

Welcome to the second edition of Hort Innovation's new publication, **Impact Update** – a snapshot of your investments in action and how they are making an impact on the ground.



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R&D: Improving the quality of sweetpotatoes

Quality is the main driver for buying sweetpotatoes for 63 per cent of Australian households, according to levy-funded research through the Hort Innovation Sweetpotato Fund investment *Australian sweetpotato consumer insights research* (PW18003).

Based on this research, there is a significant opportunity to shift 'medium users' (45 per cent of the sample) of sweetpotatoes to doubling their consumption. This group primarily buy sweetpotatoes on impulse, and quality will significantly impact their purchase behaviour. 'Light users' can also be influenced to increase purchases, but this can be addressed by improving their knowledge of sweetpotatoes and how to use them. A small shift in purchasing frequency in these two consumer segments could double consumption by these consumers.

A new Hort Innovation Sweetpotato Fund investment began in 2021 to improve the quality of sweetpotato across the industry by engaging key stakeholders across the value chain, including growers, wholesalers and

retailers, so quality can be monitored and maintained in the long term.

Improving quality of sweetpotato across the industry supply chain (PW20000) is investigating pre-and post-harvest quality issues for Australian sweetpotatoes and is developing a business case for quality improvements in the supply chain. This is being explored through supply chain quality reviews on-farm in Queensland and at retail level in Victoria, mimicking a typical supply chain.

Industry adoption of the recommendations will be driven through direct engagement, newsletters and grower roadshows. The program will monitor the adoption of these recommendations by the sweetpotato industry.

Meet Matthew Prichard, sweetpotato grower from Cudgen, Northern NSW

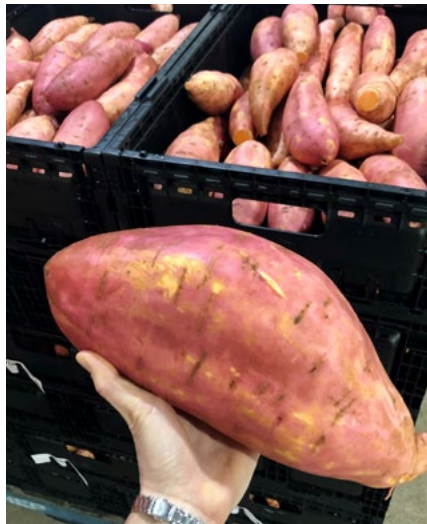
Our industry was concerned about the quality of sweetpotatoes we saw in retail displays. They weren't up to the standard that we thought they should be, so we began to work with Hort Innovation on a levy-funded investment that improves the quality of sweetpotatoes across the industry supply chain. The ultimate aim of the project is to improve quality to drive sales.

There are three areas where you can experience problems that impact sweetpotato quality and can lead to consumer dissatisfaction on-farm, during the supply chain and with retailers. This project works to align growers and supply chain participants such as transporters, agents, merchants and retailers. Getting on the same page and ensuring we're driving in the same direction will help increase sales of sweetpotato through bringing new consumers into the category and encouraging existing consumers to buy more (increasing purchase frequency and average weight of purchase).

The first stage is about figuring out what's happening on the shelf so that we can get a baseline on the standard of sweetpotatoes right now and understand what factors affect their quality. Our project partners, Kitchener Partners and Quality Associates, are collecting initial data instore across Coles, Woolworths, Aldi and independent supermarkets.

We've found so far that skin damage is the main factor causing issues on the shelf. These issues originate on-farm, so when we saw that information come through, we decided to put skin damage top of mind when making decisions. For example, gentle handling will be the top priority when we look to replace equipment through the harvesting process or the packing line.

The next thing we've found is that some temperature and humidity issues are occurring in the supply chain. It looks like the sweetpotatoes are experiencing significant changes in temperature, which can increase problems like bacterial pitting.



Reject sweetpotato with skinning suffering

In response to this finding, the project has changed to include using almost a thousand trackers that will monitor location, temperature and humidity in real-time. This will tell us exactly where the problems are happening on-farm and along the supply chain. We've got five sweetpotato farms participating in that part of the program.

The retailer engagement component of the program is all about showing retailers what is happening on the shelf and providing them with strategies and solutions to improve their handling of sweetpotatoes. For example, a possible solution to some of the problems we're facing would be to move sweetpotatoes into the banana supply chain because they have similar needs in terms of temperature management compared to standard potatoes, which can withstand lower temperatures.

The Hort Innovation Sweetpotato Fund has also invested in a project



Hort Innovation R&D Manger Bianca Cairns with a reject sweetpotato

looking at causes and management strategies for skin loss in sweetpotatoes. These two projects will work together really well. The *Causes and management strategies for skin loss in sweetpotatoes* (PW21002) project is working with Louisiana State University, the world leader in sweetpotato research. Being able to leverage their knowledge and techniques will be hugely beneficial for our industry.

I'm looking forward to seeing how this project progresses and how I can change my methods on-farm to improve the quality of our sweetpotatoes. It's all about figuring out where the issues are happening and addressing them. As a grower, I'm making efforts to provide better quality sweetpotatoes from the farm. In doing so, the retailer receives high-quality potatoes with less skin damage, stored in better temperature and humidity parameters, so that the customer will get the best sweetpotato experience they can.

Divya Vinod, Hort Innovation Industry Strategic Partner for sweetpotatoes

“The sweetpotato industry is setting itself up for success through its levy investments. The consumer insights project revealed that there was work to be done to ensure consistent quality for consumers, which has informed the development of the quality improvement program. Together with the skin loss research project, the sweetpotato industry will have the knowledge they need to address their quality issues and improve the end product available for consumers.”

R&D: Taking a collaborative approach to integrated pest and disease management

In October 2021, Hort Innovation hosted a two-day workshop for the macadamia industry to discuss integrated pest and disease management. The workshop brought together macadamia growers, key industry stakeholders and delivery partners to:

1. Review the current macadamia pest management program
2. Engage the macadamia industry in shaping the next iteration of the macadamia pest management program
3. Identify key priorities for pest management in macadamia.

The workshop was a major success and an excellent example of collaboration between Hort Innovation and key macadamia stakeholders, including 22 macadamia growers and consultants.

The stakeholders involved in leading the event were:

- Corrine Jasper (Hort Innovation Head of Industry Strategic Partnerships), Kathryn Young (Hort Innovation R&D Manager) and Olive Hood (Hort Innovation Regional Extension

Manager) provided a strategic direction for the workshop.

- Leoni Kojetin and Chris Searle from the Australian Macadamia Society coordinated the workshop and provided the macadamia industry perspective.
- Araz Solomon (Hort Innovation R&D Manager for Integrated Pest and Disease Management) chaired the workshops and provided his expertise on entomology and pathology.

A key part of the workshop was a discussion on macadamia growers needs and concerns about integrated pest and disease management, which were distilled into a 'wish list'. Through discussion, this 'wish list' was then converted into research targets based on industry priorities and available levy budget. The priorities were then

developed into a multidisciplinary pest management program which Hort Innovation contracted on behalf of the macadamia industry.

An integrated systems-based approach for pest management in Australian macadamia (MC21000) aims to establish a decision support system to facilitate timely and effective pest management decisions for the Australian macadamia industry. This will suppress populations of key insect pests under an economic threshold, ensuring sustained and improved orchard health and productivity. The main value proposition this project offers is the modelling component which has the capability to integrate data from past, current and future projects to support decision-making to control pests in macadamia.



Megan Boote, Grower Services Manager for Suncoast Gold Macadamias

Meet Megan Boote, Grower Services Manager for Suncoast Gold Macadamias

“ I was involved in the workshop held in Bundaberg in October 2021, where we were asked to rank the priorities for future integrated pest and management R&D for the macadamia industry.

Participants included pest-focused consultants and grower representatives working in the Queensland macadamia industry, and we had the opportunity to hear from some key research stakeholders on the progress of their projects.

The main priority identified by the group was pest ecology and biology.

We identified that large scale trials were needed to better understand the lifecycle, breeding and feeding patterns of the industry’s most destructive pests, primarily fruit spotting bug, seed weevil and lacebug. We discussed the questions we’d like answers to such as “What controls population expansion?” “Is there a relationship between tree health, nutrition or growth stage and pest incidence?” “What is the relationship between temperature, humidity and changing climate and the growth and feeding patterns of the pests?”

The outcomes of such research should then be used to develop evidence-based tools to more accurately and efficiently predict and control pests. The group thought tools such as predictive models of insect populations,

updated risk matrix and economic control thresholds were a high priority.

The group agreed that more work on cultural, biological controls and beneficial insects already used was needed. We also identified a need to continue the work in finding new or novel solutions from this sector that could help our industry in the future.

As has been discussed at many macadamia industry consultant meetings, we identified a need for localised extension groups to promote information sharing, upskilling and to strengthen local and regional ties between growers, consultants and researchers so that we can better deal with new and existing pest threats. ”

International Trade: Nature’s gift to health in Malaysia

In 2020, the Australian Government announced the Agribusiness Expansion Initiative (ABEI) as part of a long-term strategy to achieve sustainable growth and resilience in exports. Over \$85 million will be invested through the initiative to help Australian agribusinesses expand and diversify their export markets. The ABEI is jointly delivered by the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries and Austrade, in close collaboration with industry.

Through this initiative, Hort Innovation received funding to support Taste Australia activities for cherries, citrus, summerfruit, and table grapes. Each of the four sectors had \$100,000 contributed to their marketing levy budget to support a program of activities in an additional or existing market, plus in-kind marketing support and advice.

Hort Innovation consulted with the cherry and summerfruit industry in partnership with Austrade, on the best approach. The decision was made to use the extra funding to run a campaign in an additional market, Malaysia.

The ‘Nature’s Gift to Health’ campaign positioned Australia as a premium supplier and highlighted the many health benefits of cherries and summerfruit. The campaign also focused on gifting to capture the giving culture of the festive period, which is prominent in Malaysia from Christmas to Chinese New Year.



Hort Innovation carried out the campaign with a three-pronged approach:

Media outreach

The campaign held an exclusive media session at the High Commissioner of Australia's residence and a consumer-focused event featuring Dato' Fazley Yaakob, a Malaysian celebrity chef. Media events delivered a high media value of AUD 1.4 million with 91 pieces of coverage that generated a reach of over 43 million.

Influencer engagement

The campaign partnered with 13 highly influential lifestyle and food opinion leaders, including Malaysian celebrity chef, Chef Wan and Abang Brian, Malaysian actress and model Amber Chia, alongside other high profile people such as Bella Kuan and Nana Bebu.

Influencers were given a beautifully decorated gift basket containing summerfruit, cherries and flowers to highlight the gifting message key to the campaign. These gifts were distributed to the influencers to create bespoke content showcasing the fresh produce

and conveying its premium qualities to consumers.

Influencer engagement is imperative in reaching the target audience, especially as Malaysians are proficient social media users and use it to interact with the brands they love.

Retailer program

Retail programs further strengthened the presence of Australian summerfruits and cherries in stores with supermarkets such as AEON, Jaya Grocer, Village Grocer, Ben's Independent Grocers, Cold Storage, Mercato, TF Value, Lotus and QRA providing prominent display space.

Retail promotions reached an audience of 134,890 (68 per cent above target) with an increase in sales by 60 per cent during the sampling period.

The Taste Australia promotion had a microsite with QR codes in all point-of-sale materials for the first time. The site provided consumers with comprehensive information on the campaign, recipes, products and promotions with point-of-sale materials placed at over 100 stores nationwide.

TESTIMONIALS

"We are really excited that our Malaysian friends can access, taste and enjoy our delicious premium cherries – a low calorie, tasty snack that is high in antioxidants and vitamins.

Here in the Yarra Valley, we can pick them, pack them, carefully select them and send them in one day. We love it even more that they can be available to the customer by day three while they are still as fresh as the day we picked them. Fresh is best!"

Robyn Hall, cherry grower from Yarra Valley Cherries

"The in-store activation helped us increase the sales volume as repeat ordering is better after customer sampling, and there was more buzz this year on social media. The taste of fruit is very important in driving repeat purchasing and we must strive to deliver this to consumers"

Tracy L, Purchaser at Khaishen Trading in Malaysia

"Australian peaches are one of my favourite fruits and each year. I always buy them for my clients as Chinese New Year gifts. Trying fruits at the supermarket helps me to decide if I'll purchase or not. I also love the premium gift, it's good quality."

Triptpal K, Customer at Village Grocer Supermarket in Malaysia



Marketing: Whatever your thing, make your body sing!

The challenge for Australian Bananas in 2022 was to develop an enduring, engaging and disruptive brand campaign to promote the natural energy provided by bananas while also communicating how versatile bananas are at fueling our passions.

Australian Bananas relaunched the iconic 'Make Your Body Sing' soundtrack with a distinctive tongue-in-cheek brand platform promoting a faux range of bananas, each specifically suited to a popular Aussie pastime. First launched in 1994, many consumers instantly recall the song, reminding them that bananas are a great natural energy source to help you do all the things you love, no matter who you are and what you're doing.

Competitors in the energy space have been innovating for years, while bananas have not changed for millennia. Australian Bananas takes a unique approach through this playful campaign encouraging Australians to reappraise the humble banana and prompting consumers to consider bananas for more occasions, more often. The positioning of Australian Bananas as the go-to snack for honest-to-goodness natural energy allows the fruit to be considered as a convenient, healthy solution with breakfast and throughout the day.

The campaign is backed by research insights and a focused media plan to optimise spend. It promotes the banana category at a time when growers are

experiencing unprecedented challenges including, but not limited to, escalating farm input costs, worker shortages and weather events.

Activities

With 91 per cent of Australian households (8.95 million households) already purchasing bananas, the media approach needed to cast the net wide. Through this approach, the campaign includes light buyers who represent a growth opportunity for bananas; by increasing their consumption frequency.

Hort Innovation promoted the campaign from January to June through an integrated marketing program including television, broadcast video on demand, out-of-home display panels outside supermarkets, radio, public relations and social media. The campaign leveraged a complementary selection of media channels to ensure key messages were delivered to consumers across the path to purchase to raise awareness, drive consideration and contribute to conversion.

Activities focused on building the association of Australian Bananas with energy, and tapping into opportunities

to communicate the banana message during key cultural events. The first was back-to-school in January to ensure bananas are the go-to fruit in the lunchbox, following an influx of seasonal fruit choices throughout Summer. The second was National Banana Day, May 1st, to build consumer interest in the lead-up to winter.

Results

The 'Make Your Body Sing' campaign performed well in both pre-launch and post-launch effectiveness measures as detailed below.

PRE-LAUNCH

Pre-launch, Australian Bananas' campaign was assessed on its advertising effectiveness, using quantitative research.

The results conducted with research company Cubery showed that the bananas advertising exceeded all other advertisements tested by Cubery in Australia. Cubery tests approximately 500 advertisements annually, measuring their effectiveness, with the Australian Bananas advertisement falling into the top five





per cent of advertisements Cubery has tested globally.

The Australian Bananas television advertising exceeded norms across all key measures to:

- **Captivate:** 71 versus 59 norm to stand out and grab attention
- **Connect:** 81 versus 59 norm to instantly recall the product/brand
- **Compel:** 77 versus 58 norm to motivate behavioural change through the positive influence of thoughts, feelings and behaviours.

Not only was the advertisement enjoyed by consumers, the campaign also conveyed the key messages that were intended to resonate with consumers. With each message tested measuring significantly higher than the norm, including 'a snack high in energy' 94 versus norm of 78.

In addition, qualitative research found the Australian Bananas message warm, inclusive, and nostalgic portrayal of the way Bananas fuel the activities consumers love, bringing bananas front of mind for more occasions, more often.

Examples of consumer responses shared include "Bananas are for everything, they're a winner. It's relatable, nostalgic and appeals to more generations and more activities" and "It left a positive impression about how good bananas are as fuel for nearly anything."

POST LAUNCH

Post-launch, the key success measures were reach, frequency and opportunities

to see the Banana advertising and content. The Banana media campaign has reached 24.4 million Australians, equivalent to reaching 98 per cent of the target market; grocery buyers aged 25-54.

All KPI's for reach, frequency and opportunities to see the Banana key messages have been met or exceeded, driven by the following activities:

- **Television/ Broadcast video on demand (catch up tv):** View the advertisement here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tol4YBStdIc>
- **Radio:** Listen to the radio advertisement here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4JZNglWcb4M>
- **Out of home:** Panels outside of supermarkets

Further to media, public relations media outreach and social media have created 205.3 million opportunities to see the banana key messages (the number of exposures or opportunities the audience has to view the content), driven by the following activities:

- **Public Relations, Back to School:** Achieved 73 pieces of coverage, generating over 51.9 million opportunities to see the banana key messages. View the 'Back to School Banana' themed video shared with media [here](#)
- **Public Relations, National Banana Day:** Achieved 105 pieces of coverage, generating over 131 million opportunities to see the banana key messages. View the 'Karaoke Banana' themed video shared with media [here](#)

- **Social media:** Achieved 22.4 million opportunities to see the banana key messages, at an average engagement rate on Facebook and Instagram of 7.47 per cent, versus food and beverage global average of less than 1 per cent*.

To further support understanding of consumer impact, research conducted during the campaign period provided key campaign diagnostics that measure the Australian Banana campaign's impact on consumer perception. Results were overwhelmingly positive with each measure exceeding norm; 'easy to understand' 77 per cent versus 62 per cent norm, 'believable' 68 per cent versus 48 per cent norm, 'relevant to people like me' 56 per cent versus 42 per cent norm and 'enjoyable campaign' 61 per cent versus 47 per cent norm.



Data & Insights: Bringing consumer insights to industry

The last three months have been busy for Hort Innovation Consumer Insights Manager, George Margin, as he connects with growers and other stakeholders at industry conferences. George was invited to present at Avo Connections and BerryQuest International to talk about the consumer landscape and inform attendees about how current trends are impacting their categories.

With approximately 120 attendees at Avo Connections and 450 at BerryQuest International, George used data from Hort Innovation's foundational consumer insights investments to build a comprehensive perspective of the consumer drivers influencing attitudes and behaviours for the avocado and berry categories.

Key insights for avocado growers

- Due to unprecedented market supply of avocados, retail prices have dropped by approximately 40 per cent compared to a year ago, which has had a significant impact on growers.
- Although value is down for industry, consumers have reacted positively to the drop in retail prices by significantly increasing their volume consumption – an increase of 34 per cent compared to a year ago.
- This growth has primarily come from more households purchasing (an extra 700,000 vs. a year ago) as well as increased frequency (households adding an extra 2.1 per year on average).
- High prices have historically been a barrier to purchase as there was a strong correlation between lower

prices and more households shopping more frequently.

- Online is becoming an areas of focus for the avocado industry as it's no longer considered a niche channel – online now accounts for 1 in 10 (8 per cent) of avocados sold which has nearly doubled in the past two years. In the past year alone, volume sold online grew by 69 per cent which was twice the rate of physical stores.
- Avocados (and fruit as a whole) under-trade within the online channel. The national average sold online for all categories within a supermarket was 12 per cent. This indicates that there are key category challenges for the industry to overcome to capitalise on growth.

Key insights for berry growers

- Since 2013 berry production value and volume has increased significantly, however in recent years volume has begun to plateau.
- Over the last year, volume has declined across all demographic groups due to households shopping less frequently.
- Prices have increased compared to a year ago, and it remains the single largest barrier for consumers to purchase berries.

- As consumers are price sensitive and growers operate in an environment of higher production costs – how does the industry continue to sell while maintaining a profit?

George posed the following challenges to the BerryQuest audience to consider:

- How will the berry industry deliver value to consumers? 'Value' doesn't always mean lower prices, value can be delivered through higher or superior quality, product innovation, Environmental, Social or Governance (ESG) credentials.
- Industry need to understand consumer price elasticity (how consumers react to price and what the impact is on volume) to answers questions such as:
 - Do consumers react differently at different points in the year?
 - Do they behave differently across different varieties? i.e. what happens to blueberry volume if strawberries are selling at a discount?
 - Do consumers behave differently between different pack sizes?
 - Do different demographics behave differently?

Hort Innovation's Consumer Insights Strategy focuses on building a detailed understanding of our consumers and the potential market opportunities for the horticulture sector. The Consumer Insights Strategy is underpinned by a number of multi-industry investments that work together to provide the necessary data and insights needed by our stakeholders, including:

- *Consumer demand spaces for horticulture* (MT21003) – see hortinn.com/mt21003
- *Consumer behavioural data program* (MT21004) – see hortinn.com/mt21004
- *Consumer usage and attitude research program* (MT21202) – see hortinn.com/mt21202

Hort Innovation is continuing to develop its consumer insights capabilities off the back of industry requirements. If there are any questions on George's presentations, please reach out to us at communications@horticulture.com.au.

Extension: Processing tomato cultivar trials

In 2020/21, the Australian processing tomato industry recorded an industry-wide average yield of 106.13 MT/ha, its highest on record. Contributing to this success is the cultivar trial work conducted by the Australian Processing Tomato Research Council (APTRC) in collaboration with the Hort Innovation-funded project *Processing tomato industry development and extension (TM20000)*.

The APTRC cultivar trial program has successfully identified several new, high performing cultivars that are suitable to match or potentially replace the older 'mainstay' cultivars, some of which are being evaluated in machine harvest trials and others that are already being used in commercial plantings. The findings from the APTRC cultivar trials are extended to the processing tomato industry via the activities of the levy-funded capacity building program.

Cultivar Improvement Trial Program

"Cultivar trials are the backbone of the APTRC trial program as there is no current breeding program in Australia for processing tomatoes," says Matt Stewart, the Industry Development Manager for the Australian Processing Tomato Research Council.

"To stay current with world best genetics in tomatoes, we need to put cultivars from breeding programs overseas through trials to our conditions. This includes our climate, soil types and pest and disease pressures. We also assess varieties for yield, brix and field holding capacity, that is, the ability of the tomatoes to ripen but not rot or have any quality losses in the field if there is a delay in harvest."

APTRC firstly conduct screening trials, where they plant out small plots on growers' properties to see how new cultivars perform over the course of a typical season. APTRC use a consultant to assist Research Manager, Ann Morrison to critically assess the plant and fruit characteristics and then the highest scoring cultivars are put into the machine harvest trials. These are much larger, fully replicated, randomised plot design trials.

"The trials give us a greater understanding of the quality and quantity the new



David Chirnside, processing tomato grower, and Matt Stewart, Industry Development Manager for the Australian Processing Tomato Research Council

cultivars can produce. Growers and processors can use this information to decide whether they want to introduce one or more of those cultivars, into their commercial plantings. From there, growers can assess the new cultivars compared to the benchmarked cultivars they're already using."

Increased yields of between 150 and 219 MT/ha were identified in the machine harvest trials on properties in the Boort, Lake Boga and Echuca growing regions in 2020/21. To record such outstanding yields in the trial program, suggests that best management practices are being adopted by different growers across different soil types and regions.

The trials also provide industry with the ability to choose cultivars that have better pest and disease resistance. Matt says "this is becoming ever more important as we strive for a more environmentally-savvy way of doing things, reducing our inputs and becoming more sustainable."

Another reason the cultivar trials are so valuable is for risk mitigation. Viroid screening of seeds coming from overseas can pick up viruses that are not wanted in Australia, which can put our seed supply chain at risk. Matt says "our cultivar trials

mean that we can identify desirable cultivars from multiple seed suppliers, and therefore don't have all our eggs, or seeds, in one basket."

Growers' integral to the trial work

"Almost all growers in the industry actually have the trials taking place on their properties – so they are first in line to see how the different cultivars are performing," says Matt. "It's important to note that our growers give up their own time and resources to plant the trials on their properties. They work closely with the APTRC Research Manager, Ann Morrison, to manage the trials, but it's a significant contribution from the growers and their employees to help run the cultivar trials."

"Having growers fully integrated into the APTRC trials is a key component of the program's success. The fact that growers commit additional time and energy into planting and harvesting the trials demonstrates how high the interest is in identifying cultivars with better production outcomes. The dividends from getting an improvement in yield and quality is worthwhile, and necessary in a climate of increasing costs."

Extending the results

Through the Hort Innovation funded program, APTRC communicates the results of the field trials to industry, ensuring that they have access to the information they need on cultivars to make informed business decisions.

“Everyone in industry has the opportunity to see for themselves the outcomes of the cultivar trials,” says Matt. “At our regular field days, everyone is able to visit different properties to see the characteristics and performance of the different cultivars side by side in the field.”

“We also hold a specific field day for seed company representatives where they’re invited to look at our screening trials and they can see how their own cultivars are performing in Australian conditions, compared to other options. This provides a valuable feedback loop. For example, last year a seed rep was able to see in the field that their cultivar was breaking down too soon for Australian conditions. This insight can help inform their future breeding activities or at the very least

influence what cultivars they trial in Australia in the future.”

At the APTRC annual forum, the cultivar trials are presented on the big screen from last season and there is an opportunity to discuss them in an open forum with attendees from across

the industry – such as growers, seed representatives and agronomists.

Matt also provides industry with progressive updates through their quarterly Tomato Topics newsletter, as well as publishing the full trial results in the annual grower magazine.

Meet David Chirnside, processing tomato grower from Kerang, Victoria

“I’m a second-generation grower from Kerang in Victoria, where my family has been growing tomatoes for over 30 years. Our current contract is for 18,000 tonnes a year.

The Australian Processing Tomato Research Council has been a great source of information for us over the years. We get our information from newsletters and Matt Stewart is always in contact with us throughout the year. We also have an annual industry forum, which gives great insights to new technologies and new cultivars, and

things that have been monitored over the season. It’s also a great way to meet and share ideas with other growers.

Through the APTRC cultivar trials we have been able to discover a couple of new cultivars, in particular UG16112. We grew five hectares of it last year and are very happy with its field holding capacity with increased fruit size and yield. About half of next year’s production will be this cultivar – we are very excited, and this could only have come about through the work of the APTRC cultivar trials.

We are very grateful to Matt, Ann and the team at the APTRC – they are helping the whole industry grow together.”

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