



Blueberry Fund

Annual Report 2019/20



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About Hort Innovation and the Blueberry Fund

Hort Innovation is the grower-owned, not-for-profit research and development corporation for Australia’s horticulture sector. We work closely with industry to invest the voluntary blueberry R&D levy, together with Australian Government contributions, into key initiatives for growers, through the Hort Innovation Blueberry Fund. We’re extremely proud of the work we do to help drive productivity, profitability and demand for blueberry growers, and for the horticulture sector at large.

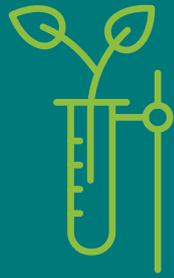
About the year

An intense and unpredictable year, 2019/20 certainly dealt challenges for the world, for Australian horticulture, and for Hort Innovation. There was ongoing drought, a devastating bushfire season, intense floods, the biosecurity threat of fall armyworm and, of course, the global and ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

We encourage you to download a copy of the overarching Hort Innovation Annual Report 2019/20 at www.horticulture.com.au/annual-report-portal to better understand Hort Innovation’s responses to these events, and how the company was able to change its plans and priorities to best serve the sector.

Through it all, though, strong inaugural investments were made in the Hort Innovation Blueberry Fund, including a new, collaborative communication and development program for the berry industries. Read on for an overview of the year.

2019/20 Blueberry Fund snapshot



\$105,000

invested in R&D



5

active R&D investments



\$138,000

in levies collected

through the blueberry collective industry fund and passed on to Hort Innovation for investment

Did you know?



24%

The blueberry industry is one of the fastest-growing horticulture industries, with production volume increasing at an average annual rate of almost 24 per cent over the five years to 2018/19



\$339M

The production value of Australian blueberries grew from \$145 million in 2013/14 to \$339 million in 2018/19



87%

Some 87 per cent of Australia's blueberries are grown in New South Wales, particularly around Coffs Harbour

These facts and more can be found in the Australian Horticulture Statistics Handbook, which is delivered by Hort Innovation each year. The handbook is packed with horticulture statistical information and analysis for some 75 categories, for use by individual industries and the wider sector. The 2018/19 edition was released in early 2020 and, for the first time, features an interactive dashboard format for desktop users. See www.horticulture.com.au/horticulture-statistics-handbook.



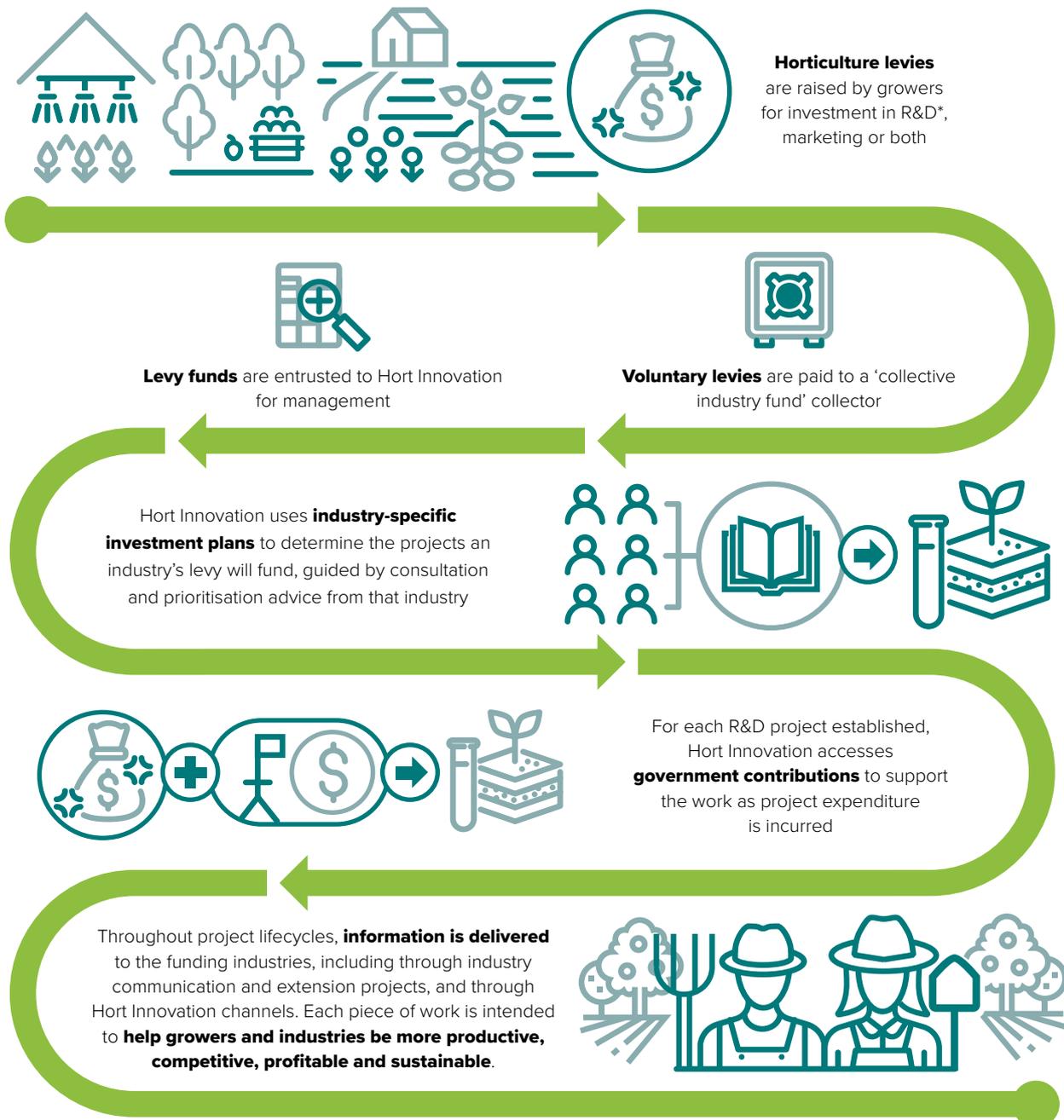
Just some of the things delivered for you during the year:

- ✓ **A new, multi-industry communication and extension program for the berry industries** delivering the *Australian Berry Journal*, *The Burst* e-newsletter, the www.berries.net.au website, webinars and more (p5)
- ✓ **A guide to maximising pollination in blueberry orchards**, available at www.bit.ly/blueberry-pollination*
- ✓ **Information and data to assist through COVID-19**, including the new *Hort Innovation Insights* podcast (www.horticulture.com.au/webinars) and regular consumer attitude and behaviour information (www.horticulture.com.au/impact-monitor)*
- ✓ **Preparation support for fall armyworm**, including emergency minor use permits and an educational podcast series, www.bit.ly/armyworm-podcast*
- ✓ **The Good Mood Food** across-horticulture marketing campaign to support industries through the effects of recent times (www.horticulture.com.au/the-good-mood-food)*
- ✓ **Investments in the Hort Frontiers strategic partnership initiative** to address longer-term and often complex issues and opportunities critical to the future of Australian horticulture – see www.horticulture.com.au/hort-frontiers*
- ✓ **Projects supported by grants** secured by Hort Innovation, ranging from cross-sector Rural R&D for Profit initiatives to horticulture-specific work to aid in access to crop protection products – see the Hort Innovation Annual Report 2019/20 for more*

*These initiatives were delivered outside of the Hort Innovation Blueberry Fund and, in most instances, did not involve the industry levy

Making investments in 2019/20

The below diagram shows how Hort Innovation makes strategic levy investments on behalf of horticulture industries. The voluntary blueberry R&D levy was invested this way during the year, guided by the investment plan developed by the industry, and advice from Hort Innovation’s blueberry investment advisory panel.



To learn more about funding specific to the Hort Innovation Blueberry Fund, visit www.horticulture.com.au/blueberry. During the year, other sources of funding were also used to support activities for the benefit of Australian horticulture, including grant funding secured by Hort Innovation, co-investment dollars brokered through our Hort Frontiers initiative and centralised strategic levy reserves.

R&D project list 2019/20



NEW INVESTMENTS IN 2019/20

AM17010	Taste Australia trade shows
MT18020	Facilitating the development of the Australian berry industries
MT19005	Horticulture trade data
MT19008	Strategic Agrichemical Review Process (SARP) updates
MT19009	BerryQuest International 2021

R&D report

Take a closer look at the first investments to be made in the Hort Innovation Blueberry Fund, all established in 2019/20. You can also visit www.horticulture.com.au/blueberry at any time to access information on new, ongoing and completed projects, and to download resources produced by levy investments, such as fact sheets and guides.

Facilitating the development of the Australian berry industries (MT18020)

Key research provider: Berries Australia

Beginning in 2019, this multi-industry investment supports Australian berry growers in adopting improved practices on-farm and in keeping up to date with the latest industry news, information, resources and technologies.

The project delivers a nationally coordinated but locally implemented program which employs several industry development officers to provide specialist skills and knowledge.

Extension and communication channels delivered include, but aren't limited to:

- » The *Australian Berry Journal* quarterly magazine, available from www.berries.net.au/home/news/abjournal
- » The industry's monthly newsletter, which has information tailored to blueberries and other berry crops, as well as the latest across-industry R&D news – if you don't receive it already, sign up at www.berries.net.au/subscribe
- » The Berries Australia website, www.berries.net.au, which features industry news, information and resources for growers, including those listed below
- » Fact sheets and case studies, as needed
- » Berry plant protection guides for each crop
- » Workshops across the country
- » Webinars for growers.

BerryQuest International 2021 (MT19009)

Key research provider: Berries Australia

This investment was established to support the running of BerryQuest International 2021, which was to be held in Queensland in July 2021. However, due to the global pandemic, the event has been postponed to 2022. When it does go ahead, it will be an opportunity for berry industry participants to engage with the outcomes of their levy investments as well as hear from international experts and learn from field visits. It will be a joint initiative across the berry category and have a focus on networking, connecting growers with supply chain stakeholders, researchers and industry experts to facilitate knowledge transfer on key issues such as biosecurity, trade, market development, marketing and adoption of R&D outcomes.

Strategic Agrichemical Review Process (SARP) updates (MT19008)

Key research provider: AGK Services

This short investment is facilitating a 2020 Strategic Agrichemical Review Process (SARP) for several horticulture industries, including the blueberry industry. Providing an updated view of current priorities and gaps regarding pest, disease and weed control, the completed blueberry SARP report will assist in directing ongoing efforts to ensure the availability of and access to effective chemical controls. This may relate to pursuing chemical registrations with agrichemical companies, or minor use permits.

Financial statement

Financial operating statement 2019/20

	R&D (\$)	TOTAL (\$)
	2019/20 July – June	2019/20 July – June
OPENING BALANCE	61,668	61,668
Voluntary levies from growers	137,500	137,500
Australian Government money	77,321	77,321
Other income*	1,562	1,562
TOTAL INCOME	216,383	216,383
Project funding	105,403	105,403
Consultation with and advice from growers	8,701	8,701
Service delivery – base	5,895	5,895
Service delivery – shared	8,465	8,465
Service delivery – fund specific	22,700	22,700
Service delivery – Minor use	3,477	3,477
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	154,642	154,642
Levy contribution to across-industry activity	–	–
CLOSING BALANCE	123,409	123,409

* Interest, royalties



BONUS ACTIVITY: THE GOOD MOOD FOOD

In 2019/20, Hort Innovation created The Good Mood Food campaign to deliver an immediate and enduring behaviour-change message to motivate more Australians to eat more fruit, vegetables and nuts.

With the central message that these Aussie horticulture products are natural mood boosters, the campaign was developed to support the sector through the impacts of recent challenges including bushfires, drought, floods and of course COVID-19 – the effects of which continue to be felt in consumer spending and purchasing behaviour.

Initially running between May and November 2020, The Good Mood Food has been seen across the country on TV; in newspapers; on radio and music streaming services; online (including on YouTube and TV catch-up services); on social media; and via retail partnerships and advertising screens near supermarkets.

In July, 56 per cent of surveyed consumers said The Good Mood Food had positively influenced their shopping habits, and by the end of campaign's run, 98 per cent of all Australians were expected to be reached.

Learn more at www.horticulture.com.au/the-good-mood-food.

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

Hort Innovation

Horticulture Innovation Australia Limited
ACN 602 100 149

Level 7, 141 Walker Street
North Sydney NSW 2060 Australia

02 8295 2300 | communications@horticulture.com.au

www.horticulture.com.au