

Processing Tomato Fund

Annual Report 2020/21



About Hort Innovation and the Processing Tomato 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 processing tomato R&D levy – together with Australian Government contributions – into strategic initiatives through the Hort Innovation Processing Tomato Fund.

The voluntary levy was established by the industry as part of a 'collective industry fund' arrangement with Hort Innovation, and is set at a rate of 0.5 per cent of gross value of production.

How are investment decisions made?

Investments specific to the Hort Innovation Processing Tomato Fund are guided by the industry's Strategic Investment Plan (SIP). This document has been developed by the industry to outline key priorities for investment. The industry also has an advisory panel to provide prioritisation advice to Hort Innovation on potential voluntary levy investments.

Projects in the 2020/21 financial year

The 2020/21 financial year saw the continuation of the industry's capacity building program.

Processing tomato industry capacity building (TM17000) is delivered by the Australian Processing Tomato Research Council. It supports awareness and adoption of R&D, delivers best practice information, enhances skills of existing industry participants and encourages new entrants. You can read more about the impact of this project through the case study on p3.

Its normal activities include, but aren't limited to:

- **Delivery of communication channels** including the annual *Australian Processing Tomato Grower Magazine*, quarterly *Tomato Topics* newsletters, plus R&D content on the industry website
- **Events including industry field days** and annual R&D forums
- **The collection of industry benchmark data and statistics**, communicated to industry through annual data and statistics reports
- **Support for on-farm trials**, including cultivar evaluation trials, and disseminating results to industry.

This investment wrapped up towards the end of August 2021, with a new project set to begin at the same time. Like its predecessor, **Processing tomato industry development and extension (TM20000)** is delivering effective research, development and capacity building solution to Australian processing tomato businesses, to improve profitability and sustainability.

During the coming year, you can keep up to date with any new projects and results in the Processing Tomato Fund by visiting www.horticulture.com.au/processing-tomato. Hort Innovation also sends news and alerts to Hort Innovation members and contacts, so if you haven't already, be sure to sign up for free at www.horticulture.com.au/sign-up.

Additional work in 2020/21

Outside of the Hort Innovation Processing Tomato Fund, Hort Innovation delivered a range of activities to support the wider horticulture sector through the intense and unpredictable year that was 2019/20. We encourage you to download a copy of the full Hort Innovation company annual report at www.horticulture.com.au/annual-report-portal to better understand the company's responses and activities. Just some of the work delivered outside of our 37 levy funds included:

- **Preparation support for pest incursions such as fall armyworm and serpentine leafminer**, including emergency minor use permits and longer-term investments to bolster the horticulture sector's response
- Continuation of **The Good Mood Food across-horticulture marketing campaign** to support industries through the effects of recent times. See www.thegoodmoodfood.com.au.
- **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 2020/21 for more*

Growing the processing tomato industry to ensure Australian producers are the pick of the bunch

This industry development program supports awareness and adoption of research and development outcomes, delivers best practice information, enhances the skills of existing industry participants, and encourages new entrants to build capacity.

The challenge

Ensuring the industry is up to date with the latest techniques, technologies and practices, and that it's easily able to adopt the recommendations of various research and development projects to improve productivity, quality and profitability.

Meet Johanna

Johanna Morgan is an agronomist with Kilter Rural, which manages 765 hectares of conventional and organic tomatoes. She's acutely aware of the need to build capacity in the industry and the role of programs like this in doing so. "They're important to ensure we stay relevant and up to date with the latest agricultural technology and industry developments," says Johanna.

That includes program communications, like the *Australian Processing Tomato Grower Magazine*. "It pulls together all the trial data from the season and has a recap of everything that is relevant to the industry stakeholders. It's really helpful."

Although limited by COVID, field days and annual R&D forums are an important part of the program, says Johanna. "They promote discussion with other growers and agronomists regarding new operations, technology, chemicals, and other important aspects of the industry. It's really beneficial hearing from service providers and product suppliers about new things coming to market and whether or where it can fit in our operation."

The program also produces an annual data and statistics report, which features a collection of industry benchmark data and statistics, supported by on-farm trials, including cultivar evaluation trials – the results of which are then presented to growers. "These are

extremely helpful," says Johanna. "Nothing is quite like seeing it in the paddock though, but the data and statistics do help to sort out what is of importance to consider on the farm. Every other agriculture industry is continuously improving their varieties. It's important we do the same, with improved quality parameters, disease resistance, etc."



Johanna Morgan, agronomist with Kilter Rural

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In November 2020, a group-based pest and disease early warning 'Workplace' app was setup, which Johanna has incorporated into her crop management. "I use this regularly to receive updates within our areas. It helps keep me informed."

The approach

The program team are keeping the industry informed via the annual *Australian Processing Tomato Grower Magazine* and quarterly *Tomato Topics* newsletters and regular field days and annual R&D forums.

The impact

Research continues with cultivar and small-pot trials planted to find suitable replacement cultivars. A full report of the trials is included in the annual *Australian Processing Tomato Grower* magazine, along with information comparing the performance cultivars to one over a period of years.

Via the 'Workplace' app, information is provided by agronomists on their pest and disease observations from different regions and the APTRC team summarise the information, check it for accuracy and then post to the application. You can learn more about the app here on the APTRC website.

The pre-Christmas field day and information evening in the Lake Boga region also went ahead as planned.

Integrated pest management (IPM) and non-chemical disease and weed suppression techniques were discussed, as well as rotational cropping with cotton and tomatoes and a Q&A session about farming practices and what challenges and benefits this season has brought.

In addition, the industry survey was completed in December 2020, which focused on the industry's performance over the past 2019/20 season, with comparisons to previous seasons.

A new five year program *Processing tomato industry development and extension* (TM20000) will build on and extend the excellent results of this program.



"Projects like this are important to ensure we stay relevant and up to date with the latest agricultural technology and industry developments."

Johanna Morgan, agronomist with Kilter Rural

For more information, visit hortinn.com/tm17000

Project details

Processing tomato industry capacity building (TM17000)

Key research provider: Australian Processing Tomato Research Council

Start date: August 2018

End date: August 2021

Estimated value for life of project: \$704,889

Financial operating statement

Processing Tomato Fund (collective) Financial operating statement 2020/21

	R&D (\$)	Total (\$)
	2020/21 July – June	2020/21 July – June
OPENING BALANCE	(45,990)	(45,990)
Voluntary levies from growers	106,245	106,245
Australian Government money	91,071	91,071
Other income*	–	–
TOTAL INCOME	197,316	197,316
Project funding	160,102	160,102
Consultation with and advice from growers	–	–
Service delivery	22,039	22,039
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	182,141	182,141
Levy contribution to across-industry activity	–	–
CLOSING BALANCE	(30,815)	(30,815)

* Interest, royalties

Levy collection costs – These are the costs associated with the collection of levies from industry charged by Levy Revenue Services (LRS)

Service delivery – Also known as Corporate Cost Recovery (CCR), this is the total cost of managing the investment portfolio charged by Hort Innovation