

How the **turf levy** is collected

Many growers will be familiar with the **Hort Innovation Turf Levy**. But how much do you know about the path that levy funds take from farmgate the allocation of research and development projects and the role of the key players along the way?

Turf growers

Every turf grower selling more than 20,000 m² of turf in any year, is required to pay the levy at 1.5cents per m².



Collection agents

Responsible for collecting levies and charges and submitting levy returns to the DAWE on behalf of levy payers.



FACTS ABOUT THE TURF LEVY

1. R&D contributions are matched 1:1 with funds from the Australian Government
2. Turf Australia is not the collector or administrator of the turf levy
3. The levy is not a tax – you have a say in how it is invested
4. Levy funds are used to investigate pest and disease issues, communicate the benefits of turf and improve on-farm productivity

Industry Body

Turf Australia is the Prescribed Industry Body for the turf levy, which supports the setting, changing and allocation of the levy across the levy funded activities. This is a consultative role only.



Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment (DAWE)

DAWE is responsible for administering levy legislation, receiving the levy returns from collection agents, paying the levies to Hort Innovation and conducting compliance inspections.



Minister for Agriculture, Drought and Emergency Management

The Minister decides whether to progress changes to levies, or introduce new levies, through the appropriate legislative pathway and consultation with industry.



Hort Innovation

Hort Innovation is the levy recipient body for the turf levy. In consultation with The Turf Strategic Investment Advisory Panel (SIAP), made up of growers and industry stakeholders advises Hort Innovation on the allocation of levy funds. Hort Innovation then manages the allocation of funds into research and marketing projects to grow and develop the Australian turf industry.



Marketing and R&D Projects



Where the **turf levy** goes

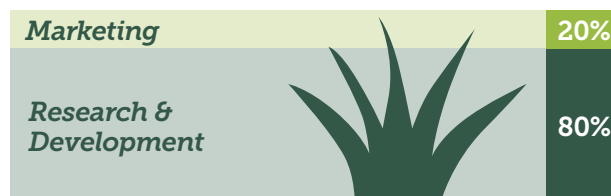
Background on the turf levy

- In 2006, the turf industry voted to implement a compulsory levy.
- **The levy is collected by the Australian Government and then managed by Hort Innovation.** It is the responsibility of Hort Innovation to work with industry to invest the levies.
- **Turf Australia liaises with Hort Innovation to represent its members**, and help determine appropriate and strategic levy investments which include industry development, research and marketing initiatives.
- **The levy rate is 1.5 cents per square metre of turf.** This amount is payable to the Federal Department of Agriculture – Levies by all businesses that grow and sell more than 20,000 square meters of turf in any year.
- The levy investment ratio is **80% research and development** (these funds are then matched by the Government), **20% marketing**.



How are levy investments decided?

- Investments are guided by the industry's **Strategic Investment Plan (SIP)**.
- The SIP guide Hort Innovation's oversight and management of individual levy industry investment programs. **The SIP lays the foundation for decision making in levy investments.**
- The most important function of the SIP is to make sure that levy investment decisions align with **industry priorities**.
- In addition to the formal strategic investment plan, **all growers are encouraged to share thoughts and recommendations with Hort Innovation** and can do so by contacting a Hort Innovation employee directly or filling out the Grower Investment Ideas Form on the Turf Australia or Hort Innovation website.



Achievements of the turf levy

Conveying the benefits of living turf

Levy funded projects *Conveying the benefits of living turf - a bushfire retardant* (TU17008) and *Conveying the benefits of living turf - mitigation of the urban heat island effect* (TU18000), have been able to prove, with the robust backing of scientific investigation the ways that turf can improve the lives of entire communities by making our cities safer and more liveable.

For example, it found that turf can not only prevent bushfire spread in peri urban areas but also cools down urban environments by up to 4.9°C.

These findings can be used by growers and by Turf Australia to advocate for greater investment in turf by government and local council.

Understanding the true value of turf

The levy funded project *Economic, environmental, social and health impacts and benefits of the turfgrass and lawncare industries* (TU17006) used economic modelling to identify the ways that turf holds real value for homeowners. **For example, it found that installing turf can fetch rental properties an additional \$4.45 per square metre** in a city like Sydney.

Bringing us together

Levy funds are used to help the Turf Industry become a cohesive, collaborative industry. For example, the NxGen Conference which has helped develop our industry's rising talent is subsidised through levy-funds. Many of our current industry leaders are alumni or current participants of the NxGen event.

The National Market Development Program (TU16002) led by Jenny Zadro, and **Turf Industry Communications Program** (TU16004) which funds the development of resources such as this are also levy-funded projects.

A full list of levy-funded projects and their outcomes are available on the Turf Australia website