, an adjustment is made to the corresponding right-of-use asset, or to profit or loss if the carrying amount of the right-of-use asset is fully written down.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

for the year ended June 30, 2025

Note 15. Retained surpluses

	2025 \$	2024 \$
Balance at the beginning of the year	100,649,018	83,089,744
Net surplus for the year	8,573,609	17,559,274
Retained surpluses at the end of the year	109,222,627	100,649,018

	2025 \$	2024 \$
Reconciliation of net surplus for the year		
Corporate net surplus	2,028,625	3,968,753
Research and development net surplus	8,305,482	12,051,079
Marketing net surplus	(1,760,498)	1,539,442
Net surplus	8,573,609	17,559,274

Funds	2025 \$	2024 \$
Funds – corporate		
Funds – corporate	12,275,569	10,246,944
Total corporate funds	12,275,569	10,246,944
Funds – R&D		
Unspent R&D levies	52,781,531	47,711,590
Levy industry strategic reserve	5,000,000	5,000,000
Non levy reserves	23,710,043	20,474,502
Total designated funds – R&D	81,491,574	73,186,092
Funds – marketing		
Unspent marketing levies	13,455,483	15,215,981
Levy industry strategic reserve	2,000,001	2,000,001
Total designated funds – marketing	15,455,484	17,215,982
Total funds	109,222,627	100,649,018

The net surplus at June 30, 2025 includes \$6,544,984 of industry reserves, made up of \$8,305,482 from research and development and a deficit of \$1,760,498 from marketing.

Non Levy Reserves relate to unspent Co-Investment income and government grant funding.

When managing capital, management's objective is to ensure the Company continues as a going concern as well as to maintain optimal returns for all stakeholders.

The Company is not subject to any externally imposed capital requirements.

For the year ended June 30, 2025 the Company has recognised corporate revenue, including corporate recoveries, income and interest of \$31,527,710. Corporate expenditure during this period amounted to \$29,499,084 resulting in a corporate surplus for the year of \$2,028,625. Corporate funds are used to manage the operations of the Company, while research and development and marketing retained funds represent surplus industry funds received but not yet expended on the research and development and marketing programs.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
for the year ended June 30, 2025

Note 16. Key management personnel disclosures

Compensation

The compensation made to Directors and other members of key management personnel of the Company is set out below:

	2025 \$	2024 \$
Directors	622,128	613,413
Key management personnel	2,859,747	2,764,443
	3,481,875	3,377,856

At Horticulture Innovation Australia Limited, the key management personnel are the executive team. The executive pay is structured as a total remuneration package with superannuation payments made in accordance with the Superannuation Guarantee Legislation to the executive's choice of superannuation fund for the 2024/25 financial year. The balance of the executive's remuneration can be structured at the executive's discretion within the Company salary packaging policy. The Executive is eligible for a performance bonus based on criteria determined in consultation with the Board.

Note 17. Remuneration of auditors

During the financial year the following fees were paid or payable for services provided by RSM Australia, the auditor of the Company:

	2025 \$	2024 \$
Audit services – RSM Australia		
Audit of the financial statements	88,000	85,000
Other services		
Preparation of the financial statements	5,150	5,000
Consulting services	34,000	–
	127,150	90,000

Note 18. Contingent liabilities

Estimates of the maximum amounts of contingent liabilities that may become payable:

	2025 \$	2024 \$
Research and development and marketing expenditure liabilities		
Within one year	129,066,996	140,304,695
After one year but not more than five years	270,486,158	266,628,706
After more than five years	17,085,007	14,469,003
	416,638,161	421,402,404
Bank guarantee facility	1,900,000	1,900,000

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
for the year ended June 30, 2025

Note 19. Commitments

The Company had no commitments as at June 30, 2025 (June 30, 2024: none).

Note 20. Related party transactions

The Directors of the Company during the period were:

- Julie Bird
- John Said
- Victoria Taylor
- Michael Nixon
- Robert Mullins
- Jan Vydra
- Elke Cleverdon
- Cameron Mackay
- Stephen McCutcheon
- Catherine Oates (Retired on: November 29, 2024)

Because of the nature of the skills and other interests of Directors related to horticulture, there is potential for conflict of interest given the broad range of R&D and marketing projects undertaken by the Company. The Company keeps a register of Directors' declared conflicts of interest, and each Board meeting commences with a declaration of conflicts in relation to the agenda items.

Robert Mullins is a Director of Future Food Systems Ltd. During the reporting year Horticulture Innovation Australia Ltd provided funding for a project with Future Food Systems Ltd to the value of \$487,500 (2024: \$487,500).

Catherine Oates is a Director of Wine Australia. During the reporting year Horticulture Innovation Australia Ltd received Co- investment contributions from Wine Australia to the value of \$142,105 (2024: \$10,000), and provided sponsorship of \$nil (2024: \$3,500) to Wine Australia.

Julie Bird is a Non-Executive Director of Cotton Research & Development Corporation. During the reporting year Horticulture Innovation Australia Ltd received Co-Investment contribution CRDC to the value of \$62,104 (2024: \$20,000).

Note 21. Events after the reporting period

No matter or circumstance has arisen since June 30, 2025 that has significantly affected, or may significantly affect the Company's operations, the results of those operations, or the Company's state of affairs.

Directors' Declaration

In the Directors' opinion:

- the attached financial statements and notes comply with the *Corporations Act 2001*, the *Australian Accounting Standards – Simplified Disclosures*, the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012* and associated regulations, the *Corporations Regulations 2001* and other mandatory professional reporting requirements;
- the attached financial statements and notes give a true and fair view of the Company's financial position as at June 30, 2025 and of its performance for the financial year ended on that date;
- there are reasonable grounds to believe that the Company will be able to pay its debts as and when they become due and payable; and
- the consolidated entity disclosure statement is 'true and correct'.

Signed in accordance with a resolution of Directors made pursuant to section 295(5)(a) of the *Corporations Act 2001*.

On behalf of the Directors,



Julie Bird, Chair

Dated this 16th day of September 2025



John Said, Deputy Chair

Dated this 16th day of September 2025





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INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT To the Members of Horticulture Innovation Australia Limited

Opinion

We have audited the financial report of Horticulture Innovation Australia Limited (the Company), which comprises the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2025, the statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income, the statement of changes in equity and the statement of cash flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including material accounting policy information, and the directors' declaration

In our opinion, the financial report of Horticulture Innovation Australia Limited has been prepared in accordance with Division 60 of the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012, including:

- (i) giving a true and fair view of the Company's financial position as at 30 June 2025 and of its financial performance and cash flows for the year ended on that date; and
- (ii) complying with Australian Accounting Standards – Simplified Disclosures under AASB 1060 General Purpose Financial Statements – Simplified Disclosures for For-Profit and Not-for-Profit Tier 2 Entities and Division 60 of the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Regulation 2022.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report section of our report. We are independent of the Horticulture Innovation Australia Limited in accordance with the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (the Code) that are relevant to our audit of the financial report in Australia. We have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Other Information

The directors are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the Company's annual report for the year ended 30 June 2025, but does not include the financial report and the auditor's report thereon.

Our opinion on the financial report does not cover the other information and accordingly we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

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In connection with our audit of the financial report, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial report, or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated.

If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact. We have nothing to report in this regard.

Responsibilities of the Directors for the Financial Report

The directors of the Company are responsible for the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards – Simplified Disclosures under AASB 1060 General Purpose Financial Statements – Simplified Disclosures for For-Profit and Not-for-Profit Tier 2 Entities and the Australian Charities and ACNC Act, and for such internal control as the directors determine is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view and is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial report, the directors are responsible for assessing Horticulture Innovation Australia Limited ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the directors either intend to liquidate the Company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of this financial report.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial report is located at the Auditing and Assurance Standards Board website at: http://www.auasb.gov.au/auditors_responsibilities/ar4.pdf. This description forms part of our auditor's report.



RSM AUSTRALIA PARTNERS



Peter Kanellis
Partner

Sydney, NSW
Dated: 17 September 2025





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AUDITOR'S INDEPENDENCE DECLARATION

In relation to our audit of the financial report of Horticulture Innovation Australian Limited for the year ended 30 June 2025, and in accordance with the requirements of Subdivision 60-C of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*, I declare that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, there have been:

- (i) no contraventions of the auditor independence requirements of any applicable code of professional conduct; and
- (ii) no non-audit services provided that contravene any applicable code of professional conduct.

RSM

RSM AUSTRALIA PARTNERS

P Kanellis

Peter Kanellis
Partner

Sydney, NSW
Dated: 16 September 2025

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Acknowledgements

Hort Innovation would like to thank all the organisations that contributed photos for this annual report to highlight the activities and achievements of 2024/25. We would also like to thank the various growers and industry stakeholders who provided input into the case studies and quotes throughout the report.



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Glossary, abbreviations and acronyms

ACIAR	Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research
AFL	Asia Fruit Logistica
AFPA	Australian Fresh Produce Alliance
AFWC	Australian Food & Wine Collaboration
AGM	Annual General Meeting
AHR	Applied Horticulture Research
AIP	Annual Investment Plan
APP	Australian Privacy Principles
APVMA	Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority
ARC	Audit & Risk Committee
ASD	Anaerobic soil disinfestation
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
ATMAC	Agricultural Trade and Market Access Cooperation
BCP	Business Continuity Plan
CIF	Collective Industry Fund
COP	Community of Practice
CRC	Cooperative Research Centre
CRRDC	Council of Rural Research and Development Corporations
DAFF	Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry
DAFQ	Department of Agriculture and Fisheries Queensland
DE&I	Diversity, Equity & Inclusion
DNC	Director Nomination Committee
DPIRD	Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development NSW
ENRI	Emerging National Rural Issues
FASTA	Fresh and Secure Trade Alliance
GaPs	Grower and Partner survey
HAL	Horticulture Australia Limited

IC	Investment Committee
IFPA ANZ	International Fresh Produce Association Australia and New Zealand
IP	Intellectual Property
IPM	Integrated Pest Management
IRP	Independent Review of Performance
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
M&E	Monitoring & Evaluation
MoU	Memorandums of Understanding
MRT	Mandatory Response Table
PBRI	Plant Biosecurity Research Initiative
PIB	Peak Industry Body
PIPS	Productivity, Irrigation, Pests and Soils program
PPC	People & Performance Committee
R&D	Research and Development
RD&E	Research, Development and Extension
RDC	Research and Development Corporation
RFP	Request for proposal
SARP	Strategic Agrichemical Review Process
SFA	Statutory Funding Agreement
SIAP	Strategic Investment Advisory Panel
SIP	Strategic Investment Plan
WH&S	Work Health & Safety



Hort Innovation Annual Report 2024/25

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