



Prune Fund

Annual Report 2018/19

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The projects in this report have been funded by Hort Innovation using sources including the prune levy, Australian Government contributions and, in some instances, co-contributions from a variety of sources.

Welcome

Hort Innovation is the grower-owned, not-for-profit research and development corporation (RDC) for Australia's horticulture sector. It's our job to work with industry to invest the prune R&D levy, together with Australian Government contributions, into key initiatives for growers.

The 2018/19 financial year was another great year of growing better, together – particularly when it came to closer connections and critical collaborations being forged.

There was close to \$61,000 invested into R&D through the Hort Innovation Prune Fund across the year, to support the industry. This included the establishment of new investments allowing the prune industry to join forces with other horticulture industries for maximum efficiency and impact across shared issues and opportunities.

Read on to learn more about all of the projects undertaken. And remember to take advantage of the Hort Innovation website at www.horticulture.com.au/prune, where you can search and find information relating to investments, past and present, at any time. The new site and its Prune Fund section were launched in 2018/19.

During the year there were also many opportunities for Hort Innovation to connect with you, the growers. A big thank you in particular to everyone who came to our early-2019 regional roadshows to feed into the development of the new Hort Innovation Strategy 2019-2023 (read more at www.horticulture.com.au/strategy-2019-2023).

You can reach out to us at any time to learn more about our work, to submit ideas for investments, or to simply have a chat about your industry. You'll find details of specific staff at www.horticulture.com.au/get-in-touch, or can otherwise email communications@horticulture.com.au or call our general line on 02 8295 2300.



Additional value in the year

During 2018/19, Hort Innovation was proud to deliver extra value to the prune industry, outside of levy-funded initiatives within the Prune Fund. Here's a quick look at just some examples.



The new Hort Innovation website, with dedicated Prune Fund section

You can now visit www.horticulture.com.au/prune to quickly search and find prune investment information and updates, project resources, and growing tips and advice from Hort Innovation's R&D work. You can also download full final research reports direct from the site, access key contact information, share your ideas and feedback, and so much more.



The Australian Horticulture Statistics Handbook

Each year Hort Innovation delivers an *Australian Horticulture Statistics Handbook* packed with horticulture statistical information and analysis for use by specific industries and the wider sector. The handbook combines all available data on production, international trade, processing volumes and fresh market distribution for some 75 categories. The 2017/18 edition, released in early 2019, is available from www.horticulture.com.au/horticulture-statistics-handbook.



Hort Frontiers projects

With seven investment areas, Hort Innovation's Hort Frontiers strategic partnership initiative is about collaborative, cross-industry work to address longer-term, complex issues and opportunities identified as critical for the future of Australian horticulture. While industry levies can be invested into Hort Frontiers projects upon the advice of the relevant Strategic Investment Advisory Panels, the bulk of funding comes from broad-reaching funding relationships that are secured by Hort Innovation, plus support from the Australian Government. Learn about all of the projects and what they're delivering for you at www.horticulture.com.au/hort-frontiers.



Grant funding

In 2018/19, Hort Innovation delivered \$6.7 million worth of investments involving grant funding across the horticulture sector. To do so, we applied for and secured a range of competitive grants on behalf of industry, including through the Australian Government's Rural R&D for Profit program, Improved Access to AgVet Chemicals initiative, and Agricultural Competitiveness White Paper. With projects across everything from biosecurity to pollination, there's plenty in there to directly and indirectly benefit the prune industry.

Making investments in 2018/19

Hort Innovation is dedicated to making the right investments at the right time and in the right areas, in line with identified priorities for the industry.

Where the funding comes from

The prune industry's grower-raised statutory R&D levy is collected by the Australian Government and entrusted to Hort Innovation as the RDC for Australian horticulture. It's then our responsibility to work with the industry to invest the levy, together with Australian Government contributions, into strategic initiatives for the benefit of growers.

Additional funding streams can also come into play, such as co-investment dollars from sources including project partners, and grant funding that Hort Innovation secures on behalf of industry.

How decisions are made

Investment decisions in the Hort Innovation Prune Fund are guided by the industry's Strategic Investment Plan (SIP). This document was developed through close consultation with growers and other industry stakeholders, and outlines specific investment priorities, strategies and themes. An at-a-glance version can be found at www.bit.ly/prune-plan, or find the full version at www.horticulture.com.au/prune.

The SIP is currently used like a 'roadmap' by the prune Strategic Investment Advisory Panel (SIAP) – a panel made up of growers and other industry representatives that's tasked with providing advice to Hort Innovation on potential levy investments.

Turning ideas into investments

Great investments start with great ideas, and Hort Innovation encourages all growers and other industry participants to share their thoughts and suggestions for the work they want to see. Ideas can be submitted any time via Hort Innovation's investment idea form at www.bit.ly/concept-form.

Ideas that are selected for investment are worked into project proposals by Hort Innovation. These are then made public for potential delivery partners to submit responses. Current opportunities are always listed at www.horticulture.com.au/delivery-partners.

Responses are assessed, often with the assistance of industry, and the best delivery partner for the work is chosen. A contract is then issued and the work begins.

Keeping track of investments

All investments in the Hort Innovation Prune Fund are detailed on the 'Your investments' page at www.horticulture.com.au/prune. We also send news and alerts to Hort Innovation members and contacts – if you haven't already, you can sign up for free at www.horticulture.com.au/sign-up.

Importantly, the industry's levy-funded communication and extension program has been tasked with providing growers with regular information on levy-related activity. See p6 for more.





R&D project list 2018/19

NEW INVESTMENTS IN 2018/19	
DP18000	Communications and extension for the Australian prune industry
MT17006	Xylella coordinator
MT17006	Improving preparedness of the Australian horticultural sector to the threat potentially posed by <i>Xylella fastidiosa</i> (a severe biosecurity risk)
MT18011	Ex-post impact assessment*

ONGOING INVESTMENTS IN 2018/19	
MT16005	Enhanced National Bee Pest Surveillance Program
MT17005	Improving the biosecurity preparedness of Australian horticulture for the exotic spotted wing drosophila (<i>Drosophila suzukii</i>)

During the 2018/19 financial year, all levy paying horticulture industries also contributed to a small selection of across-industry projects addressing issues that affect horticulture as a whole. Details of all investments that Hort Innovation manages can be found at www.horticulture.com.au.

* This multi-industry project was a key monitoring and evaluation investment during 2018/19 – we encourage you to find the full details at www.horticulture.com.au/mt18011



But wait, there's more. To see what Hort Innovation delivered across the entire horticulture sector in 2018/19, download the full Hort Innovation Annual Report 2018/19 from www.horticulture.com.au/annual-report-portal.

R&D report

Take a closer look at some of the key investments in the Hort Innovation Prune Fund during 2018/19. Any resources from these and other levy-funded projects – such as fact sheets, guides and more – are published on your grower page at www.horticulture.com.au/prune as they become available.

Communications and extension for the Australian prune industry (DP18000)

NEW IN 2018/19

Key research provider: Australian Prune Industry Association

Beginning in late 2018, this year-long investment has been tasked with delivering best practice information and news to the Australian prune industry. Its activities include:

- » Production of prune industry articles for *The Vine* magazine, which is the joint magazine for the dried fruit and table grape industries
- » Delivery of Ausprunes e-newsletters to industry contacts
- » Events including field days and a grower forum, with details circulated in Ausprunes channels as they become available.

Visit www.ausprunes.org.au/login.php for more.

Xylella coordinator (MT17006)

NEW IN 2018/19

Key research provider: Wine Australia

Xylella fastidiosa is an exotic and potentially devastating bacteria that impedes the movement of rising sap in plants. While it hasn't yet appeared in Australia it has proven catastrophic overseas and, were it to enter the country, it could threaten more than 350 commercial, ornamental and native plant species.

This multi-industry and multi-sector investment supports the role and activities of a national coordinator as part of a three year program to improve Australia's readiness for any potential incursion of the disease. This is a joint initiative between Hort Innovation and Wine Australia, through the Plant Biosecurity Research Initiative (PBRI). The PBRI is a collaboration between Australia's seven plant-focused Rural RDCs, Plant Health Australia, the Department of Agriculture and other contributors, to coordinate plant biosecurity RD&E funding and efforts. You can learn more at www.pbri.com.au.



Improving preparedness of the Australian horticultural sector to the threat potentially posed by *Xylella fastidiosa* (a severe biosecurity risk) (MT17006)

NEW IN 2018/19

Key research provider: The Victorian Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions

Adding to the PBRI's *Xylella* work as described on the previous page, this multi-industry investment will review and allow Australia to adopt world's best practice methods for detecting and identifying strains of the *Xylella fastidiosa* bacteria, should it come to our shores. As well as developing state-of-the-art diagnostic tools, technologies and protocols to screen plant material entering the country and to support active surveillance programs, it will provide associated training to technical staff in diagnostic laboratories.

The project's work will ultimately allow for quick and effective detection of what is considered to be the number one plant biosecurity threat to Australia and New Zealand, to facilitate a swift and sure response.

Improving the biosecurity preparedness of Australian horticulture for the exotic spotted wing drosophila (*Drosophila suzukii*) (MT17005)

Key research provider: Plant Health Australia

This multi-industry investment is tasked with improving industry awareness of the risks posed by spotted wing drosophila, which attacks a range of soft-skinned fruit, and also with increasing the capacity to detect and respond to any incursions of the pest.

Activities include building knowledge and capacity around appropriate surveillance and management tools and strategies within the growing industries, government and among other relevant stakeholders. Looking at options for meeting domestic and international quarantine requirements are also among the project's activities.



Enhanced National Bee Pest Surveillance Program (MT16005)

HORT FRONTIERS

Key research provider: Plant Health Australia

This investment is delivering a nationally coordinated bee-pest surveillance program to help safeguard honey-bee and pollinator-dependent industries in Australia. It builds upon the previous *National Bee Pest Surveillance Program* (MT12011), and includes upgrading sentinel hive arrays, strengthening relationships with surveillance operators, the introduction of new elements such as Asian hornet screening and more. The surveillance is designed to enable the early detection of high-priority pest incursions that can impact on honey bees, providing the best opportunity for successful pest eradication.

The prune industry is one of several contributors to the work, and the program is part of the Hort Frontiers Pollination Fund.



To keep up to date with the latest information on new, ongoing and recently completed R&D investments throughout the year – and to search and find resources and reports from these investments – visit www.horticulture.com.au/prune.

Financial statement

Financial operating statement 2018/19

	R&D (\$)	TOTAL (\$)
	2018/19 July – June	2018/19 July – June
OPENING BALANCE	21,865	21,865
Levies from growers (net of collection costs)	24,963	24,963
Australian Government money	27,241	27,241
Other income*	26	26
TOTAL INCOME	52,230	52,230
Project funding	60,869	60,869
Consultation with and advice from growers	448	448
Service delivery – base	2,657	2,657
Service delivery – shared	4,403	4,403
Service delivery – fund specific	7,540	7,540
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	75,918	75,918
Levy contribution to across-industry activity	1,739	1,739
CLOSING BALANCE	-3,562	-3,562
Levy collection costs	2,278	2,278

* Interest, royalties

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