

Annual Report 2025/26



Hort Innovation's investments and initiatives drive value for the nation's horticulture sector, now and into the future. The *Hort Innovation Annual Report 2025/26* provides an overview of our performance and progress over the past year and highlights key activities and outcomes.



This report is prepared for our members, horticulture levy payers, the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) and other stakeholders across the horticulture sector.

The progress in this report reflects the significant contribution of growers, industry representatives and delivery partners, together with the dedication of the Hort Innovation team. We also acknowledge the Australian Government's oversight of our activities as a Rural Research and Development Corporation.

Hort Innovation acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands on which we work and their enduring connection to Country. Inspired by their care for land and culture, we commit to fostering an industry that respects and values First Nations' knowledge, traditions and contributions.



On the cover

Innovation takes flight through this Hort Innovation Frontiers project, which is investigating how advanced drone technology can help growers protect crops from bird damage. The project combines cutting-edge technology with wildlife expertise to develop a scalable solution for Australian horticulture.



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This Annual Report outlines our progress in 2025/26 against the *Hort Innovation Strategy 2024-2026*. See page 9 for an overview of the strategy.

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A prosperous and sustainable Australian horticulture industry built on innovation.

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Enhance and safeguard supply

Hort Innovation works to enhance and safeguard supply through world-class innovation. We draw on ideas and expertise from Australia and around the world to advance innovation for Australian horticulture, improving sustainability, strengthening resilience and future-proofing supply chains.

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Accelerate local and global demand

Strong demand underpins a prosperous horticulture sector. Hort Innovation works with industry to promote Australian produce, expand local and international market opportunities, and give growers the insights and tools to make informed decisions and build new revenue streams.

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This Annual Report is complemented by *Hort Innovation’s 2025/26 Performance Statement*, a requirement of our Statutory Funding Agreement with the Australian Government.

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Maximise and diversify investments

Through strong industry partnerships, Hort Innovation delivers levy-funded impact, scales bold innovation and creates pathways for new investment and alternative funding.

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Make the culture thrive

Strong people and strong relationships are central to delivering value to growers. We focus on building an engaged, capable and inclusive team within Hort Innovation, while investing in leadership, skills and knowledge across the horticulture sector.

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Work simply and effectively

Good governance, transparency and truly listening to what government, growers and research partners want us to hear are the elements that underpin Hort Innovation and allow us to work simply and effectively with stakeholders.

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See Hort Innovation's formal reporting for 2025/26 from p99.

This includes the Directors' Report and the company's full Financial Report.

Alloway Macadamia
Bundaberg, Queensland

Alloway Macadamia is part of Australia's thriving macadamia industry in Queensland's Bundaberg region. Through participation in orchard research and on-farm trials, growers such as Johan Oosthuizen are helping advance innovation that supports productivity, sustainability and the long-term competitiveness of Australian macadamia production.



Introduction

1

***A prosperous and sustainable
Australian horticulture industry
built on innovation.***

Our vision is clear. See how
we are working towards it.

Who we are



Hort Innovation is the grower-owned, not-for-profit research and development corporation for Australia's horticulture industry.

We advance Australia's \$18.4 billion horticulture industry by investing in research and development, marketing and trade to build a prosperous and sustainable future for growers.

We partner with Australian and international co-investors including government, leading science, technology and consumer strategy experts to anticipate future challenges and opportunities.

Our role is to capture value from the investments we make to benefit all levy payers.

Delivering our vision

The *Hort Innovation Strategy 2024-2026* guided our work over the past three years, setting a clear direction for how we invest and work with industry.

Shaped through extensive consultation with growers, delivery partners, peak industry bodies and the Australian Government, the strategy focused our efforts through five strategic imperatives and 18 targeted priorities. Our performance against these goals is summarised on [p12](#).

Our future direction

In 2025/26, we developed Strategy 2031, setting the direction for Hort Innovation and our investment over the next five years. Shaped through more than 1000 face-to-face engagements with growers and industry stakeholders, and informed by industry priorities and roadmaps, the strategy reflects the ambitions, challenges and opportunities of the 37 horticulture industries we serve.

Strategy 2031 provides a clear framework to focus investment and collective effort where it can deliver the greatest impact for Australian horticulture.

At its heart is a shared agenda, bringing together growers, industry, delivery partners, co-investors and government to drive growth and productivity, while preparing Australian horticulture for the challenges and opportunities ahead.



Our vision

A prosperous and sustainable Australian horticulture industry built on innovation.

Our strategic imperatives

Enhance and safeguard supply

- 🌱 **PRIORITY 1.1**
Lead world-class innovation to ensure Australian horticulture is globally competitive.
- 🌱 **PRIORITY 1.2**
Partner with industry on their sustainability priorities and research needs to support social and environmental stewardship.
- 🌱 **PRIORITY 1.3**
Excel in breakthrough research to strengthen industry's readiness for existing and emerging opportunities and threats.
- 🌱 **PRIORITY 1.4**
Collaborate with industry to bolster resilience and future-proof supply chain disruptions.

Accelerate local and global demand

- 🌱 **PRIORITY 2.1**
Access and expand high-value markets to deliver profitability and sustainability for industry.
- 🌱 **PRIORITY 2.2**
Drive consumption through high-impact, evidence-based domestic and export marketing campaigns.
- 🌱 **PRIORITY 2.3**
Deliver valuable data and insights that transform decision making.
- 🌱 **PRIORITY 2.4**
Advance solutions to reduce and utilise waste to deliver new revenue streams for growers.

Maximise and diversify investments

- 🌱 **PRIORITY 3.1**
Partner with industry to deliver Annual Investment Plans ensuring industry levy-funded projects deliver impact at scale.
- 🌱 **PRIORITY 3.2**
Build strategic partnerships to deliver bigger, bolder investments in innovation for Australian horticulture.
- 🌱 **PRIORITY 3.3**
Create a flexible investment framework attracting new partners and alternative funding resources.

Make the culture thrive

- 🌱 **PRIORITY 4.1**
Collaborative and customer focused.
- 🌱 **PRIORITY 4.2**
High performance, inclusive culture.
- 🌱 **PRIORITY 4.3**
Empower our people.
- 🌱 **PRIORITY 4.4**
Invest in industry capability.

Work simply and effectively

- 🌱 **PRIORITY 5.1**
Quality compliance and governance.
- 🌱 **PRIORITY 5.2**
Transparent relationships.
- 🌱 **PRIORITY 5.3**
Minimise complexity.

Our role

We advance Australia's \$18.4 billion horticulture industry by investing in research and development, marketing and trade to build a prosperous and sustainable future for growers.

We partner with Australian and international co-investors including government, leading science, technology, and consumer strategy experts to anticipate future challenges and opportunities.

Our role is to capture value from the investments we make to benefit all levy payers.

Our goals

- 🌱 **Foster collaborative relationships** – stakeholder engagement ≥ 66%.
- 🌱 **Strong teamwork and shared purpose** – employee engagement ≥ 80%.
- 🌱 **Deliver real impact for growers** – benefit-to-cost ratio > 5:1.
- 🌱 **Live our values** – focus on our customers and innovation.
- 🌱 **Satisfaction with service** – partner rating ≥ 68%.
- 🌱 **Execute for industry** – Strategic Investment Plans delivered on time and on budget.
- 🌱 **Help grow value** – preference for Australian horticulture in key markets.
- 🌱 **Be ambitious** – 100% annual investment target and attract new partners.

Our values

- 🌱 **We are focused on the future.**
- 🌱 **We work as one team.**
- 🌱 **We act with respect and integrity.**
- 🌱 **We make a positive difference.**

A message from our Chair and CEO

This year marks an important milestone for Hort Innovation, in which we can reflect not only on the progress made in 2025/26, but also on the completion of the Hort Innovation Strategy 2024-2026.

Three years ago, the strategy set a clear direction for how we would invest, partner with industry and strengthen our organisation. It recognised that creating value for growers depends on strong relationships, practical innovation, informed investment decisions and a commitment to continuous improvement.

As we close this strategy, we are proud of what has been achieved alongside growers, peak industry bodies, researchers, delivery partners, co-investors and government. We have made meaningful progress, but like the industry we serve, we know there is always more to learn and improve. More importantly, we are seeing what these foundations can enable.

Australian horticulture continues to demonstrate both resilience and opportunity. The latest industry figures value production at \$18.4 billion, while fresh horticulture exports reached a record \$3.5 billion. At the same time, growers continue to navigate rising costs, labour constraints, biosecurity risks, seasonal variability and changing consumer expectations. These realities reinforce the importance of investing in solutions that are practical, relevant and shaped by industry priorities. While progress has been made in many areas, we know there is more work to do to ensure growers can clearly see the value created through their investment and benefit from it sooner.

Throughout the year, we continued to work with industry on initiatives that improved productivity, strengthened preparedness and supported long-term competitiveness. This included new work to better understand the drivers of productivity growth, emerging technologies being tested in commercial environments, investment in future-focused innovation and programs to help growers access the knowledge and tools needed to make informed decisions.

We also continued to support industry efforts to protect and grow horticulture's future. New market access outcomes for blueberries, apples and other industries, strengthened biosecurity initiatives, and levy-funded marketing programs all demonstrate what can be achieved when industry, government and delivery partners work together towards shared goals.

A central commitment of Strategy 2024-2026 was ensuring industry priorities remain at the centre of investment decisions. One of the most significant pieces of work during the year was listening to growers and stakeholders as we developed the Horticulture Investment Roadmaps. The process reinforced both the opportunities ahead and the areas where industry expects us to improve, helping ensure future investments remain grounded in industry priorities.

As a grower-owned research and development corporation, we have a responsibility to ensure industry and government funds are invested transparently, responsibly and with a clear focus on value. Improvements made during the year will help strengthen accountability, support better decision-making and provide clearer visibility of outcomes over time.



The completion of Strategy 2024-2026 provides an opportunity to reflect on what has been achieved and what we have learned along the way. The progress made during the past three years has strengthened the foundations for what comes next, leaving us better positioned to deliver greater impact and value for growers. The partnerships, planning and collaboration built during this period leave us better positioned to help industry respond to future challenges and opportunities.

While challenges remain, there is good reason for confidence. Advances in technology, stronger data and insights, growing market opportunities and deeper collaboration across industry are creating new possibilities for Australian horticulture. Our role is to help connect these opportunities with the needs of growers and support investments that create practical outcomes and lasting value.

We thank Australia's growers and levy payers for their contribution throughout the year and across this strategy period. We also thank peak industry bodies, delivery partners, researchers, co-investors, government, our fellow Directors and the Hort Innovation team for their commitment and partnership.

It is a privilege to serve Australian horticulture. As we look ahead, we do so with confidence in the strength of the industry, the partnerships that underpin it, and the opportunities we can create together.



Julie Bird
Chair



Brett Fifield
Chief Executive Officer



2025/26 by the numbers

\$68.6M

invested in
strategic levy
R&D

\$82.9M

invested in Hort Innovation's
Frontiers program and
non-levy R&D initiatives

\$20.8M

invested in
strategic levy
marketing programs



Foster collaborative relationships

Goal Stakeholder engagement > 69%

Result 72%

See [p96](#) for more on our annual Grower and Partner Survey



Strong teamwork and shared purpose

Goal Employee engagement > 80%

Result 77%

See [p83](#) for more on our annual employee engagement survey



Live our values

Goal Focus on customers and innovation

Result Values factor uplift from 49% (July 2023 survey) to 86% (July 2025 survey)

See [p83](#) for more on our company values



Satisfaction with service

Goal Delivery partner rating > 73%

Result 74%

See [p96](#) for more on our annual Grower and Partner Survey



Execute for industry

Goal Investment Plans delivered on time and on budget

Result Achieved

See more on how we partner with industry on [p48](#)



Help grow value

Goal Preference for Australian horticulture in key markets

Result 80% of top 10 export commodities have a positive three-year and five-year CAGR

See more on our work to accelerate local and global demand from [p35](#)



Be ambitious

Goal 100% annual investment target and attract new partners

Result Investment target exceeded with \$175.3m invested in 2025/26 (budgeted \$166.5m)

Find out more about our new investments in 2025/26 from [p65](#)

Note: Preference for Australian horticulture is measured against the combined market share of Australia's top five export commodities (almond, avocado, citrus, macadamia, table grape) in their respective top five export markets.

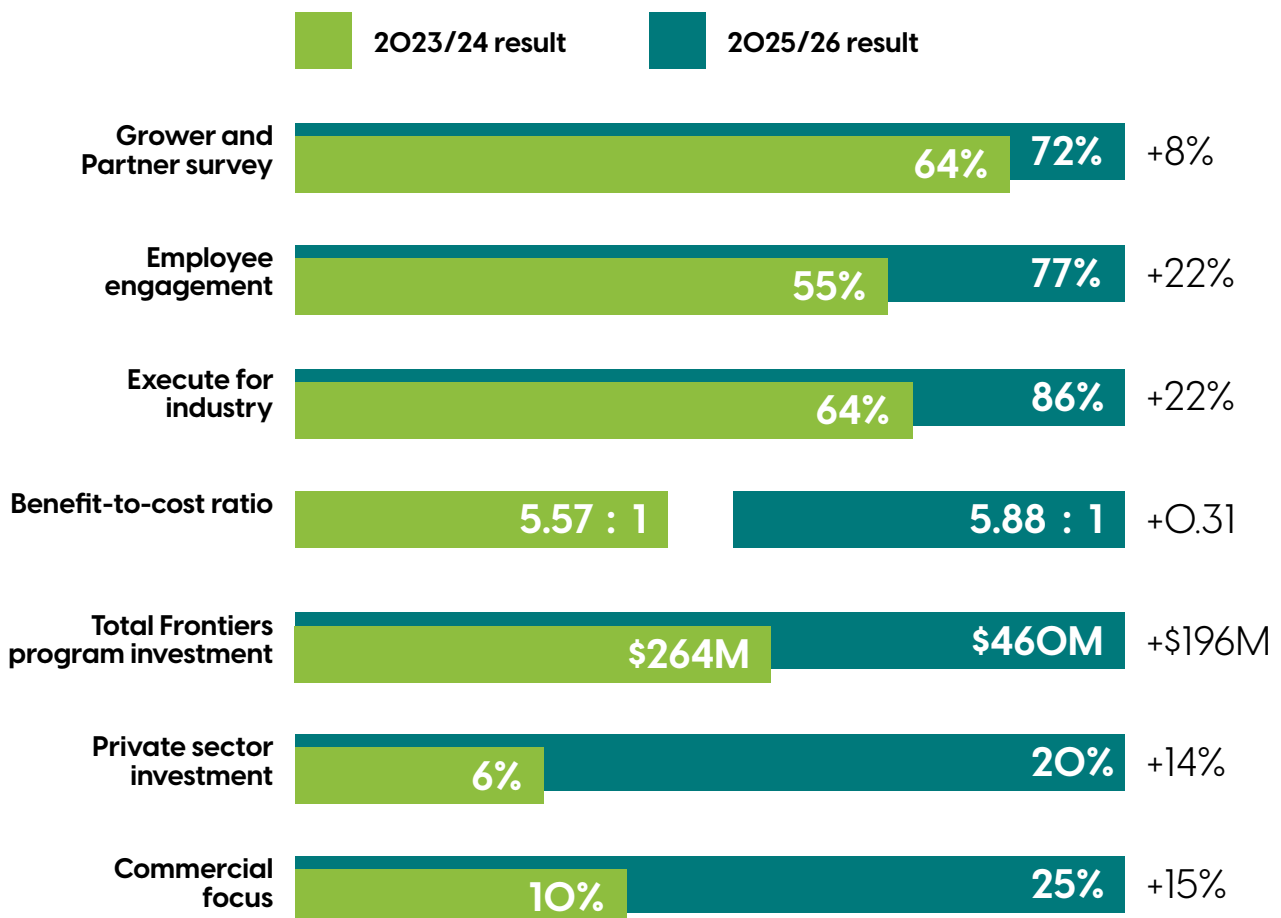
Reflecting on our progress



"Hort Innovation has made significant progress in strengthening how we work with growers, industry and delivery partners to create value for Australian horticulture. We have built stronger relationships, improved the way we plan and manage investments, and sharpened our focus on the outcomes that matter most to levy payers.

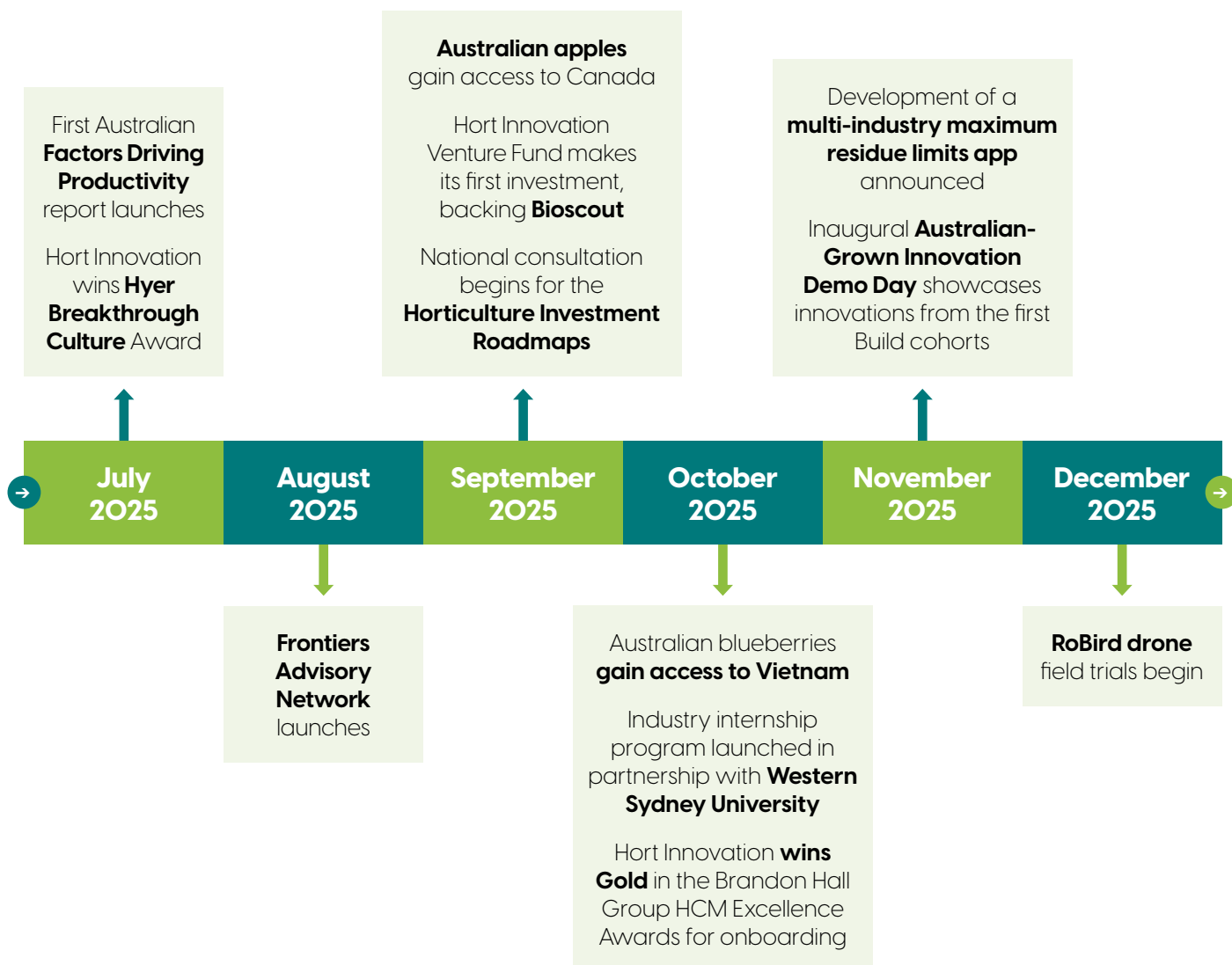
As we look ahead to our next strategy, our ambition is clear: to work together with industry to lift productivity, grow demand, build resilience and make sure every investment is focused on delivering practical impact for growers and the future of Australian horticulture."

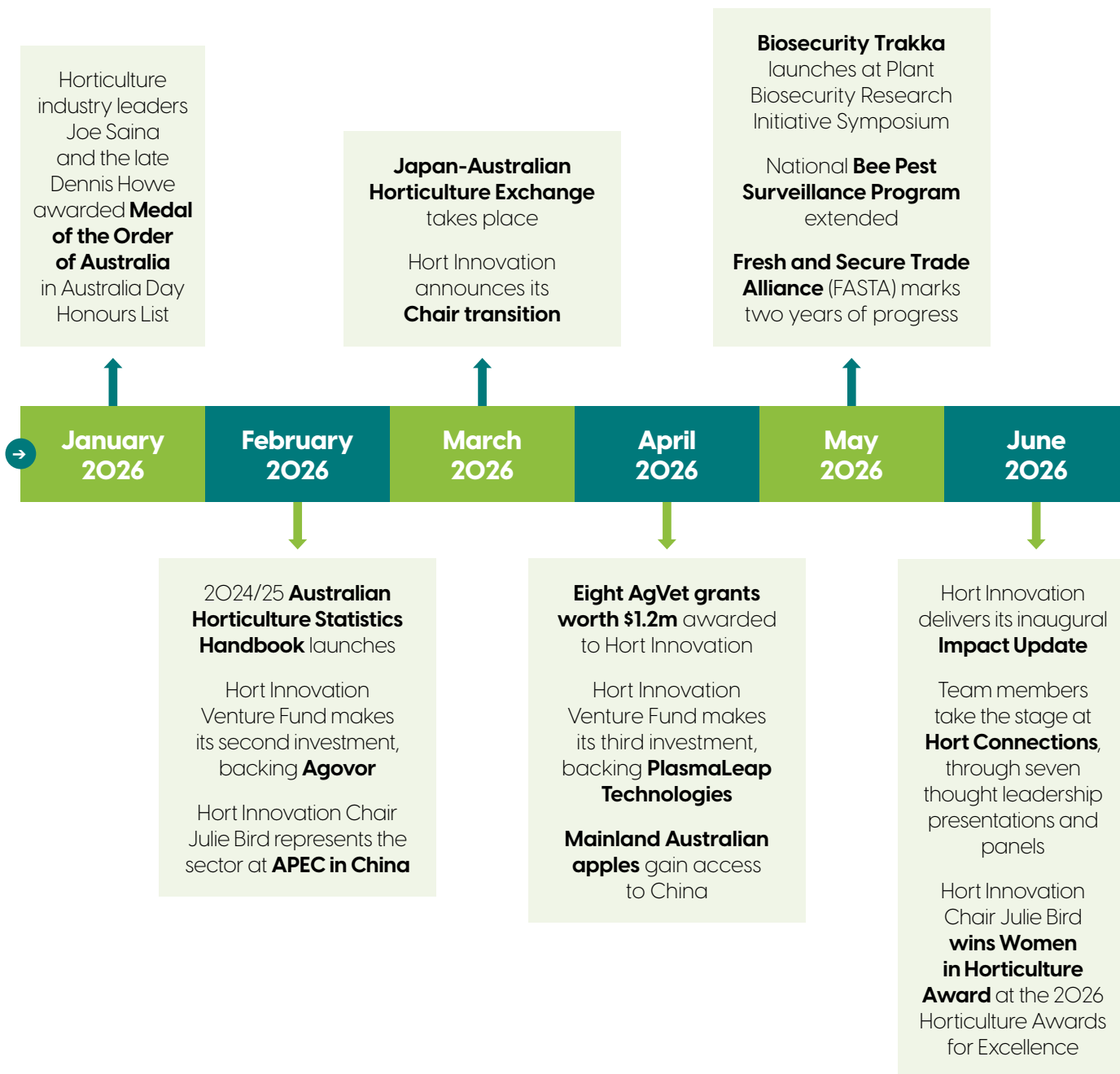
Hort Innovation CEO,
Brett Fifield



The year in review

Here is a look at some of the highlights from 2025/26.





Our sector



\$18.4Bn

total production value of the Australian horticulture sector



\$6.5Bn

growth in production value over the past 10 years



19.7%

of Australia's total agricultural production is horticulture



3rd

largest agricultural sector in Australia is horticulture



21%

production value increase for horticulture over the past five years



\$3.5Bn

export value, up 13 per cent



78

export markets, with the top five being China (35%), India (6.3%), Vietnam (5.5%), Hong Kong (5.4%) and Japan (5.2%)

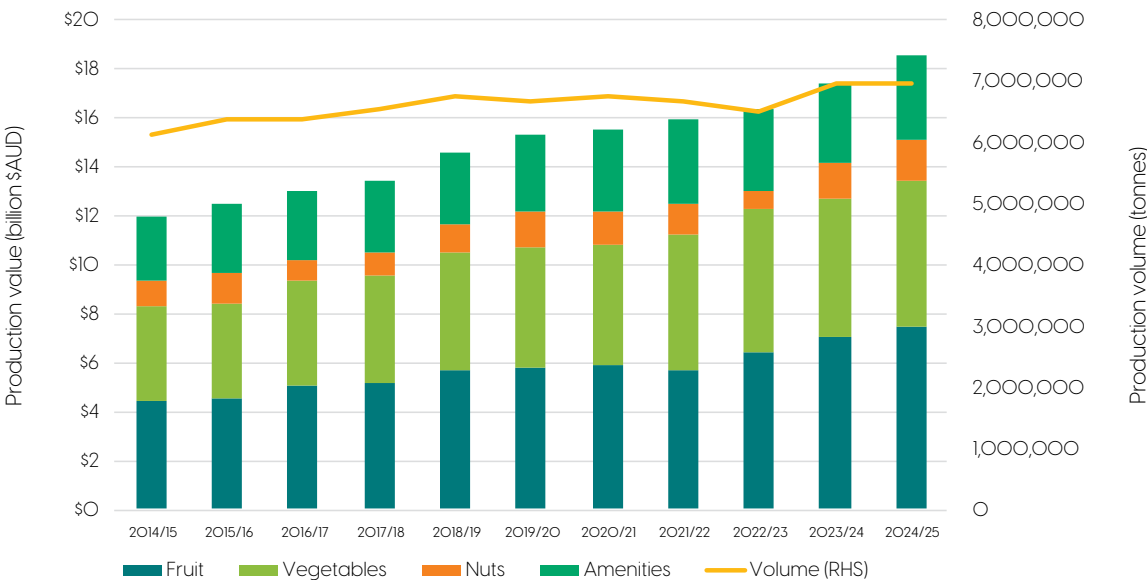
Record export performance

The total value of fresh horticulture exports reached a record \$3.5 billion in 2024/25, up 13 per cent on 2023/24. Export value has increased by 126 per cent over the past decade. This growth has been underpinned by stronger trade relationships with China, India and Vietnam, and reflects a long-term structural shift in the sector.

Figures are taken from the most recent 2024/25 Australian Horticulture Statistics Handbook



Industry production value growth over 10 years



Export value growth over 10 years



Our stakeholders

Hort Innovation works with a wide range of stakeholders to understand the horticulture sector's challenges and opportunities and deliver results.

Growers, including regional and state-based grower groups across the country

Our project delivery partners

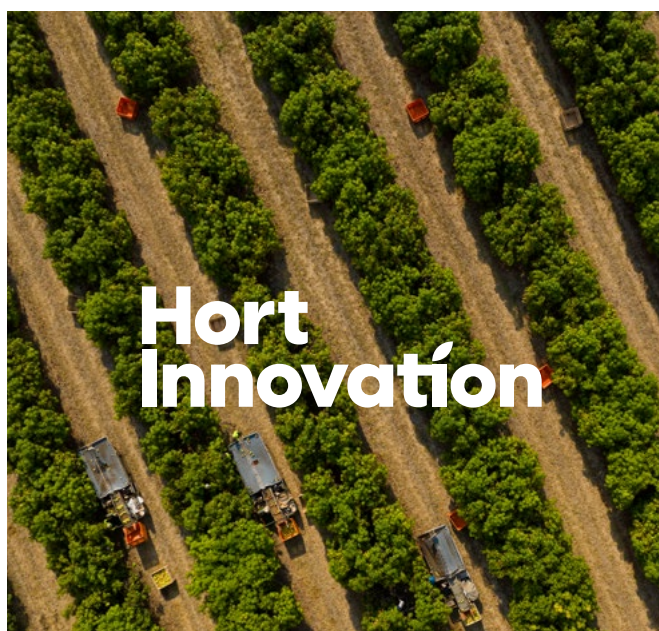
The Australian Government, through the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF)

Horticulture representative bodies, including peak industry bodies and other groups

The wider research community in Australia and overseas

Australia's other Rural Research and Development Corporations, including initiatives led by AgriFutures such as grow^{AG} and Emerging National Rural Issues (ENRI)

Collaborative initiatives, such as the Plant Biosecurity Research Initiative and the Australian Food & Wine Collaboration



Supply chain participants and partners, such as retailers and Fresh Markets Australia

Trade partners, such as Austrade and Australian Horticulture Trade

Associations relevant to horticulture, such as the International Fresh Produce Association and the Australasia-Pacific Extension Network

Industry agencies, such as Plant Health Australia and the government's Cooperative Research Centre network

Co-investors in our research, particularly through Frontiers

Our funding

Hort Innovation's work is funded by statutory and voluntary industry levies, co-investment funds brokered from a range of partners, grant support and Australian Government contributions.

In 2025/26, we used two primary funding sources: one for strategic levy investments and one for co-investment through our Frontiers investment program.



Levy funding

Levy funding is the core model for Hort Innovation's work, involving the investment of statutory and voluntary industry levies, along with Australian Government matching payments for eligible R&D investments.

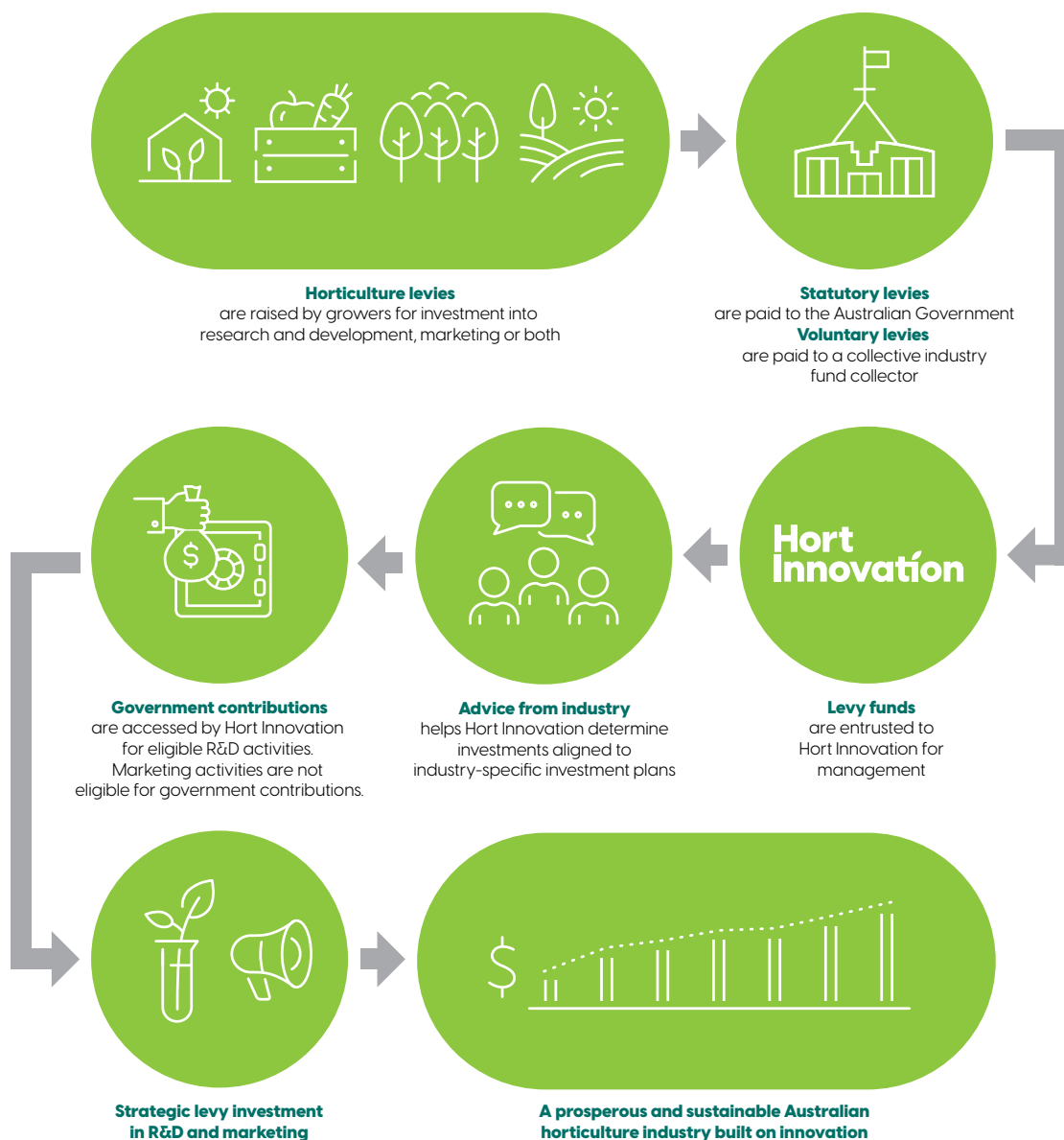
Levy investments are specific to each industry's needs, though multi-industry projects can collaborate across multiple commodities for maximum efficiency and impact.

Hort Innovation does not set or directly collect levies. Individual horticulture industries choose whether to have a levy, what the levy rates are and determine how (or if) their levy is split for investment between R&D and marketing.

Levies can be statutory and administered through DAFF or voluntary and administered through an approved Collective Industry

Fund (CIF) arrangement with Hort Innovation. Industries with a voluntary levy are almond, blueberry, pistachio, processing tomato and pyrethrum.

Industries may have other levies that are not managed by Hort Innovation, such as biosecurity levies that are passed on to Plant Health Australia for investment.



Hort Innovation Frontiers

Frontiers is Hort Innovation's co-investment model, designed to enable longer-term, cross-industry investments focused on complex areas critical for the future of the horticulture sector.

Under the Frontiers model, investments are funded via strategic partnerships with private and commercial partners. Investment from partners is combined with Australian Government contributions for eligible R&D activities.

Frontiers co-investment partners range from commercial businesses to research agencies, education institutions and government departments. Based on industry advice, levy funds can also be invested in Frontiers projects.

Frontiers works alongside rather than in place of levy-funded initiatives. Frontiers investments are designed to extend and amplify levy-funded work, tackling industry-defined themes while avoiding duplication.

In 2024/25, Frontiers launched a number of programs to meet the needs of a rapidly evolving horticulture industry – the fastest growing of the Australian agriculture sectors. These programs included the Hort Innovation Venture Fund, which launched in November 2024, and the Australian-Grown Innovation mentoring program in March 2025.



Healthy living



Adaptation and resilience



Market growth and security



Disruptive technologies



Capability building

There are five
Frontiers investment themes



Hort Innovation attracts Australian and international **innovators, co-investors and partners** to collaborate with in each of these research areas



Innovation partnerships



Australian-grown innovation



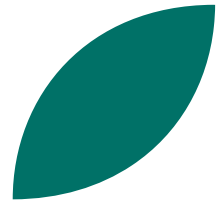
Hort Innovation Venture Fund

Innovative ideas are realised through investment pathways that are aligned with the Frontiers themes and priorities



For each project, Hort Innovation **brings together funding from all partners** (there may be one or there may be many) and **accesses Australian Government contributions** for eligible R&D activities





Our history

Hort Innovation is an unlisted public company limited by guarantee and the declared industry services body for horticulture. The Australian Government established Hort Innovation in 2014.

We transitioned to a grower-owned company from the former Horticulture Australia Limited (HAL), which operated between 2001 and 2014.

Since 2014, Hort Innovation's company structure has evolved to meet the needs of the horticulture sector, based on close consultation with industry. You can view our current organisational structure and learn more about the Hort Innovation team on [p74](#).

On 1 January 2025, a new 10-year Statutory Funding Agreement with DAFF came into effect. The agreement takes a 'principles-based approach' to Hort Innovation's performance. You can read more about the agreement on [p91](#).



Our membership

Hort Innovation membership gives growers and other industry stakeholders more opportunities to stay connected, understand and contribute to their industry's investments, and keep up to date on results.

As of 30 June 2026, we had 2036 members, including 1774 grower members, representing 87 per cent of total membership.

Membership is free, but it is not automatic. Apply at www.horticulture.com.au/membership.

Why join?

Membership helps build a more connected, informed and research-active horticulture community, supporting investment decisions and stronger research outcomes.

Members can:

- Contribute to and participate in research and investment initiatives.
- Access Hort IQ – Hort Innovation's one-stop shop for consumer insights.
- Receive exclusive event ticket offers.
- Apply for voting entitlements at the Annual General Meeting, giving a direct say on Hort Innovation's leadership and governance.

Who can join?

Membership is open to people and businesses that:

- Carry on an enterprise within Australia's horticultural industry.
- Hold a registered ABN.

This includes enterprises involved in:

- Growing and harvesting.
- Processing.
- Packing.
- Transporting.
- Marketing.
- Wholesaling.
- Retailing.
- Exporting.
- Supplying of inputs for horticulture production.

Easier voting for members

Voting rights are available to members who are levy payers and/or producers who contribute to a Collective Industry Fund (CIF).

We've made it easier for levy payers to receive their first vote. Members who were liable for \$200 or more in levies in the prior financial year can receive one vote by completing the Annual Levy Return form and ticking the horticultural products for which levies were paid. Members no longer need to report levy amounts paid.

Members receive one additional vote for every \$10,000 in average levies paid over the previous three financial years. To receive more than one voting right, members must report the levy amounts paid for each horticultural product on the Annual Levy Return.

Kalfresh
Kalbar, Queensland

Kalfresh started in 1992 as a small family-owned business. It has grown and adapted since then to be one of Australia's leading vertically-integrated fresh vegetable businesses.



2

Enhance and safeguard supply

Hort Innovation works to enhance and safeguard supply through world-class innovation. We draw on ideas and expertise from Australia and around the world to advance innovation for Australian horticulture, improving sustainability, strengthening resilience and future-proofing supply chains.



Spotlight:

Unlocking a \$1 billion productivity opportunity for growers

PRIORITY 1.1

Lead world-class innovation to ensure Australian horticulture is globally competitive

Australian horticulture could unlock up to \$1 billion in additional value each year through greater adoption of proven innovations, supporting more profitable and resilient farm businesses. This is the key finding of the Factors Driving Productivity Report, commissioned by Hort Innovation and delivered by the Centre for International Economics.

The report identified four priority areas to accelerate productivity growth:

- Building capability in production cost analysis.
- Automating data collection.
- Harnessing AI-driven insights.
- Embracing mechanisation and automation at scale.

With productivity growth historically modest, lifting efficiency in these areas will be critical for the long-term performance of more than 12,000 horticulture businesses.

To help growers act on the report's findings, we released a custom-built modelling tool that allows businesses to explore tailored productivity scenarios and assess how different investments in labour, supply chain and technology could improve performance.

The tool supports more informed decision making, helping growers identify the changes likely to deliver the greatest impact for their operations.

Together, the research and modelling tool help growers and industry identify practical opportunities to lift productivity as the sector moves towards a projected value of \$22 billion by 2040.



"The most crucial path to productivity is to identify improvements and ways forward through the use of on-farm data.

"As the industry continues to change, to remain viable, we must be looking for ways to streamline and remove input costs. The capability to do this lies in being able to assess where the money is going and where there are opportunities to reduce or remove costs entirely.

"We've found through building our own app, we've been able to change our practices on farm to get more output for less. We hope to continue to do this more in the coming years and build our database so that every challenge we come up against we can try and find a viable solution."

Hillwood Berries Director and Farm Manager,
Simon Dornauf

Spotlight:

Drones deliver smarter crop protection

PRIORITY 1.1

Lead world-class innovation to ensure Australian horticulture is globally competitive



“Our goal is to deliver a practical and scalable bird deterrence solution that integrates seamlessly into growers’ operations. By combining advanced drone technology with rigorous field testing, we’re confident this project will set a new benchmark for bird control in agriculture.”

AERIUM Analytics CEO,
Jordan Cicoria



See the RoBird take flight

Growers will soon have a new way to reduce crop losses, with drone technology offering a practical, non-lethal solution to bird damage.

This Frontiers project is developing, testing and commercialising drone-based deterrence systems to help growers protect crops, improve productivity and support farm profitability.

Over three years, fixed-wing and flapping-wing drones will be trialled across key regions and crops, including almonds, pome, summerfruit and strawberries. These trials will assess how effectively and consistently the technology works across different bird species, crops and operating conditions.

At the centre is AERIUM Analytics’ RoBird technology, which mimics a peregrine falcon in flight. Early trials in Australian almond orchards recorded:

- An 89 per cent reduction in fruit loss within monitored blocks.
- A 94 per cent displacement of bird activity following drone engagement.

Further trials will test whether these results can be replicated across different crops and growing environments.

Delivered in collaboration with industry partners and The University of Adelaide, the project combines advanced drone technology with wildlife expertise to create a scalable and environmentally responsible approach to bird management.



Spotlight:

Wearable technology to improve safety and productivity

PRIORITY 1.2

Partner with industry on their sustainability priorities and research needs to support social and environmental stewardship



"As growers, we need practical proof before rolling out new technology. Being part of the trial gives us the chance to see how exoskeletons perform in real farm conditions and whether they can help our team work safely and productively."

Burlington Berries General Manager,
Laurie Adams

Wearable technology is being tested to help reduce physical strain and improve safety during repetitive and physically demanding on-farm tasks.

A Hort Innovation Frontiers project is trialling an exoskeleton designed to reduce fatigue and injury risk without disrupting normal operations.

Trials on commercial farms are generating practical insights into where the technology could deliver the greatest benefit. Early results show:

- A 25 per cent reduction in overall movement-related injury risk.
- A 64 per cent reduction in risk for tray-carrying tasks.
- Up to 68 per cent lower task risk across assessed activities when using the technology.

AI-enabled sensors are being used to analyse worker movement and task risk, providing clear, evidence-based guidance on when and how the exoskeleton could be used on-farm.

By testing the technology on real tasks in real conditions, the project is delivering findings that are practical and relevant for growers considering adoption.



Spotlight:

Next-generation macadamias for smarter production

PRIORITY 1.2

Partner with industry on their sustainability priorities and research needs to support social and environmental stewardship

Macadamia growers will benefit from new tree varieties designed to deliver higher yields, better-quality nuts and stronger resilience to changing conditions.

This project is accelerating the development of next-generation macadamia trees, aiming to reduce development time from more than 20 years to around 10.

Led by the Queensland Alliance for Agriculture and Food Innovation, the program uses genetic markers, genomic selection, phenomics and artificial intelligence to identify high-performing varieties suited to Australian growing conditions.



“We see this project as a partnership with growers, and value that interaction with growers on our trials in the field. We want to combine our expertise with the industry’s more practical expertise to improve the program. Our vision is to deliver high-performing, climate-resilient trees that fruit earlier, produce better-quality and optimally-sized nuts and reduce production costs.

By cutting the variety release timeframe from 24 years to just 10 – along with new varieties every three to five years – we’re ensuring Australian growers stay ahead with sustainable, profitable and world-leading orchards ready for the future.”

Queensland Alliance for Agriculture and Food Innovation (QAAFI) Research lead, Dr Mobashwer Alam

The program is focused on delivering trees that:

- Produce earlier and more consistently.
- Improve nut size and quality.
- Increase tolerance to pests, diseases and climate pressures.
- Help reduce production costs for growers.

This work responds to rising input costs, changing environmental conditions, and challenges including reduced pollination services.

By accelerating breeding and aligning research with grower needs, the project aims to release new varieties every three to five years. This work will contribute to more productive, resilient orchards and stronger global competitiveness for Australia’s macadamia industry.



Meet the next gen orchards team



Spotlight:

Staying ahead of emerging pest and disease threats

PRIORITY 1.3

Excel in breakthrough research to strengthen industry's readiness for existing and emerging opportunities and threats

As biosecurity risks continue to evolve, preparedness is critical to protecting production, market access and grower profitability. Through CitrusWatch and VegWatch, Hort Innovation is helping industry stay ahead of emerging pest and disease threats by strengthening readiness, improving response capability and building long-term resilience.

CitrusWatch

- Strengthens preparedness for high-consequence citrus pests and diseases, reducing the risk of production losses, market disruption and increased grower costs. In 2025, Australia's citrus exports were valued at \$569.7 million, with key markets including China, Japan, Hong Kong, Indonesia and Thailand.
- Preserves surveillance networks, trusted data and strong industry-government partnerships that support early detection, rapid response and proof-of-freedom outcomes.
- Translates surveillance, risk modelling and technical expertise into practical tools and resources that improve on-farm preparedness, decision making and business continuity.

VegWatch

- Supports preparedness for exotic and emerging vegetable pests, helping safeguard an industry worth more than \$5.5 billion that produces more than 3.8 million tonnes of vegetables annually. By strengthening industry readiness, VegWatch helps minimise production losses, trade disruptions and business impacts.
- Brings together growers, researchers, government agencies and industry partners to develop surveillance systems, diagnostic tools, priority pest plans and data-driven decision-making frameworks that support early detection and effective responses.
- Delivers practical tools including farm biosecurity planning resources, pest risk mapping and business continuity systems that help growers prepare for, respond to and recover from new pest incursions, while supporting the faster reinstatement of trade.



Spotlight:

Improving access to critical crop protection tools

PRIORITY 1.3

Excel in breakthrough research to strengthen industry's readiness for existing and emerging opportunities and threats

Hort Innovation supports growers' access to safe and effective crop protection solutions through levy-funded projects, grant funding and industry-wide initiatives.

Minor use permits

The Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) issues minor use permits that allow growers to legally access and safely use crop protection products for uses not covered by a registered product label. Hort Innovation coordinates permit applications and renewals on behalf of the horticulture sector.

Permits by the numbers:

- 370 active permits as at 30 June 2026 (renewed on a one-to-five-year cycle).
- 88 permit applications submitted during 2025/26, including applications for new permits, new uses and renewals.
- 75 permits issued in 2025/26, including 73 permit renewals and two new minor use permits.
- 13 permits withdrawn, surrendered, expired or not renewed due to regulatory reviews, product label registrations or changing industry needs.

Data generation and regulatory support

Securing access to crop protection solutions often requires scientific evidence to demonstrate safety, efficacy and compliance. Through targeted data generation projects and regulatory submissions, Hort Innovation helps build the evidence needed to support new permits and product registrations for horticultural industries.

In 2025/26, Hort Innovation received \$1.2 million through the Australian Government's Access to Industry Priority Uses of AgVet Chemicals program. This funding supports priority crop protection solutions across multiple industries by decreasing sole reliance on levy funds to complete trial work.

Keeping industry informed

Quarterly ag chemical updates and six-monthly regulatory risk assessments help growers and industry stay informed about domestic and international regulatory developments, supporting proactive management of potential impacts on chemical access and use.



Spotlight:

Strengthening biosecurity to protect pollination

PRIORITY 1.4

Collaborate with industry to bolster resilience and future-proof supply chain disruptions



“Fortifying our borders from anything that further impacts our honey bee population is paramount. We have been living through the serious impacts of varroa mite since it was detected in 2022, so we need to be ready, and the surveillance program is one way we can stay ahead of the game to protect our farms and farming communities.”

Walker Flat Almonds
General Manager,
Peter Cavallaro

The next phase of the National Bee Pest Surveillance Program is strengthening Australia's ability to detect and respond to emerging bee pests, helping protect growers, pollination services and food production.

The five-year, nationally coordinated program focuses on early detection of 18 exotic and regionally significant pests. This work helps safeguard the honey bee industry and the \$12 billion in pollination services that underpin Australian agriculture.

Surveillance will be targeted at high-risk entry points, including major air and sea ports, using a consistent, risk-based approach across all states and territories. Delivered by Plant Health Australia with government and industry partners, the program combines specialist hives, diagnostics and coordinated data sharing to monitor and respond to threats before they become established.

The program builds on lessons from recent incursions and reinforces the importance of preparedness and rapid response in protecting farms and supply chains.

By strengthening national coordination and investing in early detection, the program helps growers reduce risk, maintain pollination reliability and support long-term productivity.



Spotlight:

Shared leadership, stronger biosecurity for growers

PRIORITY 1.4

Collaborate with industry to bolster resilience and future-proof supply chain disruptions

Cherry and summerfruit growers are gaining stronger, more coordinated biosecurity support through a new cross-industry project designed to strengthen capability and preparedness.

The project brings the two industries together under a shared approach, supporting more consistent planning and decision-making in response to pest and disease threats.

At the centre is a dedicated biosecurity leadership role that provides on-the-ground support and acts as a link between growers, industry bodies and government.

This role is:

- Coordinating best practice biosecurity across both industries.
- Providing clear guidance during pest and disease incursions.
- Keeping growers informed on regulatory changes and response protocols.
- Supporting industry alignment on trade, chemical access and pest management.

The project also strengthens collaboration across the supply chain, helping both industries respond to changing trade requirements and demonstrate strong biosecurity credentials in domestic and international markets.



“This is an exciting project where our two industries can proactively manage biosecurity risks together, including those of trade significance, to create a stronger, more sustainable future.”

Cherry Growers Australia CEO,
Penny Measham



Plus One Serve program

Students take part in a school vegetable snacking initiative, as part of the Plus One Serve program, designed to increase vegetable consumption during snack breaks. The project is evaluating vegetable provisioning and education programs to help establish lifelong healthy eating habits and improve access to vegetables for primary school children.



3

Accelerate local and global demand

Strong demand underpins a prosperous horticulture sector. Hort Innovation works with industry to promote Australian produce, expand local and international market opportunities, and give growers the insights and tools to make informed decisions and build new revenue streams.



Spotlight:

Strengthening trade through knowledge exchange

PRIORITY 2.1

Access and expand high-value markets to deliver profitability and sustainability for industry

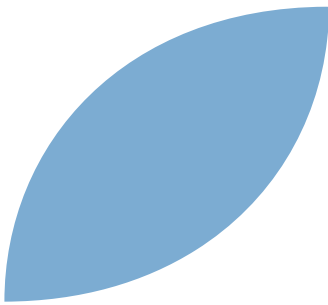
Australian growers and industry leaders are strengthening connections with Japan through a new initiative focused on knowledge sharing and collaboration.

The Japan-Australia Horticulture Exchange brings industry, government and research partners together to build relationships and share knowledge across sustainability, food security, trade and innovation.

Through open dialogue and in-country engagement, the Exchange helps growers and industry leaders learn from shared challenges and apply practical insights in their own industries.

It also provides an opportunity to build awareness of Australian horticulture and its clean, green produce in a mature, quality-driven market.

Japan is a significant export partner and a key growth market for Australian horticulture. By deepening relationships and supporting ongoing knowledge exchange, the program will help shape future collaboration between the two countries and support continued market access and growth.



“Last year we secured additional access for some of our varieties into Japan, which has been a really positive step. It’s allowed us to diversify, and Japan is such a mature market when it comes to quality and understanding maturity. That’s why so many of our growers value Japan.

“Hort Innovation has always been very supportive and encouraging. They genuinely understand our industry and the fact that we’re export-focused, which makes a real difference.”

Australian Table Grape Association Chief Executive Officer,
Jeff Scott



Learn about the table grape industry’s engagement with the Japan market

Spotlight:

Expanding global market access for Australian horticulture

PRIORITY 2.1

Access and expand high-value markets to deliver profitability and sustainability for industry



Australian horticulture is expanding access to high-value international markets, with recent market access outcomes opening new opportunities across Asia and North America.

These milestones reflect a coordinated effort between growers, industry, government and Hort Innovation to build export readiness, strengthen trade relationships and support long-term competitiveness.

Recent milestones include:

■ **Blueberries to Vietnam** – A new export protocol gives Australian blueberries access to a fast-growing market where demand for premium imported fruit is growing. With new markets now available, the blueberry industry has set a target to reach \$22 million over the next five years, almost double its current export value.

■ **Mainland-grown apples to China** – A major new biosecurity agreement expands access to one of the world's largest fruit markets, building on Australia's existing export success. The China market is worth more than \$250 million annually, with imports growing almost 14 per cent each year over the past five years.

■ **Apples to Canada** – A new pathway removes the need for fumigation or cold treatment, helping growers maintain fruit quality while expanding into a key North American market. The Canadian market is worth more than \$300 million annually, creating new opportunities for Australian growers to supply counter-seasonal fruit and diversify exports.

These outcomes have been supported by long-term investment in trade development, market access programs and technical research, ensuring industries are ready to act when new opportunities emerge. The Fresh and Secure Trade Alliance (FASTA) is the pivotal program currently underway to build the evidence, tools and capability that underpin market access success.

By securing access to diverse, high-value markets, the program helps growers increase export volumes, improve returns and reduce reliance on any single destination. Together, these efforts aim to lift global demand for Australian produce and strengthen the industry's position in international markets.

Supporting market access applications

In 2025/26, the International Market Access Assessment Panel (IMAAP) continued to provide independent, transparent and merit-based advice to support Australia's horticultural export market access priorities. IMAAP is a service provided on behalf of industry and the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF), and is a recognised Hort Innovation Board committee.

During the year, the IMAAP met twice to assess six new market access and two market improvement applications, helping ensure that applications submitted to DAFF were technically robust, industry-supported and export ready. These efforts support how Hort Innovation helps industry set export goals, growers diversify markets, improve trade opportunities and build the long-term competitiveness and resilience of Australian horticulture exports.



Spotlight:

Driving demand through increased vegetable consumption

PRIORITY 2.2

Drive consumption through high-impact, evidence-based domestic and export marketing campaigns



A six-year R&D program is bringing together global best practice, national data and consumer insights to identify, test and scale practical ways to help Australians eat one more serve of vegetables each day.

Led by AUSVEG, the Plus One Serve program involves leading researchers, behavioural scientists, health promoters, retailers, growers and innovators to generate evidence and coordinate activities that drive measurable, sustained behaviour change.

Increasing vegetable consumption delivers a dual benefit: better public health outcomes and stronger demand across the supply chain.

Projects under the Plus One Serve banner include:

- Education pathways from primary school through to tertiary settings, shaping lifelong eating habits.
- School-based programs, such as Pick of the Crop, embedding vegetables into curriculum, food environments and family engagement.

- Consumer tools and insights to make vegetables more accessible, convenient and appealing.
- Partnerships across industry, health, retail and research to extend the reach and impact of effective approaches.

Increased consumption represents a significant economic opportunity, with the potential to deliver substantial value growth for growers, support jobs and reduce pressure on the healthcare system.

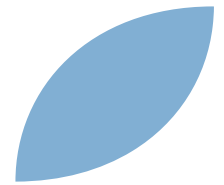
By focusing on the life stages and environments where habits are formed, the program is building sustained consumption patterns across generations, supporting stronger long-term demand for Australian vegetables and a healthier, more resilient future for growers and communities.

Improving children's diets starts with making healthy choices easier

As part of the Plus One Serve program, a project is identifying practical ways to increase vegetable consumption among primary school students, particularly in communities where access to fresh produce can be more challenging.

Led by researchers from The George Institute for Global Health, in partnership with Western Sydney Local Health District, the two-year project is exploring how schools can incorporate more vegetables into existing snack breaks. The research aims to understand what works in real-world school settings and how successful approaches can be scaled more broadly.

For Australia's vegetable industry, the project represents an opportunity to build stronger connections between growers and future consumers while supporting better nutrition outcomes for young Australians.



Spotlight:

Inspiring people to eat fresh and live green

PRIORITY 2.2

Drive consumption through high-impact, evidence-based domestic and export marketing campaigns

Whole-of-sector and industry-specific marketing campaigns are driving demand by making fruit, vegetables and greenlife more visible, appealing and relevant to consumers in Australia and overseas.

Fruit and Veggies Yummy Yummy

Fruit and Veggies Yummy Yummy uses the reach and influence of The Wiggles to encourage Australian families to eat more fruit and vegetables.

The campaign combines digital and social content, retail activations and live experiences to make fruit and vegetables more visible, appealing and accessible.

The campaign is a collaborative, whole-of-industry initiative, with funding from Hort Innovation, the International Fresh Produce Association Australia and New Zealand, AUSVEG, Perfection Fresh Australia, Flavorite, Mitolo Family Farms, Premier Fresh Australia and Mackay's Marketing.



Interested in learning more about our marketing work? Download our new digital publication *Marketing Impact*

The first year of Fruit and Veggies Yummy Yummy has seen reach and engagement far exceed targets set at the launch. Results included:

- Direct engagement with 1.9 million families through direct mailouts, customised social media reels, surveys and competitions.
- 121 million views across The Wiggles channels and retail partners.

The next phase will build on this foundation, deepening partnerships, strengthening data and scaling impact to deliver sustained behaviour change.

Reigniting Australia's love for greenlife

The nursery industry's Greener Spaces Better Places marketing program used evidence about the value of plants to renew consumer interest and support demand.

At the centre of the campaign in 2025/26 was the Plant Value Report, developed in partnership with Domain. The report analysed property listings over 12 months to show how greenery can increase property value, improve selling speed and boost buyer engagement.

An integrated campaign brought these insights to life through earned media, social content and expert voices to translate the findings into practical, relatable advice about the benefits of adding plants to homes and outdoor spaces.

This campaign generated more than 500 pieces of unique earned media coverage reaching 19.9 million Australians, and paid social media activity resulted in more than 419,000 views with 67,000 engagements (likes, shares, comments). During the campaign period, there was also a 16 per cent year-on-year increase in Google searches for 'plants' and 'greenery'.

By combining data-led insights with compelling storytelling and partnerships, the campaign positioned plants as both a lifestyle enhancement and a worthwhile investment.



Protecting avocado quality across the value chain

Maintaining fruit quality is a shared challenge across the avocado supply chain, from how fruit is picked and packed to how it is handled in store. Even minor damage can affect shelf life, eating quality and consumer confidence.

We are working with industry on coordinated initiatives that improve handling practices, build supply-chain capability and reinforce product quality in domestic and export markets.

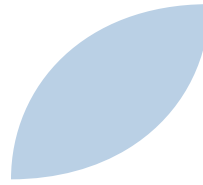
■ **Improving handling through the supply chain** – A world-first virtual reality (VR) training program is giving growers, packers and retail teams practical training across every stage of the supply chain. It simulates environments from picking and packing through to in-store handling, helping teams embed best practice, improve consistency and reduce damage that can affect shelf life and quality.

■ **Reducing damage at the point of purchase** – More than half of Australians squeeze avocados incorrectly when checking ripeness, potentially bruising the fruit before it even leaves the store. A new consumer campaign tackles this challenge by encouraging shoppers to check ripeness at the neck of the avocado to protect fruit quality through to consumption.

■ **Reinforcing quality in international markets** – In Singapore, a month-long collaboration featured Australian avocado dishes across six cafés, integrating them into local food culture and positioning Australian avocados as a premium, versatile ingredient. These activities helped build familiarity, reinforce quality and drive demand among international consumers.

Together, these initiatives address avocado quality at every stage, from supply chain practices to consumer handling to product positioning in export markets.





Accelerating export growth through a coordinated global approach

A more coordinated, insight-led export approach is strengthening how Australian horticulture builds demand in international markets.

A new global agency model brings agencies and in-market partners together across 11 priority markets, reducing duplication and enabling programs to be better tailored to local consumers while remaining aligned with a unified strategy. It connects business-to-business (B2B) and business-to-consumer (B2C) activity across the value chain, from trade engagement to consumer demand.

Results included:

- **Cherries across multiple markets** – Season launch events in four markets reached 149 industry attendees and generated 286 pieces of media coverage, supported by influencer activity delivering 473,000+ views and 20,500+ engagements.
- **Cherries in Hong Kong** – Digital and retail activation delivered 1.24 million impressions, more than 37,000 clicks (35 per cent above the KPI), a 68 per cent sales uplift during campaign periods and 61 per cent year-on-year growth over Lunar New Year.
- **Pears in New Zealand** – A targeted Woolworths campaign delivered more than 9.4 million impressions and strong customer acquisition, with 34 per cent of purchasers new to Australian pears and a significant increase in sales during the campaign period.
- **Avocados in Malaysia** – E-commerce, roadshows and retail activity delivered sales uplifts of 52 per cent, 251 per cent and 176 per cent respectively, supported by a campaign reach of 3.3 million.
- **Avocados in Singapore** – Six cafés across eight outlets featuring 18 dishes during May, driving trial and positioning Australian avocados as a premium, versatile ingredient.
- **Avocados across Asia** – The Australian Avocados Asia Instagram account delivered more than 900 new followers and increased views from 4,500 to 36,000, with more than 90 per cent of views coming from people who did not already follow the account.

By combining global coordination with local delivery, this approach is strengthening demand in priority markets and supporting a more diversified and resilient export future for growers.

Turning everyday behaviour into stronger demand

The Banana Gym Pass and Swim Pass gave consumers new reasons to buy bananas, linking them with existing fitness and family routines.

With bananas already purchased by 87 per cent of Australian households each year, the campaign focused on increasing purchase frequency rather than attracting new buyers.

The campaign introduced the Banana Gym Pass on National Banana Day in October, and the Banana Swim Pass during the January back-to-school period. Each turned a banana into entry for participating gyms and pools nationwide, creating new consumption moments linked to energy and physical activity.

Results included:

- 617 pieces of earned media coverage.
- 72 million opportunities to see the campaign key messages.
- 3.48 per cent incremental sales uplift during the Banana Gym Pass activity.
- 3.82 per cent incremental sales uplift during the Banana Swim Pass activity.

Campaign research also recorded improvements in perceptions of value, associations with natural energy and frequency of consumption. The results show how creating simple, accessible consumption occasions can influence attitudes, behaviour and sales.



Spotlight:

Enabling smarter decisions through data and insights

PRIORITY 2.3

Deliver valuable data and insights that transform decision-making

Better access to data and insights is helping growers and industry make faster, more informed decisions. Hort IQ brings together trusted insights on consumer behaviours, industry performance, trade intelligence and market trends in one place.

With 79 per cent of industries prioritising demand data and 58 per cent prioritising supply data, Hort IQ is addressing a clear need for accessible, practical information. In 2025/26, the platform recorded more than 10,000 visits, supporting a more data-led approach to marketing and investment. Over the past year, 55 per cent of sessions were with returning users, meaning that visitors are seeing value and coming back to the platform.

Data and insights are also being embedded in how marketing strategies are developed and evaluated. In 2025/26, we delivered nine marketing strategy workshops with industries, achieving an average satisfaction score of 83 per cent. We also presented eight webinars for industry, delivery partners and stakeholders on topics including consumption trends and cost-of-living pressures. The webinars achieved an average relevance score of 86 per cent.

Other targeted insight investments are improving access to retail scan data and category-specific analysis, helping growers and supply chain partners better understand performance and identify opportunities.

What does Hort IQ deliver for growers and industry?

- Faster, more confident decision-making supported by accessible data.
- Better alignment between insights, strategy and marketing activity.
- Greater visibility of opportunities across both demand and supply.

By strengthening access to insights and embedding them into decision-making, we are building a more informed, responsive and resilient horticulture industry.





How consumers behaved in 2025/26

In 2025/26, cost-of-living pressures continued to shape how Australians bought, prepared and consumed fresh produce. Shoppers looked for value while balancing quality, health, convenience and sustainability.

Drawing on NielsenIQ retail data and Fiftyfive5 consumer research, Hort IQ brought together insights that showed where demand is holding strong, where barriers remain and where industry can focus efforts to support growth.



Value-conscious consumers are reshaping food choices

Sixty-four per cent of consumers reported dining out less often, while 69 per cent said cost-of-living pressures had affected how they ate at home. Many used cost-saving strategies such as buying more staples, including rice and pasta, and spending less on meat, poultry and fish.

At the same time, two in five consumers were looking to recreate takeaway and pub-style meals at home, particularly among younger consumers. This presents an opportunity to inspire quick, tasty and affordable meal ideas that make fresh produce easy to use.

Health, convenience and confidence shape consumption

Australian adults consume around 2.4 serves of vegetables per day, below the recommended five serves. Encouragingly, 67 per cent say they would like to eat more vegetables and 61 per cent say it would be easy to consume one additional serve each day. Time and preparation remain key barriers, while confidence in cooking and a love of vegetables are both associated with higher consumption.

Fruit and nuts continue to play an important role in snacking, with bananas and apples bought by more than eight in 10 households. Snacking vegetables are also recording strong volume growth as more households buy them, although there is still an opportunity to build purchase frequency.

Fresh produce remains a household staple

The average Australian household shops for fresh produce more than 90 times a year and takes home an average of 3.9 kilograms of fresh fruit, vegetables and nuts each week. More than 80 per cent of households buy potatoes, bananas, apples, carrots and berries over the year.

Retail data also shows volume gains for categories including avocados, pears, sweet corn and garlic. While these category movements vary by product and occasion, they highlight the ongoing role of fresh produce in Australian households and the importance of maintaining relevance, visibility, quality and convenience at the point of purchase.



Continued >>

How consumers behaved in 2025/26 (continued)

Sustainability is increasingly linked to waste and value

Sustainability remains important to consumers, although overall environmental concern has softened slightly as other pressures, including cost of living, compete for attention. More than half of consumers consider sustainability when buying fresh produce, with concerns often expressed through food waste and packaging.

Eighty per cent of consumers are trying to throw away less food to save money, and 86 per cent sometimes or regularly use leftovers to create meals. Forty-seven per cent of younger adults, aged 18 to 34, are concerned about how much fresh produce their household throws away.



Organics continue to offer growth potential

Thirty-eight per cent of consumers reported buying organic fruit and vegetables, with this rising to 52 per cent among younger adults.

Purchase drivers include perceptions that organic produce is chemical or pesticide free, support for local farmers and preference for Australian-grown produce.

Cost remains a barrier, but the findings indicate potential for further growth. Almost four in 10 consumers say they are willing to pay more for organic fruit and vegetables, while 38 per cent say they would buy organic options if they were readily available.

Spotlight:

Turning surplus into value for growers

Priority 2.4

Advance solutions to reduce and utilise waste to deliver new revenue streams for growers

A national program is helping growers recover more value from each harvest by reducing on-farm losses and unlocking opportunities in surplus and out-of-spec produce.

Up to one million tonnes of Australian horticulture produce are lost each year, representing a significant missed revenue opportunity. This program works directly with growers and supply chain partners to identify where losses occur and develop practical solutions to lift utilisation and returns.

Key areas of focus include:

- On-farm trials and measurement tools to pinpoint losses and test what works in real conditions.
- Market development pathways for surplus and out-of-spec produce, including value-added products.
- Consumer insights to understand tolerance around product specifications.
- Grower training and case studies to support adoption of proven approaches.

The program recognises that solutions need to account for differences between crops, regions and seasons, rather than take a one-size-fits-all approach.

By combining research, on-farm testing and industry collaboration, the program aims to help growers sell more of what they produce, reduce waste and improve farm returns.



“International trials have shown that growers can increase profitability by up to 20 per cent through food waste reduction. When food isn’t sold, it’s not just the food that is wasted; it is also the fertiliser, water, labour and opportunity cost of using that land that are also wasted.”

End Food Waste Australia Director of Research, Development and Extension,
Francesca Goodman-Smith



Rugby Farm
Gatton, Queensland

Rugby Farming Group is a large Australian farming operation, growing, packing, processing and transporting fresh produce to supply key customers around Australia as well as numerous export markets with fresh vegetables grown on their farms, 12 months of the year.



4

Maximise and diversify investments

Through strong industry partnerships, Hort Innovation delivers levy-funded impact, scales bold innovation and creates pathways for new investment and alternative funding.

Partnering with industry

PRIORITY 3.1

Partner with industry to deliver Annual Investment Plans ensuring industry levy-funded projects deliver impact at scale

Hort Innovation works with industry and co-investors to maximise the value of levy funds, attract additional investment and support promising innovations that can deliver value for growers.

Industry priorities guide how levy funds are invested. We work with growers, peak industry bodies and subject matter experts to build a balanced portfolio of foundational, incremental and transformational investments aligned to both current industry and Australian Government priorities and emerging opportunities.

In 2025/26, our Industry Service & Delivery team facilitated more than 100 Strategic Investment Advisory Panel (SIAP) and ideation meetings. These resulted in 122 research, development and extension project recommendations valued at \$243.4 million and 28 marketing investments valued at \$20.1 million as of 30 June 2026.

Our Marketing team co-designs annual plans with SIAPs for industries with marketing levies, using consumer insights and campaign performance data to guide strategy. This approach ensures greater industry involvement in marketing planning.



Introducing Horticulture Investment Roadmaps

During 2025/26, Hort Innovation worked with growers and industry to develop a new strategic investment approach that will help guide levy investments to the opportunities and challenges that matter most across Australian horticulture.

The Horticulture Investment Roadmaps provide a grower-informed framework for directing research and development, trade and marketing investments over the next five years, helping ensure every dollar is invested where it can deliver the greatest value for growers and long-term benefit for the sector.

The roadmaps were developed through extensive consultation with growers and industry stakeholders and respond to industry requests for:

- Easier access to information about levy investments.
- Simpler and more consistent investment planning.
- Greater transparency and visibility of industry priorities and investment activity.
- Better information to support grower and industry decision-making.

More than 1000 growers and industry stakeholders contributed their perspectives to help identify the priorities that matter most across Australia's horticulture industries and provide a clear direction for future levy investments.

Across horticulture, a common framework of objectives and initiatives was established, making it easier to compare priorities across industries, identify shared challenges and opportunities, and support greater collaboration across the sector.

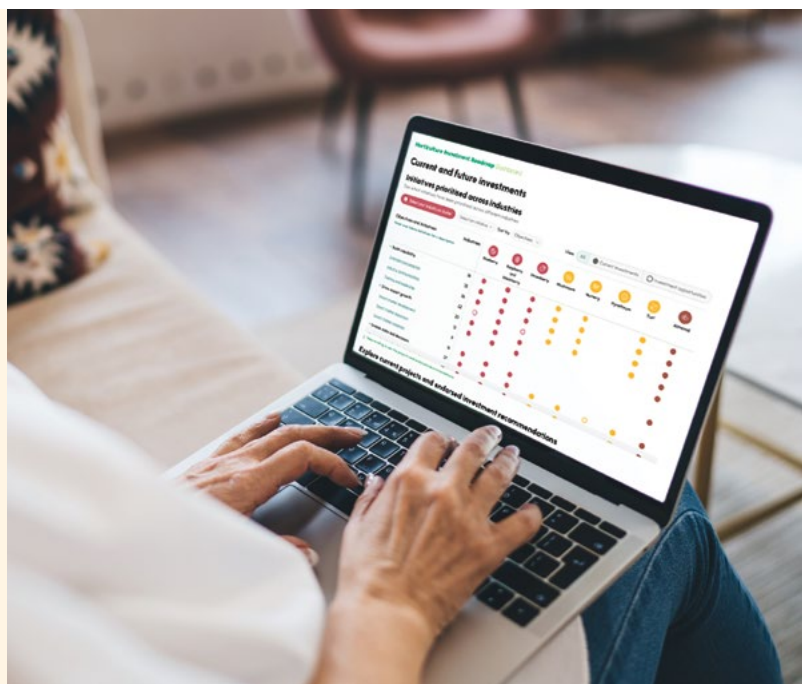
The roadmaps introduce a more responsive approach to investment planning, with priorities to be reviewed annually through SIAPs. This will ensure investment priorities continue to reflect changing industry conditions, emerging opportunities and grower needs.

Access the Investment Roadmap Dashboard

To support the new approach, Hort Innovation has launched the Horticulture Investment Roadmap Dashboard, a digital tool that brings industry priorities, funded projects and levy investments together in one easy-to-access location.

Through the Dashboard, growers and industry stakeholders can explore where their industry is planning to invest, view current research, development and marketing investments, see how funded projects align with agreed priorities, and identify opportunities for collaboration across horticulture.

The Dashboard provides greater transparency and visibility of levy investments, helping growers understand the direct connection between industry priorities, funded projects and future investment opportunities.



Facts and figures for a data-led future

PRIORITY 3.2

Build strategic partnerships to deliver bigger, bolder investments in innovation for Australian horticulture

The 2024/25 Australian Horticulture Statistics Handbook shows that the value of Australian horticulture production rose by six per cent year-on-year to \$18.4 billion.

The Handbook brings together reliable data across 75 categories of fruit, vegetables, nuts and greenlife. It covers state-level production volumes and values, exports and imports, processing volumes and distribution across fresh supply, retail and food service.

In 2026, regional statistics and trade export data were introduced to strengthen Hort Innovation's role as the trusted source of industry intelligence.

Key findings include:

- 🍌 **Fruit led growth** – Production value for fruit reached a record \$7.3 billion, supported by major increases in avocados, table grapes and citrus. Citrus reached its highest ever farmgate value of more than \$1.2 billion, while bananas, melons and dried grapes also hit new highs.
- 🍌 **Vegetables value increased** – Production value reached a record \$6 billion, increasing six per cent despite a slight decline in production volume, led by potatoes, tomatoes, cucumbers, lettuce and capsicums.
- 🍌 **The world goes nuts** – The Australian nut sector continued its expansion, with production value increasing 13 per cent to a record \$1.7 billion. Almond production value increased by 20 per cent, while almond export value reached a record \$1.3 billion, the highest of any horticultural export.
- 🍌 **Greener spaces nurturing the sector** – Nursery production value increased by four per cent to reach \$2.8 billion, maintaining its position as one of the sector's largest categories.



Driving export growth while strengthening biosecurity

PRIORITY 3.2

Build strategic partnerships to deliver bigger, bolder investments in innovation for Australian horticulture

The Fresh and Secure Trade Alliance (FASTA) is helping Australian horticulture manage insect pests and generate the technical evidence needed to maintain and expand market access.

Insect pests can affect production and restrict access to export markets. International trading partners require rigorous evidence that Australian exports meet phytosanitary requirements before approving new trade arrangements.

FASTA is an eight-year collaboration between horticultural export stakeholders and government authorities that generates high-quality data to support Australian Government market access negotiations. The initiative began in 2023 and is delivered through Hort Innovation and led by the Department of Primary Industries Queensland.

Spotlight:

Celebrating two years of FASTA

More than 100 activities relating to market access, biosecurity and integrated pest management are underway. Outcomes from the program's first two years include:

- Technical reports supporting bilateral market access negotiations for blueberries and mainland-grown apples in Asian markets.
- Experimental trials advancing biological control techniques using parasitoids and entomopathogenic nematodes, with findings published internationally.
- New methods to support responses to exotic fruit fly incursions and stronger collaboration with state and national biosecurity agencies.
- Support for the National Exotic Fruit Fly in Torres Strait Eradication Program through audits of field control activities.
- Twelve university students completing or progressing through PhD and Honours programs aligned with FASTA, helping build future horticulture science capability.



Collaboration drives action on biosecurity

PRIORITY 3.2

Build strategic partnerships to deliver bigger, bolder investments in innovation for Australian horticulture

Australia's plant industries are pooling investment and expertise through the Plant Biosecurity Research Initiative (PBRI) to tackle shared biosecurity threats.

Hosted by Hort Innovation, the PBRI coordinates a research investment portfolio valued at \$132 million, focused on practical solutions that strengthen national preparedness and protect the future of Australian horticulture and agriculture. Its work spans preparedness, surveillance, diagnostics and sustainable pest and disease management.

Since its establishment in 2017, the initiative has brought together the collective insights and capabilities

of Australia's seven plant-focused Rural Research and Development Corporations, DAFF and a range of industry, state and national biosecurity stakeholders.

By coordinating investment and sharing expertise, the PBRI helps partners address common challenges, reduce duplication and develop solutions that can benefit multiple plant industries. It also works with partners including BetterBorderBiosecurity NZ, Euphresco, Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR), Plant Health Australia and the Plant Health Committee.



Spotlight:

BiosecurityTrakka

BiosecurityTrakka is a new national system designed to help laboratories and agencies securely share and analyse plant pest and pathogen genomic data.

Backed by an \$11 million investment from the Australian Government, Hort Innovation and all seven plant-focused Rural Research and Development Corporations, the system applies pandemic-proven genomic technology to plant biosecurity.

Consistent access to data from different laboratories and agencies will support faster, nationally-coordinated responses to emerging threats. The system aims to reduce diagnostic turnaround times from eight to twelve days to just one to three days, supporting earlier containment and more informed decision-making during biosecurity events.

Delivered by the NSW Department of Primary Industries with strong collaboration across industry, government and research partners, Biosecurity Trakka will help protect crops, safeguard market access and build long term confidence across Australia's horticulture sector.

Spotlight:

Biosecurity is about people, not pests

Australia's plant biosecurity system is stronger when people work together. The latest Plant Biosecurity Research Initiative (PBRI) PBRI Symposium brought together growers, researchers and government to share knowledge, showcase innovation and build connections across plant industries.

Held in May 2026 in Melbourne, the event highlighted that biosecurity is not just about managing pests and diseases, but supporting the people and businesses impacted by them.

It celebrated emerging talent through the 2026 PBRI Ritman Scholars and emphasised the importance of engaging students and developing the next generation of biosecurity leaders.

Horticulture industries were represented, including melons, turf, vegetables, potatoes, citrus and cherries, demonstrating the shared commitment to protecting crops, market access and grower confidence.



Our work with government

PRIORITY 3.2

Build strategic partnerships to deliver bigger, bolder investments in innovation for Australian horticulture

Partnerships with government help align horticulture research and development with national priorities and attract investment that benefits growers, industry and the wider community.

Australia's Rural Research and Development Corporations (RDCs) were established by the Australian Government to drive innovation and productivity across the nation's primary industries. Through targeted investment in research, development and extension, RDCs play a critical role in ensuring the long-term sustainability and competitiveness of Australian agriculture.

As the RDC dedicated to Australian horticulture, Hort Innovation works with national and state governments to shape and deliver research, development and extension that supports a thriving horticulture sector.

Our investments directly support the key national frameworks and priorities referenced in our Statutory Funding Agreement.

Our investment portfolio also aligns with key national priorities, including Productivity, Food Security, the Net Zero Transition, and Extension and Adoption.

Each year, Hort Innovation and DAFF review performance against agreed principles. The performance statement provided as part of this review is available on the Hort Innovation website.

Spotlight:

Bolstering food security with First Nations communities

Hort Innovation worked with communities and partners to explore new ways to improve access to fresh, healthy food in remote Australia while supporting local enterprise and cultural connection.

Many remote First Nations communities face high food costs and limited access to nutritious, culturally appropriate food. This project explored community-led food enterprises as a way to strengthen local supply, skills and long-term resilience.

Working with the Gooliwana Bana community in Far North Queensland, growers, researchers and community leaders co-designed a local food enterprise model. The research team:

- Mapped local food systems to identify barriers and opportunities.
- Prioritised crops including bushfoods and fresh produce.
- Developed a shared long-term vision for a community-led enterprise.
- Assessed the model with industry to ensure it was practical and scalable.

This work developed a pathway for local production in remote regions, unlocking new opportunities in bushfoods, circular-economy approaches and place-based supply chains. It also demonstrated the importance of genuine partnership with communities to improve adoption, strengthen markets and deliver lasting impact.

Next steps include pilot programs, crop trials and further investment to scale impact and support healthier, more resilient communities and food systems.

Our work with other RDCs

PRIORITY 3.2

Build strategic partnerships to deliver bigger, bolder investments in innovation for Australian horticulture

Many of the challenges facing horticulture are shared across Australian agriculture. The Council of Rural Research and Development Corporations (RDCs) brings together Australia's 15 RDCs to coordinate work on common priorities, trends and challenges.

In 2025/26, Hort Innovation partnered with other RDCs on projects relating to sustainability, climate adaptation, digital innovation and biosecurity. Pooling funding and expertise allows the corporations to address challenges at greater scale and reduce unnecessary duplication.

Spotlight:

Coordinating AI for productivity at scale

Artificial intelligence (AI) capability is developing rapidly across agriculture, fisheries and forestry, but coordinated action is needed to translate it into productivity gains. Separate investments risk creating duplicated tools, incompatible standards and data silos that could slow adoption.

With productivity growth currently around 0.7 per cent, AI may offer opportunities to improve performance, provided risks relating to data access, privacy and environmental impact are carefully managed.

The Cross-RDC AI Alliance exists to close this gap, coordinating AI investment, standards and delivery across the RDC system, treating AI as shared productivity infrastructure. Opportunities lie in common data frameworks, decision tools and deployment pathways, which offer reduced duplication, lower development costs, access to international capability and accelerated adoption across commodities.

Spotlight:

Understanding community trust

The Community Trust in Rural Industries (CTRI) program tracks the factors that influence community trust and acceptance of Australia's rural industries.

It is a cross-sector program involving Hort Innovation, AgriFutures, Australian Eggs, Cotton Research & Development Corporation, Fisheries Research & Development Corporation and Grains Research & Development Corporation.

More than 29,000 Australians have participated in the CTRI survey since the research began in 2019, including 4,301 survey participants in 2025.

Key findings include:

- **Trust remains stable** – Overall trust in rural industries was rated 3.35 out of 5 which has remained stable across the last four years. Eighty-eight per cent of participants agreed that rural industries are important to the Australian way of life and 84 per cent said that farmers deserve more recognition for the work they do.

- **Fruit and vegetable growers are trusted** – They received the highest trust rating of all industry groups, rated as 3.54 out of 5 vs 3.35 out of 5 overall.
- **Environmental responsibility shapes trust** – Community perceptions are influenced by both how an industry operates collectively and how individual farmers operate, reinforcing the value of industry-wide communication and grower-led storytelling.
- **Knowledge remains limited** – Only 23 per cent of Australians actively seek information about rural industries, creating both a communication challenge and an opportunity to build understanding.

Empowering great ideas for tomorrow's horticulture

PRIORITY 3.3

Create a flexible investment framework attracting new partners and alternative funding sources

Frontiers brings together co-investment from industry, private sector and government partners to support longer-term, cross-industry research and development that addresses major challenges and opportunities for growers.

The program is structured around five investment themes:

- **Healthy living** – Enhancing wellbeing through fresh produce.
- **Adaptation and resilience** – Supporting industry through climate and market change.
- **Market growth and security** – Expanding trade opportunities and protecting access.
- **Disruptive technologies** – Accelerating the adoption of transformative innovations.
- **Capability building** – Strengthening skills, networks and resources across the sector.

These themes are delivered through three investment pathways:

- **Innovation partnerships** – Strategic collaborations using existing procurement approaches to tackle broad-scale challenges.
- **Australian-Grown Innovation** – Helping growers and supply chain businesses turn innovative ideas into practical solutions.
- **Hort Innovation Venture Fund** – Providing early-stage capital and strategic support to high-growth start-ups and technologies.

Spotlight:

Backing growers' solutions to real-world challenges

The Australian-Grown Innovation Incubate Program is helping growers and supply chain businesses turn promising ideas into commercially viable products and services. Thirty-seven innovators have been selected to date. Through a structured six-week program, participants develop the skills, insights and connections needed to move from an initial concept to a real-world application.

In 2025/26, the cohort worked on challenges including automation, waste recovery, market transparency, sustainable packaging and crop protection. Many of the ideas responded directly to on-farm challenges, focusing on creating new value from existing resources or improving efficiency.

Participants received mentoring to refine their ideas, test assumptions and explore pathways to market. This included developing customer insights, validating concepts, building business models and strengthening communication to support adoption.

By investing early in innovation capability, this program is helping build a pipeline of practical solutions for Australian horticulture.



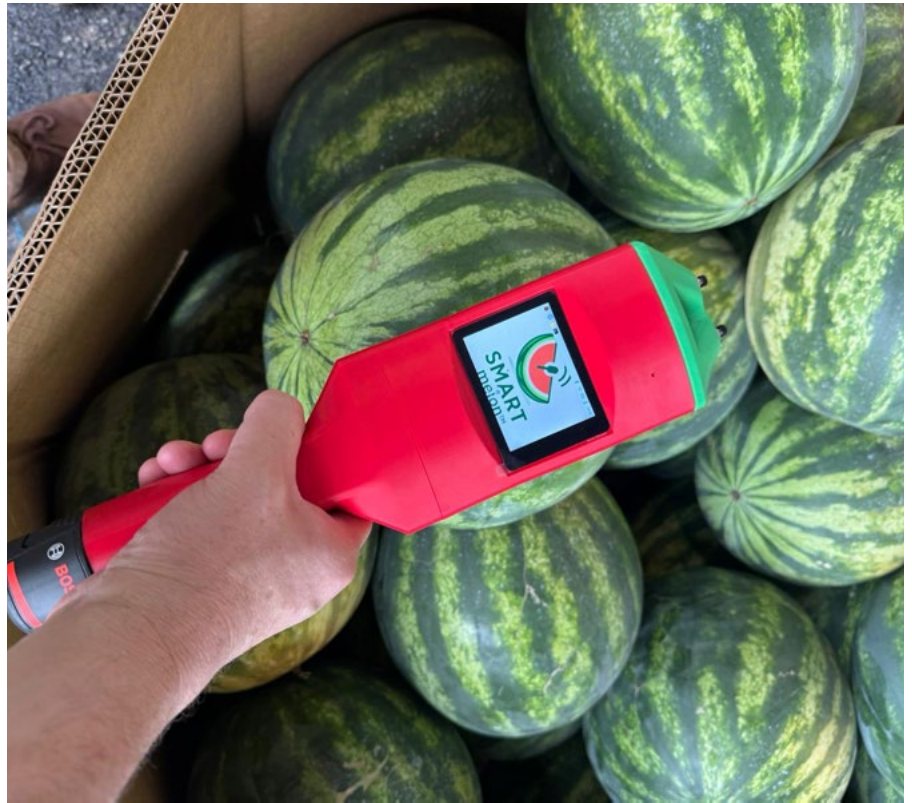
Spotlight:

From concept to on-farm impact

The Australian-Grown Innovation Build Program helps growers and industry test promising ideas in commercial environments before they are scaled. Twenty innovators have been selected to date.

In 2025/26, seven innovators progressed from the Australian-Grown Innovation Incubate Program to the Build Program, where they began testing their ideas with growers, supply chain businesses and partners. The cohort focused on challenges including climate risk, water use, labour, waste, crop insurance and supply chain transparency as areas critical to long-term sector resilience.

This program culminated in a Demo Day where participants showcased their solutions to growers, industry leaders, researchers and innovators. The event highlighted 10 practical ideas tackling real challenges across horticulture, with each participant presenting their innovation, sharing progress made through the program and demonstrating its potential impact on-farm and across the supply chain.



“The Australian-Grown Innovation Build Program has been invaluable in helping us develop and refine the SMART Melon business proposition and prepare for commercial success. Through access to experienced mentors, targeted masterclasses, industry connections and valuable real-world feedback, the program has accelerated our journey from concept to a practical commercial solution.

SMART Melon has the potential to help growers reduce waste, improve fruit quality, increase productivity and, ultimately, deliver a better and more consistent product to consumers. The support and insights provided through the Build Program have been instrumental in helping us turn that vision into a credible commercial opportunity.”

SMART Melon Chairman,
Rod Attwood

Spotlight:

Accelerating practical on-farm automation

Frontiers is helping bring affordable robotics closer to growers through the Hort Innovation Venture Fund. In 2025/26, the fund invested in agritech start-up Agovor as part of a \$3 million pre-seed investment.

Agovor's autonomous eTractor system is designed to address challenges including labour constraints, rising input costs and pressure to improve efficiency. Built by growers to solve their own on-farm problems, the lightweight electric tractors operate autonomously across a range of conditions and can be paired with interchangeable attachments for tasks including mowing and spraying.

Early results are promising. Growers using the technology are reporting significant annual savings, alongside reductions in water and chemical use. The lightweight design is also helping improve soil health, while autonomous operation allows teams to focus on higher-value tasks.

The investment will support continued product development, new attachments and expanded manufacturing and service capability across Australia and New Zealand.

By investing in solutions such as Agovor, Frontiers is helping to accelerate technologies grounded in real grower needs, with the potential to make automation more accessible across horticulture.



Spotlight:

Strengthening fertiliser security through innovation

Frontiers is supporting technology that could help growers secure a more reliable and sustainable fertiliser supply. In 2025/26, the Hort Innovation Venture Fund invested in PlasmaLeap as part of a \$30 million Series A investment round.

PlasmaLeap is developing a way to produce ammonia and nitric acid – key fertiliser ingredients – using air, water and renewable electricity. The technology could enable fertiliser ingredients to be produced closer to farm, reducing reliance on global supply chains and exposure to price shocks.

Recent global disruptions have highlighted the vulnerability of fertiliser supply. By enabling decentralised, on-farm or local production, PlasmaLeap's technology could improve supply certainty while lowering emissions associated with conventional production.

The investment will support the development of pilot fertiliser hubs in Australia, expanded field trials and further development of the technology.

The investment supports a practical solution with the potential to strengthen fertiliser security and resilience across Australian horticulture.

Spotlight:

Making disease threats visible before they strike

Frontiers is supporting technology that is helping growers detect crop disease risks earlier and make more informed spray decisions. In 2025/26, the Hort Innovation Venture Fund invested in BioScout as part of a \$6.75 million funding round.

BioScout has developed real-time airborne disease detection technology that monitors more than 40 crop disease threats through a network of in-field sensors. By providing early warnings before disease becomes visible in crops, the technology enables growers to move from calendar-based fungicide programs to condition-based spraying.

The benefits are already being demonstrated in horticulture and other agricultural sectors. Growers using the technology can reduce spray applications and associated costs by up to 50 per cent, while maintaining crop protection and reducing unnecessary chemical use. The technology also supports more sustainable production by helping growers respond to actual disease risk rather than predicted risk.

The investment will support the expansion of BioScout's global disease surveillance network, strengthen its data and AI capabilities, and accelerate adoption of the technology across major growing regions around the world.

By investing in BioScout, Frontiers is helping advance practical technologies that improve decision-making on farm, strengthen biosecurity preparedness and support more sustainable crop production across horticulture.



"This investment is about more than technology, it's about trust. Every grower who adopts BioScout, whether in a Riverina orchard or a vineyard in California, adds proof that condition-based spraying works at scale. That's how a brand earns recognition: not through marketing, but through growers seeing lower spray costs and consistent fruit quality season after season.

Frontiers backing lets us build that recognition domestically and internationally at the same pace our science is proving itself in the field. We don't see reducing chemical inputs and maintaining high fruit quality as a trade-off, we see them as the same goal, and this funding lets us prove that to growers everywhere."

BioScout Chief Sales Officer,
Charles Simon

Spotlight:

Advancing automation in protected cropping

Frontiers is helping growers explore new ways to improve productivity, workplace safety and crop consistency through protected cropping innovation. In 2025/26, Frontiers supported the development and demonstration of automated pollination and spraying technology in collaboration with protected cropping partners including Flavorite.

The technology is designed to automate two labour-intensive greenhouse tasks: pollination and

crop spraying. By reducing reliance on manual processes, it helps growers address labour challenges while maintaining high standards of crop management.

Early results have demonstrated significant benefits. The technology delivered labour reductions of 70 to 80 per cent, with estimated savings of around \$25,000 per unit each year and an indicative payback period of approximately two years. Trials also showed

consistent pollination, improved fruit set, spray coverage equivalent to or better than manual application, reduced downtime and enhanced workplace safety through reduced chemical exposure.

The project is helping validate the commercial potential of automation in protected cropping environments and build confidence in its adoption across the sector.

Connecting expertise to investment

The Frontiers Advisory Network was established in 2025/26 to bring growers, industry representatives and subject matter experts into the co-investment process.

Advisors contribute at key stages, from early concept development through to investment decisions. Their technical, commercial and market knowledge helps assess whether proposed solutions are relevant, feasible and aligned with industry needs.

The network supports innovation partnerships, the Hort Innovation Venture Fund and Australian-Grown Innovation. Advisors also connect projects with growers, researchers and commercial partners who can help shape and deliver them.

Bringing this expertise into the process strengthens investment decisions, helping turn good ideas into better outcomes for Australian horticulture.

Driving commercial outcomes and protecting IP

Frontiers aims not only to develop new ideas, but also to ensure ideas translate into long-term value for Australian horticulture.

Hort Innovation's Intellectual Property Policy and Management Framework guides how intellectual property (IP) developed through co-investments is identified, used, protected and commercialised. This may include new technologies, tools, data or plant varieties.

Protecting and commercialising intellectual property can give industry access to valuable innovations, support improved or preferred market access, and generate returns through licensing and royalties.

When commercial returns are generated, they are reinvested into research and development, helping fund future innovation and extend the value created by earlier investments.

Royalties by industry for 2025/26	
Industry	Amount (\$)
Apple and pear	20,738
Almond	182,960
Avocado	15,965
Citrus	4,606
Dried tree fruit	97
Macadamia	106,376
Nursery	-2,874
Pineapple	17,513
Strawberry	427,999
Vegetable	10,050
Hort Innovation	13,137
Total	796,567

Our 2025/26 investment figures

Levy receipts by industry

Levy receipts by industry 2025/26			
Industry/Fund	R&D (\$)	Marketing (\$)	Total (\$)
Statutory Levy Funds			
Almond	2,894,313	–	2,894,313
Apple and pear	1,833,655	2,817,370	4,651,025
Avocado	4,175,031	6,878,246	11,053,277
Banana	2,010,237	4,281,058	6,291,295
Cherry	1,006,841	201,390	1,208,231
Chestnut	24,332	27,035	51,367
Citrus	2,933,589	431,096	3,364,685
Custard apple	75,426	0	75,426
Dried grape	67,328	42,349	109,677
Dried tree fruit	8,496	–	8,496
Lychee	100,527	45,703	146,230
Macadamia	1,381,996	2,581,769	3,963,765
Mango	593,374	791,165	1,384,539
Melon	799,295	–	799,295
Mushroom	1,053,755	2,849,041	3,902,796
Nursery	1,563,528	1,137,223	2,700,751
Olive	346,994	–	346,994
Onion	753,952	259,994	1,013,946
Papaya	185,540	184,687	370,227
Passionfruit	107,444	107,444	214,888
Persimmon	122,571	81,714	204,285
Pineapple	152,970	75,638	228,608
Potato – fresh	688,122	–	688,122
Potato – processing	465,113	–	465,113

Continued >>



Levy receipts by industry 2025/26 (continued)			
Industry/Fund	R&D (\$)	Marketing (\$)	Total (\$)
Statutory Levy Funds (continued)			
Prune	38,215	–	38,215
Raspberry and blackberry	322,234	–	322,234
Strawberry	678,662	–	678,662
Summerfruit	895,311	65	895,376
Sweetpotato	587,107	7,409	594,515
Table grape	990,803	990,802	1,981,605
Turf	418,425	104,606	523,031
Vegetable	12,179,690	–	12,179,690
Total statutory levies	39,454,876	23,895,805	63,350,681
Collective Industry Funds (Voluntary Levies)			
Almond	3,154,825	–	3,154,825
Blueberry	356,250	–	356,250
Pistachio	106,942	–	106,942
Processing tomato	178,422	–	178,422
Pyrethrum	796,432	–	796,432
Total voluntary levies	4,592,871	–	4,592,871
Total levy receipts	44,047,747	23,895,805	67,943,552

For more financial reporting, see the full Financial Report from **p99**.

R&D and marketing expenditure by fund

Expenditure by Fund 2025/26			
Industry/Fund	R&D (\$)	Marketing (\$)	Total (\$)
Almond	9,757,741	–	9,757,741
Apple and pear	3,435,228	2,092,390	5,527,618
Avocado	9,003,953	5,640,164	14,644,117
Banana	2,980,417	4,058,312	7,038,729
Blueberry	1,128,569	–	1,128,569
Cherry	1,892,439	283,038	2,175,477
Chestnut	137,339	31,487	168,826
Citrus	3,864,692	187,357	4,052,050
Custard apple	61,214	4,853	66,067
Dried grape	769,508	68,000	837,508
Dried Tree Fruit	18,983	–	18,983
Lychee	118,285	34,600	152,885
Macadamia	3,010,715	2,306,432	5,317,147
Mango	690,902	610,425	1,301,327
Melon	1,486,995	–	1,486,995
Mushroom	1,973,503	2,700,818	4,674,321
Nashi	86,678	–	86,678
Nursery	3,383,993	695,505	4,079,498
Olive	254,050	–	254,050
Onion	1,627,873	213,973	1,841,846
Papaya	207,345	105,435	312,781
Passionfruit	204,986	106,106	311,092
Persimmon	217,998	79,501	297,499
Pineapple	200,842	90,159	291,001
Pistachio	189,918	–	189,918
Potato – fresh	966,418	–	966,418
Potato – processing	660,710	–	660,710

Continued >>



Expenditure by Fund 2025/26 (continued)			
Industry/Fund	R&D (\$)	Marketing (\$)	Total (\$)
Processing tomato	214,852	–	214,852
Prune	107,802	–	107,802
Pyrethrum	1,428,620	–	1,428,620
Raspberry and blackberry	1,402,261	–	1,402,261
Strawberry	1,463,083	200,721	1,663,804
Summerfruit	1,815,376	28,204	1,843,580
Sweetpotato	479,260	133,544	612,804
Table grape	1,929,243	1,001,276	2,930,518
Turf	774,763	135,852	910,614
Vegetable	18,672,995	–	18,672,995
Other			
Grant Funding	920,318	–	920,318
Board Strategic Fund	6,011,568	–	6,011,568
Hort Innovation Frontiers Funds			
Advanced Production Systems	28,650,947	–	28,650,947
Biosecurity	9,726,169	–	9,726,169
Climate	250,000	–	250,000
Fruit Fly	280,000	–	280,000
Green Cities	3,063,213	–	3,063,213
Health, Nutrition and Food Safety	5,995,345	–	5,995,345
International Markets	11,184,236	–	11,184,236
Leadership and People	1,591,295	–	1,591,295
Hort Innovation Frontiers Venture Fund	502,561	–	502,561
Pollination	6,701,737	–	6,701,737
Strategic Research	–	–	–
Levy Collection Cost	2,251,973	763,696	3,015,669
Total	153,748,912	21,571,849	175,320,761

New R&D agreements in 2025/26

New R&D investments in 2025/26			
Project code	Project name	Key delivery partner	2025/26 Spend (\$)
AL24002	Almond market development and market access project	Almond Board of Australia	2,059,587
AL25001	Efficient almond orchard systems	Flinders University	586,151
AL25002	Pathway to carbon neutral whole orchard recycling in almond orchards – phase 2	Flinders University	124,632
AM25001	Asia Fruit Logistica – FY26/27 (R&D)	Pico Australia	(24,010)
AP23002	China market entry intelligence for Australian apple industry	Australian Table Grape Association	32,000
AP25001	Building capability program for emerging leaders	Apple and Pear Australia	33,925
AP25002	Apple and pear orchard benchmarking	Apple and Pear Australia	80,795
AP25003	PIPS 4 Profit program mid-term evaluation	Ag Econ	48,750
AP25004	Future Orchards – adoption and innovation in apples and pears	Apple and Pear Australia	1,115,315
AS24007	Drone-enabled bird management for Australian horticulture	Aerium Analytics	181,735
AS25003	Field validation and commercialisation R&D for carpophilus beetle lure	Agriculture Victoria Services	242,170
AS25006	Global biological control investigation and pathway identification study tour	Elders Rural Services Australia	22,799
AS25200	Smart and practical solutions for on-farm safety	Exxovantage	–
AS25201	Exoskeleton trials for safer and more productive horticulture	Exxovantage	10,490
AV24015	Avocado international retail quality benchmarking	Applied Horticultural Research	190,507
AV25001	Avocado domestic market development manager	Avocados Australia	309,807
AV25002	Avocado rootstock variety access	Western Australian Agriculture Authority (WAAA)	93,435
AV25003	Avocados FY26 foodservice program – educational masterclasses	Papaya PR	251,073
AV25005	Avocado – 2026 Gulfood tradeshow	Export Connect	99,999
AV25006	Avocado – 2026 Japan Supermarket Tradeshow	Relativ K.K.	50,880
AV25007	Avocado market readiness and engagement project	Avocados Australia	194,542
AV25009	AV22016 mid-term evaluation	Ag Econ	26,250
AV25012	Avocado biosecurity capacity building	University of Queensland (UQ)	245,138

Continued >>

New R&D investments in 2025/26 (continued)			
Project code	Project name	Key delivery partner	2025/26 Spend (\$)
AV250I3	Avocados retail quality, education & merchandising FY26	D2C (Direct 2 Consumer)	166,911
BA240O4	Discovering new sources of resistance for panama tropical race 4 (TR4)	University of Queensland (UQ)	116,917
BA250O1	Banana industry development and extension project	Department of Primary Industries QLD	423,437
BA250O2	Mid term review of BA210O1, BA210O3, BA210O4	Ag Econ	15,450
BY230O3	Revolutionising management of fruit and banana spotting bugs through genome empowerment	Queensland University of Technology (QUT)	147,154
BY240O3	Banana multi-pathogen diagnostics	Genics	140,000
BY240O4	Nursery sustainable plant production and biosecurity preparedness	Greenlife Industry Australia	1,281,946
BY250O1	Fumigation for different life stages of carpophilus truncatus in pistachios	Department of Primary Industries QLD	18,000
CH240O2	Chestnut industry communications and extension program	Chestnuts Australia	49,867
CH250O2	Generation of data – chestnut rot fungicide trials in chestnuts	OptiAg	34,104
CY250O3	International cherries launch events program – FY25/26	Helios Worldwide	85,000
CY240O5	Understanding the environmental impacts of cherry production for long term sustainability	Life Cycle Strategies	90,160
CY240O6	Cherry trade development and market access	Cherry Growers Australia	271,150
CY240O7	Cherry biosecurity plan review	Plant Health Australia	60,054
CY240O8	Cherries FY26 health credential research	Bite Communications	57,500
CY250O1	Cherry industry conference 2026	Cherry Growers Australia	46,200
CY250O2	Monitoring cherry supply chain quality	Delytics	229,880
CY250O3	International cherries launch events program – FY25/26	Terroir and Spice	55,000
CY250O4	Global cherry study tour – Chile 2026	Cherry Growers Australia	16,107
DG240O1	Dried grape production systems	Dried Fruits Australia	224,520
DG250O1	Dried grapes export strategy	Impact Advisors	31,000
DG250O2	Atmospheric water generators scoping study	Lyntra	14,000
DP250O1	Dried prune industry communications and extension program	Aus Prunes	38,315

Continued >>

New R&D investments in 2025/26 (continued)

Project code	Project name	Key delivery partner	2025/26 Spend (\$)
DP25OO2	Prune industry international study tour – 2026 IPA Congress (Italy)	Aus Prunes	29,258
HA25OO2	Strategic planning for crop protectants – 10 year focus and industry planning	Applebox Insights	126,750
HA25OO3	Japan-Australia Exchange Program FY26	Relativ K.K.	104,425
HA25OO5	Baseline of community trust in Australian horticulture	Voconiq	82,300
HA25OO7	Hort innovation impact update	Peanut Productions	300,000
HA25OO9	Horticulture insights strategy & roadmap	Velvet Onion	105,000
HA25OI6	China-Australia Horticulture Showcase	Syncret	22,000
HN24OO1	Reducing on-farm food waste and unlocking its value for grower profitability and sustainability	End Food Waste Australia	780,444
HN24OO4	Plus one serve: using what works to increase provision and consumption of vegetables in secondary school canteens	Deakin University	149,807
HN24OO5	Plus one serve: enhancing vegetable consumption through food literacy interventions in tertiary settings	Foodbank Victoria	95,400
HN25OO1	Plus one serve – understanding school based interventions to drive vegetable consumption – focus on pick of the crop.	Health & Wellbeing Queensland	239,487
LP242OO	India internship program	Western Sydney University	–
LP25OO2	Global grower leaders	International Fresh Produce Association (IFPA)	10,500
MC24OO4	Australian macadamia breeding and evaluation program	University of Queensland (UQ)	881,428
MC24OO9	Macadamia crop forecasting 2026–28	Department of Primary Industries QLD	62,976
MC25OO1	Macadamia international insights data	Nielsen IQ	124,106
MG25OO1	Generation of data – mango methoxyfenozide residue trials	Eurofins Kalyx	39,953
MG25OO3	Mango trade development project	Australian Mango Industry Association	98,239
MT24OO9	Improving management of leafrollers and chilli thrips in rubus and blueberry	NSW DPIRD	161,484
MT24OI0	Biosecurity support for the summerfruit & cherry industries	Cherry Growers Australia	386,732
MT24OI9	Horticulture Statistics Handbook FY2024–2027	Kynetec	900,000

Continued >>



New R&D investments in 2025/26 (continued)			
Project code	Project name	Key delivery partner	2025/26 Spend (\$)
MT24O21	High school education resources	Primary Industries Education Foundation Australia (PIEFA)	198,310
MT24O22	Nut biosecurity and implementation plan	Plant Health Australia	28,417
MT24O23	National agrichemical management program	AUSVEG	492,044
MT25OO1	Addressing herbicide resistance and control failures in ryegrass management for onions, carrots and rotational crops	AUSVEG	281,718
MT25OO2	Multi-industry mrl data access and maintenance investment	Australian Table Grape Association	170,000
MT25OO3	Quantum scan tracking FY25/26: veg+onion+mushroom	Quantium	219,136
MT25OO4	Mid-term reviews for industry development and extension projects	GHD	114,426
MT25OO5	Vegetable strategic agrichemical review process (SARP) 2026 updates	AGK Services	78,995
MT25OO6	Generation of data – rubus and strawberry mite efficacy and residue trials	AgPD	70,700
MT25OO7	Generation of data – berry residue trials	Living Farm	131,650
MT25OO8	MT22OO9 mid-term evaluation	Consulting & Implementation Services (CIS)	22,765
MT25OO9	Educational resources on the health and nutrition benefits of dried fruits	Bite Communications	80,000
MT25OI0	Cherries and summerfruit retail quality, education & merch FY26	D2C (Direct 2 Consumer)	423,350
MT25OI1	Horticulture trade data 2026-2028	S&P Global United Kingdom	116,895
MT25OI2	Generation of data – residues in custard apples and passionfruit	Syngenta Australia	20,000
MT25OI6	Veg SmartMargins – enterprise financial analysis tool	Redshift Creative	103,880
MT25OI7	Printing key vegetable, onion and potato resources	RM Consulting Group (RMCG)	87,936
MU25OO1	Mushroom consumer sentiment 2025	T Garage – Strategy and Research	76,400
MU25OO2	Mushroom training capability and knowledge exchange program 2026–2029	Australian Mushroom Growers Association	114,930
MU25OO3	Watch and act for mushroom food safety and risk management	Australian Mushroom Growers Association	64,428
MU25OO4	Mushroom – Fresh Logic demand data 2026	Kynetec	56,000
NY24OO5	Review of nursery industry biosecurity programs	RM Consulting Group (RMCG)	39,991

Continued >>

New R&D investments in 2025/26 (continued)			
Project code	Project name	Key delivery partner	2025/26 Spend (\$)
NY24OO6	Resourcing and diagnostic support for the nursery industry	Department of Primary Industries QLD	370,680
PF24OO1	Passionfruit industry communications and extension program	Passionfruit Australia	82,039
PH24OO2	Flies as effective pollinators for horticulture	SeedPurity	468,618
PH25OO1	National Bee Pest Surveillance Program	Plant Health Australia	914,797
PP23OO2	Grower-led commercial papaya variety evaluation	Papaya Australia	32,078
PP24OO2	Papaya market supply data capture and analysis 2025-2028	Papaya Australia	21,120
PT24OO2	Potato workforce training and leadership program	AUSVEG	188,253
PT25OO1	Project coordinator: an integrated disease management for the Australian potato industry	RM Consulting Group (RMCG)	43,512
PT25OO2	Biosecurity preparedness and strategy for the potato industry	Plant Health Australia	64,964
PW24OO1	Sweetpotato industry communications and extension program	Australian Sweetpotato Growers	101,940
RB25OO1	RB21000 mid-term review	RM Consulting Group (RMCG)	40,230
SF25OO1	Summer fruit biosecurity plan review	Plant Health Australia	70,676
SF25OO2	Summerfruit export data portal	Summerfruit Australia	20,850
SF25OO3	Export registration portal – summerfruit	Summerfruit Australia	52,711
ST24OO2	Identifying Australian horticulture specific emission reduction knowledge: gap analysis	RM Consulting Group (RMCG)	–
ST25OO1	Generation of data – bulb onions fusarium basal rot and nematode efficacy and residue data	Syngenta Australia	–
ST25OO3	Generation of data – lopper control in rubus	Censeo Field and Lab	13,165
ST25OO4	Generation of data – six-spotted mite, tea red spider mite control in avocados	Living Farm	21,400
ST25OO6	Generation of data – pineapple hexazinone trials	AgPD	6,981
TG25OO1	Table grape industry communications program	Australian Table Grape Association	560,000
VG23OI2	Careers in horticulture	AUSVEG	255,186
VG24OO7	Maximising carrot packout	Western Australian Agriculture Authority (WAAA)	490,066
VG24OI0	Vegetable industry communications program independent mid-term review	Consulting & Implementation Services (CIS)	33,000

Continued >>

New R&D investments in 2025/26 (continued)			
Project code	Project name	Key delivery partner	2025/26 Spend (\$)
VG24O15	Biosecurity Trakka – near real-time diagnosis and monitoring for plant biosecurity threat	NSW DPIRD	1,475,000
VG25OO1	Partnering with vegetablesWA to strengthen vegnet engagement of culturally and linguistically diverse communities	vegetablesWA	90,000
VG25OO3	Pilot program for recruiting and integrating skilled and semi-skilled workers into Australian horticultural enterprises.	AUSVEG	307,720
VG25OO5	Mid-term review of vegetable industry biosecurity and business continuity strategy (VegWatch) VG22OO4	Consulting & Implementation Services (CIS)	33,840
VG25OO6	Cross-RDC fall armyworm R&D facilitation	Jane Wightman Consulting	(6,725)
VG25OO8	National spray optimisation roadshow	AUSVEG	146,777
VM25OO1	Generation of data – melon residue trials, dimethoate for post-harvest use	AgPD	15,763
VM25OO2	Melon priority export market insights	Melons Australia	7,000
VM25OO3	Enhancing melon export opportunities to gulf countries	Export Connect	67,250
VM25OO5	Evaluating mechanical harvesting solutions for the australian melon industry	Melons Australia	60,200
VN24OO3	Rapid test and fungicide resistant screening for stemphylium leaf blight in onion	Metagen Australia	70,000
VN25OO1	Onion industry biosecurity strategy phase I	AUSVEG	96,938

Our marketing partners in 2025/26

Supplier	2025/26 Expenditure (\$)
Thinkerbell	11,717,038
Direct 2 Consumer	1,206,285
Australian Table Grape Association	1,000,429
Bastion Australia Pty Ltd T/A Bastion Amplify	601,200
Australian Macadamia Society	504,880
Papaya PR	504,272
Hopscotch Japan K.K.	388,465
Hopscotch Network SAS	334,967
Four Pillars Trading	334,000
Foodnews PR	239,000
Go Future Media	234,840
South Pole Australia	228,000
WA Farm Direct	214,850
Relativ*	212,750
Helios & Partners	202,171
Life Education NSW	160,000
Ink Spiller Communications	155,908
Bite Communications	144,493
Lansky Enterprises	142,500
Turf Australia	135,000
Australian Sweet Potato Growers	127,500
Trustee for Harvey Trust T/As Arlo Agency	110,000
All About Fresh Produce Sdn Bhd	100,000
QuikRelations	99,000



TREVISO
Mildura, Victoria

TREVISO is a family-owned table grape business in the Sunraysia region of Victoria. As both a grower and exporter, Anthony Poiner reflects the industry's strong focus on quality, international markets and continuous improvement, helping Australian table grapes maintain their reputation in premium export destinations.



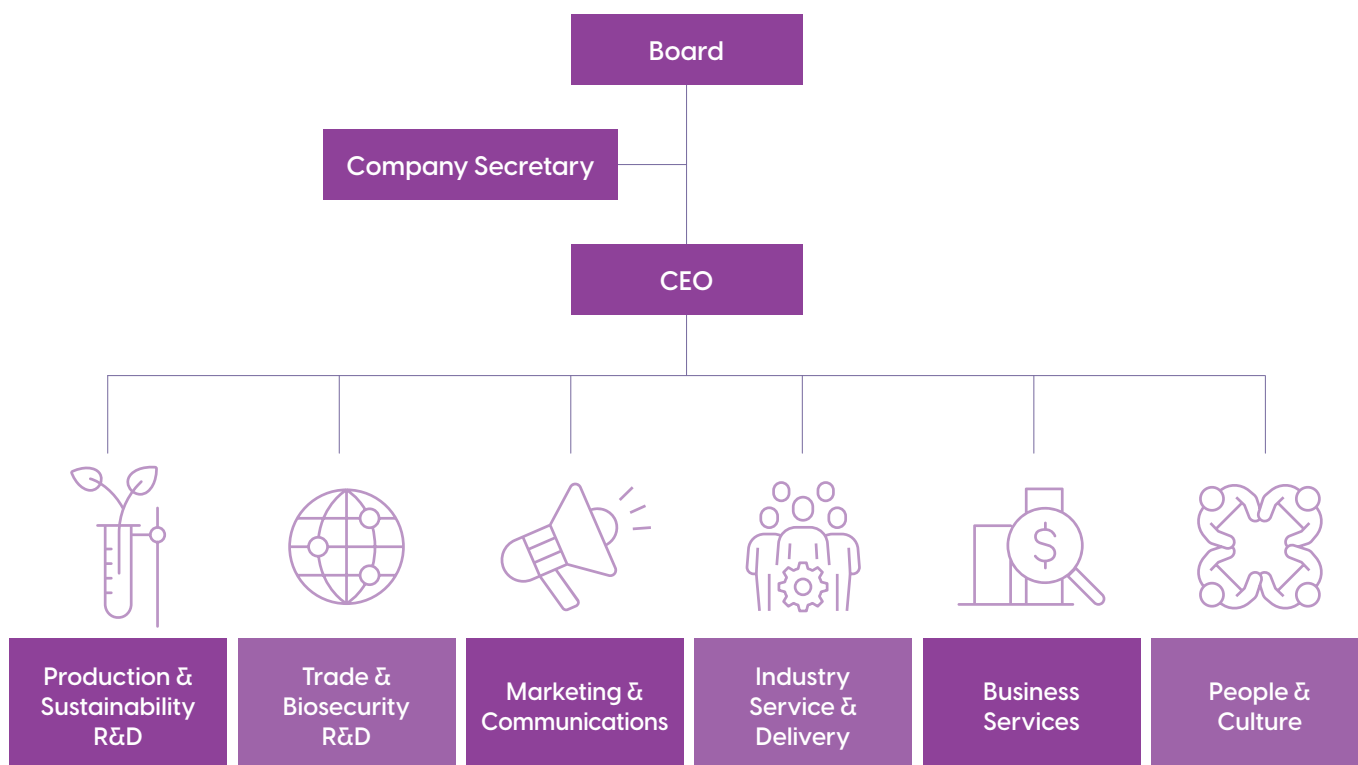
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Make the culture thrive

Strong people and strong relationships are central to delivering value to growers. We focus on building an engaged, capable and inclusive team within Hort Innovation, while investing in leadership, skills and knowledge across the horticulture sector.

Our organisational structure

Hort Innovation's structure is set up to deliver on the *Hort Innovation Strategy 2024-2026*.



This chart represents Hort Innovation as at 30 June 2026.

Our head office is in Sydney, with satellite offices in Brisbane and Melbourne, plus team members located in regional areas. Our structure is regularly reviewed to ensure we have the right skills and resources to achieve our strategic goals.

Our leadership

Meet the Hort Innovation Executive team



Brett Fifield
Chief Executive Officer

Brett joined Hort Innovation as CEO in 2022 and is committed to delivering real impact for growers and those across the supply chain.

Brett has more than 20 years' experience in agriculture, including 10 years in senior executive roles working across agriculture, biosecurity, food safety, fisheries, policy and cabinet, business performance, communications and engagement. He grew up on a mixed farm near Wagga Wagga, NSW, and spent the early part of his career as a regional journalist.

Brett is a Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.



Dr Mila Bristow
General Manager
Trade & Biosecurity R&D

Mila has more than 20 years' experience as a plant scientist and manager, with a passion for complex questions about how we can improve sustainable production and trade outcomes for Australia's plant industries. Before joining Hort Innovation, Mila was the General Manager Partnerships and Innovation at Plant Health Australia. Mila has a PhD in Forest Science, an MBA and is a Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.



Andrew Francey
General Manager
Industry Service & Delivery

Andrew has more than 20 years' experience in horticulture across commercial, operations and supply chain executive roles. Before joining Hort Innovation, Andrew was Chief Commercial Officer at OneHarvest and was Chair and non-executive Director with PMAANZ. Andrew has formal qualifications in Business, Applied Finance and is a Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.



Dr Anthony Kachenko
General Manager
Production & Sustainability R&D

Anthony has more than 20 years' experience in Australian horticulture, with extensive experience along the agribusiness value chain. Anthony joined Hort Innovation in 2014 and has held several senior roles during his time at the company. Before joining Hort Innovation, Anthony held senior policy and leadership roles at Greenlife Industry Australia. Anthony has a PhD in Agriculture and is a Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.



Karina Keisler
General Manager
Marketing & Communications

Karina has a wealth of leadership experience in marketing, communications and stakeholder engagement. Karina has been at the forefront of reputation turnarounds for Cricket Australia, NBN Co, Vodafone Australia and Telstra. Karina has a Master of Communication, postgraduate degrees in Marketing and Human Resources Management and is a Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

Continued >>



Our leadership (continued)

Meet the Hort Innovation Executive team



Mona Maidment
General Manager
People & Culture

Mona has worked in people and culture for more than 20 years, with experience across telecommunications, healthcare, media and entertainment. Before joining Hort Innovation, Mona was Head of HR at Foxtel. She has a wealth of experience across all aspects of human resource management with a particular passion for organisational culture, employee engagement, and leadership development. Mona has a Bachelor of Arts and an Executive Certificate in Public Leadership from Harvard Kennedy School.



Andrew Philpotts
Chief Financial Officer

Andrew has extensive experience in resources, packaging and building products including more than a decade as Chief Financial Officer (CFO) of Orica's Australia Asia business. Andrew has experience across strategy, business management, operations management and senior business partnering. Andrew has a Master of Commerce, is a CPA and a Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.



Melanie Weir
Executive Head –
Performance

Melanie has more than 20 years' experience across public and private sector organisations in project management, procurement and finance operations. She joined Hort Innovation in 2017 and is responsible for initiatives that enhance organisational effectiveness, operational excellence and business performance across the company. A passionate advocate for organisational improvement and capability development, she holds formal training in project management and is a Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

Our Board and Committees

Board of Directors

Hort Innovation's Board is responsible for governing the company and ensuring that we act on behalf of our members and other stakeholders.

The following decisions and outcomes are highlights from 2025/26:

- Development of the Hort Innovation Strategy 2031 and the People Plan 2031.
- Oversight of the implementation of the Strategic Horticulture Investment Framework (SHIFt) program to grow impact and streamline investment planning, including the development of impact indicators.
- Development and rollout of the Investing for Performance program.
- Engagement with industry and stakeholders, including stakeholders in Canberra, growers in Far North Queensland and attending Hort Connections in Adelaide in June 2026.
- Planning for Board succession, including annual review of the Board Skills Matrix, and leadership transition from the current Chair to the current Deputy Chair.
- Enhancement of the governance framework for the Hort Innovation Board Strategic Fund.
- Oversight of investments in key projects such as Plus One Serve and the FASTA program.
- Training on Directors' Duties, employment and workplace health and safety obligations including psychosocial risks.
- Oversight of leveraging Artificial Intelligence (AI) within the organisation.

Investment Committee

The Investment Committee (IC) advises the Board on investment strategy, performance, and risk. It is also tasked with reviewing high-value proposals before they are tendered or contracted.

The following decisions and outcomes are highlights from 2025/26:

- Development and oversight of Hort Innovation's Annual Investment Plan including strategic levy and Frontiers co-investment.
- Visits to growers in Far North Queensland.
- Reviewing insights from the Grower and Partner Survey (GAPs).
- Overseeing the enhancement of the impact assessment framework to enhance understanding and monitoring of evaluation and impact assessment in relation to investment in R&D.
- Reviewing and approving a number of projects.

Audit & Risk Committee

The Audit & Risk Committee (ARC) is integral to Hort Innovation's proactive risk management strategy, meeting quarterly to enhance and ensure the integrity of our financial and non-financial risk management frameworks and systems.

The following decisions and outcomes are highlights from 2025/26:

- Enhancement of the compliance management system.
- Consideration of opportunities in relation to sustainability reporting.
- Oversight of the implementation of AI at Hort Innovation.
- Horizon scanning for new and emerging risks.
- The finalisation of a number of internal audits conducted by an external firm.
- Oversight of testing the organisation's Business Continuity Plan.
- Review of key financial and compliance policies to build on previous work to refresh and streamline the organisation's policy suite.
- The presentation of the 2025/26 financial statements to the Board and regular review of year-to-date financial performance.

In March 2026, the Board announced a planned leadership transition, with Chair Julie Bird stepping down from the role at the 2026 Annual General Meeting. Following the AGM, Deputy Chair John Said is expected to assume the role of Chair, subject to formal appointment by the Board. The planned transition reflects the Board's commitment to strong governance and orderly succession planning.

Get to know Hort Innovation's Board of Directors by reading their profiles from p102.

Continued >>

Our Board and Committees (continued)

People & Performance Committee

The People & Performance Committee (PPC) provides strategic advice and assistance for the Hort Innovation Executive team regarding Hort Innovation's people.

The following decisions and outcomes are highlights from 2025/26:

- Consideration of the results of the annual Grower & Partner Survey (GAPs).
- Oversight of the company's strategy goals and metrics, including setting the company scorecard and oversight of the results.
- Ongoing enhancement and strengthening of the organisation's Work Health & Safety (WH&S) governance.
- Oversight of the organisation's WH&S risk management.

- Oversight of the results from the Employee Engagement Survey, and development of an action plan to address feedback received via the survey.
- Oversight of the work undertaken by the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Working Groups.
- Consideration of the Board Evaluation process for CY2026: overseeing the process for engaging a consultant to undertake the evaluation.
- Consideration of the Board Education program.
- Review and consideration of the organisation's Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA) Report.
- Annual talent and succession planning processes and plans.

Director Nomination Committee

The Director Nomination Committee (DNC) undertakes the process of candidate nominations for the Hort Innovation Board, in accordance with the constitution.

In 2025/26, the DNC engaged a recruitment firm to carry out a national search for new directors, assessed applications for the Board vacancies taking into consideration the Hort Innovation Board Skills Matrix, conducted interviews of short-listed candidates and nominated appropriate and highly skilled candidates for consideration at the 2025 Annual General Meeting. Four candidates were nominated for two Board vacancies.

The DNC comprised John Said, Deputy Chair at Hort Innovation; Professor Robert Clark, independent eminent person; Paul Denny, DAFF representative; and Jane Harris, levy payer representative nominated by DAFF.



Our team at a glance

	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
Gender split (Executive)	 40% Female 60% Male	 35% Female 65% Male	 44% Female 56% Male	 41% Female 59% Male	 56% Female 44% Male
FTE	86	83	90	97	99
Gender split (Whole company)	 60% Female 40% Male	 62% Female 38% Male	 64% Female 36% Male	 64% Female 36% Male	 68% Female 32% Male
Generation split	 8% Boomers 48% Gen X 39% Gen Y 5% Gen Z	 8% Boomers 55% Gen X 30% Gen Y 7% Gen Z	 7% Boomers 49% Gen X 37% Gen Y 7% Gen Z	 7% Boomers 49% Gen X 32% Gen Y 12% Gen Z	 6% Boomers 45% Gen X 32% Gen Y 17% Gen Z

Impact through collaboration

PRIORITY 4.1

Collaborative and customer focused

Collaboration is key to the success of a prosperous horticulture sector. Strong relationships with growers, industry bodies and delivery partners help Hort Innovation understand priorities, improve how we work and deliver better outcomes for the horticulture sector.

Strengthening our relationships with key stakeholders

Peak Industry Body Forum

At the 2025 Peak Industry Body Forum in Brisbane, discussions focused on how we could work together more effectively to deliver outcomes for growers.

At the forum, we reported that procurement and contracting timelines had reduced by 12 per cent compared to the previous year, while average contract signing time had fallen from ten days to seven days. New communication measures were also introduced to provide delivery partners with greater visibility during the tender process.

The forum also marked the launch of Hort Innovation's Productivity Report, designed to better understand the drivers of productivity across Australian horticulture and inform future investments. This work was subsequently supported through targeted grower communications, a national webinar series and ongoing discussions about strengthening business, financial and foundational capability across the sector.

Delivery Partner Forums

Hort Innovation also held two national Delivery Partner Forums in November 2025 and May 2026, attracting almost 370 participants. Attendees particularly valued updates on industry priorities, investment planning, commercialisation, project delivery and future strategy.

Marketing Showcase webinar

Held online in November 2025, the Marketing Showcase webinar gave growers and industry stakeholders a behind-the-scenes look at how Hort Innovation's marketing programs are developed, delivered and measured. Through a series of campaign spotlights from across horticulture, the webinar demonstrated how industry collaboration, consumer insights and data-driven decision making are helping drive demand for Australian-grown produce and maximise the impact of growers' marketing investments.

Bringing expert advice to project delivery

Hort Innovation team members contribute specialist knowledge to help levy-funded R&D projects stay focused on industry needs and intended outcomes. In 2025/26, team members participated in more than 120 Project Reference Groups, providing expert input to support projects as they progress. They also contributed to external committees, sharing subject matter expertise and strengthening collaboration across the horticulture sector. These contributions help ensure that levy investments draw on relevant expertise and practical industry insight.



Communicating and connecting

PRIORITY 4.1

Collaborative and customer focused

Hort Innovation's communications function plays two distinct roles: keeping growers and industry stakeholders informed about the outcomes of industry investments, and promoting Australian horticulture by sharing its people, progress and impact with broader audiences.

Inaugural Impact Update

In June 2026, Hort Innovation delivered its inaugural Impact Update, a first-of-its-kind forum that brought growers together to connect, collaborate and hear how their investments are supporting the long-term profitability and resilience of Australian horticulture.

With more than 90 growers in attendance, the Impact Update focused on what long-term success looks like for growers: profitable, sustainable businesses that can manage costs, navigate risk and adapt as conditions change.

Held alongside Hort Connections, the event took a whole-of-supply chain view, with insights from industry leaders spanning productivity, demand and value, biosecurity and risk, and exports and market access. Growers also shared first-hand experiences of how investments are translating into better decisions, stronger margins and reduced risk on farm.

Hort Innovation's communication channels

In 2025/26, we strengthened the channels we use to share investment outcomes and promote the sector:

- *Growing Innovation* brings investment outcomes to life through stories across horticulture. In 2025/26, it evolved from a newsletter published monthly to a bi-monthly interactive digital publication.
- The Hort Innovation website gives growers and industry access to articles, resources and project information. In 2025/26, a new website launched with an improved user experience, smarter search and a refreshed look and feel.
- Our social media channels share project updates, grower profiles and industry news. As of 30 June 2026, the channels had a combined follower base of around 40,000 people.
- Targeted media releases and industry outreach amplify awareness about Australian horticulture to the wider agriculture sector and beyond. In 2025/26, we achieved:
 - 2703 pieces of media coverage (867 broadcast, including increased presence with regional TV news and ABC Landline, and 1836 online and print).
 - Two high-profile, Hort Innovation-owned research reports launched (Australian Horticulture Statistics Handbook and Factors Driving Horticulture Productivity) via 298 pieces of media coverage secured.
- The Events Sponsorship Program helps growers share knowledge, build networks, and celebrate innovation. In 2025/26, the program supported 16 industry events.

Levy-funded industry communication programs

We invest in a range of levy-funded communications programs to share the outcomes of research and development and relevant marketing investments with growers and the broader industry. This work aims to keep growers up to date with research advances, inform potential practice change and provide valued opportunities to connect and share knowledge.

Each communications program is designed specifically around industry needs and grower preferences, and will often include conferences, field days and workshops.

In 2025/26:

- 32 levy-paying industries had a communications program.
- 57 grower information magazines were produced.
- 433 e-newsletters were distributed.
- 25 industry websites were maintained.
- 49 social media platforms were supported.
- Industry communications reached 388,903 industry stakeholders.

Delivery partners are actively involved in SuppHORT, Hort Innovation's industry communications community of practice. SuppHORT provides a forum to share insights and achievements, work through common challenges and strengthen collaboration across industry communications programs.

A strategic commitment to our people

PRIORITY 4.2

High performance, inclusive culture

Our ability to deliver high-quality outcomes for growers and industry depends on having a capable, confident and well-supported team. In 2025/26, we strengthened our approach to workforce development through a new People Plan, continued investment in leadership and learning, and further development of our capability framework.

Our inaugural People Plan

The Hort Innovation People Plan 2031 sets the direction for how we build the workforce, leadership and capabilities needed to support our strategy and contribute to a prosperous and sustainable horticulture industry driven by innovation.

Our People Plan priorities are to:

- Unlock our team's potential by building strong leadership.
- Shape the future of work by empowering our people to thrive in a data-driven, digitally enabled workplace.
- Drive sustained high performance by strengthening connection, clarity and consistency across our teams.
- Power success now and into the future by growing and aligning talent and capability to our strategy.

Other highlights from 2025/26 included:

- Capability framework** – A new framework was developed to define the capabilities required for all roles at Hort Innovation to support more consistent performance across the company.
- Leadership development program** – The second delivery of our flagship leadership program began, continuing to build leadership capability across the organisation.
- Wellbeing** – The wellbeing program continued as a core part of our training offering, supporting the physical, mental and emotional wellbeing of team members.
- External learning** – Around 30 per cent of team members participated in external certifications and technical and industry-focused workshops, including IFPA Executive Programs.
- Internal learning** – Capability-aligned workshops were delivered in-house, supporting consistent development across the organisation.



Diversity drives innovation

A workforce that reflects the diversity of the communities we serve brings different perspectives to our work and supports better decision-making and innovation. We are committed to creating a workplace where all employees feel supported, respected and valued, so that we can deliver the best we can for growers.

In 2025/26, our six Diversity, Equity and Inclusion working groups – Age, All Abilities, Culture and Heritage, First Nations People, Gender and Pride – continued to implement our DEI plan through employee-led activity, awareness campaigns and practical initiatives.

During the year, we also made progress with our commitment to reconciliation through the launch of our inaugural Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP). Supported by our First Nations working group, early initiatives included developing a Hort Innovation Acknowledgment of Country to embed reconciliation into our culture and ways of working.

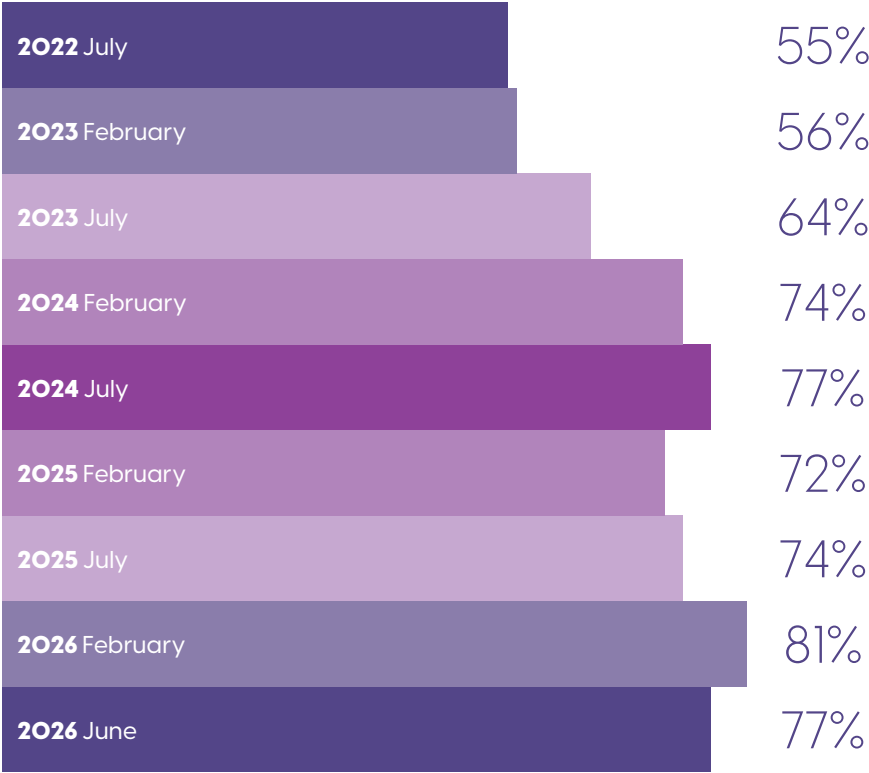
Empowering our people

PRIORITY 4.3
Empower our people

Employee engagement is an important measure of the strength of our culture and the experience of our people. Annual staff surveys help us understand where we are performing well and where further focus is needed.

In June 2026, our employee engagement score was 77 per cent, 22 percentage points higher than in July 2022, when the annual survey began.

Our culture was also externally recognised in 2025/26 through two awards: the Hyer Breakthrough Culture Award – Growth Edition and Gold in the Brandon Hall Group Excellence Award for our onboarding program.



Living our values

Our values guide how we work together to deliver outcomes for the Australian horticulture sector. Each year we measure whether our team feels aligned with our values through our employee survey. In June 2026, our overall values factor received a 93 per cent favourable rating, an increase of 44 percentage points since July 2023.

Cultivating tomorrow's leaders, today

PRIORITY 4.4

Invest in industry capability

A strong pipeline of skilled and confident leaders is essential to the long-term success of horticulture. We invest in leadership and capability-building programs that help growers and emerging professionals develop the skills, knowledge and networks needed to navigate change, make informed decisions and contribute to the future of the Australian horticulture industry.



In 2025/26, we continued to support national programs including Nuffield Australia Farming Scholarships, AgriFutures Horizon Scholarships, International Fresh Produce Association Produce Executive Program and the National Farmers' Federation Diversity in Agriculture Leadership Program.

These national programs were complemented by industry-specific leadership programs and study tours that connected participants with new ideas, global expertise and industry peers.

Global insights, local impact

International study tours are giving Australian growers direct access to global expertise, new technologies and proven practices that can be considered for Australian conditions. They also strengthen connections between growers, researchers and industry leaders, building capability, supporting innovation and improving productivity, sustainability and resilience.

A targeted tour to Europe, including Fruit Logistica in Berlin, helped growers understand how biological inputs can be adopted effectively in Australian systems, and a new tour was announced to support attendance at the Global Produce & Floral Show, building leadership capability and global awareness across the industry.

Other industry-specific study tour programs underway include:

- **Almonds** – Tours to Spain and Portugal, and the United States (California) will focus on innovations including high-density systems and self-compatible varieties, while strengthening international research and industry connections.
- **Cherry** – A tour to Chile focused on large-scale production and export systems, including fruit quality, postharvest handling and market access.
- **Melon** – Tours to the United States, Spain, Italy, Europe and Southeast Asia will connect growers with global innovations in production, supply chains and emerging markets.
- **Mushroom** – A three-year program combining inbound and outbound international tours will strengthen access to global expertise, including overseas conferences, training programs and on-farm learning opportunities.
- **Vegetable and onion** – International study tours to leading horticultural regions and global events will expose growers to cutting-edge research, technologies and practices to improve productivity and sustainability.



Building the next generation of horticulture leaders

In 2025/26, industry-specific leadership and capability programs continued to help emerging and established leaders build the skills, confidence and networks needed to navigate change, drive innovation and support future growth.

Programs included:

- **Almond** – A structured program developing emerging leaders across the supply chain, building confidence and strategic decision-making to support productivity, innovation and long-term industry success.
- **Apple and pear** – A multi-year training program, including technical and leadership courses at Tatura SmartFarm, building a pipeline of skilled leaders ready to meet evolving industry challenges.
- **Macadamia** – A practical masterclass program upskilling managers with technical knowledge and leadership capability to address skills shortages and improve orchard performance and sustainability.
- **Nursery** – A tailored leadership program preparing emerging leaders across the supply chain, strengthening industry capability and supporting strategic decision-making.
- **Potato** – A dedicated training and leadership fund supporting workforce development through scholarships, study tours and targeted training, enhancing on-farm decision-making and skills.
- **Turf** – The 'NxGen' program fostering the next generation of turf producers through professional development, collaboration and year-round learning, supporting succession planning and innovation.
- **Vegetable** – The Growing Leaders program building a diverse network of capable leaders across the supply chain, strengthening industry collaboration and driving innovation and sustainability.



Spotlight:

Nuffield scholar brings global nitrogen insights home

Through a Hort Innovation-supported Nuffield Scholarship, Stephanie Tabone studied farming systems across Australia, Europe and North America to investigate how legumes could help growers manage nitrogen more effectively.

Working directly with growers trialling legumes, she developed practical guidance that can be applied progressively and adapted to individual farming systems. Her work indicates that, when managed well, legumes can reduce fertiliser nitrogen use by 20–40 per cent while improving soil structure and biological activity.

The findings are now being translated into extension resources and on-farm conversations, helping growers test the approach, learn from the results and determine what works in their conditions.

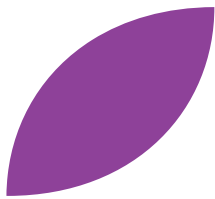
Growing stronger industries through knowledge, innovation and adoption

PRIORITY 4.4

Invest in industry capability

Across Australian horticulture, Hort Innovation invests in industry development, extension and adoption programs that help growers turn research into practical action.

Through field days, demonstration trials, workshops, on-farm support, grower networks, digital resources and one-on-one advice, these programs build skills, improve decision making and help growers respond to emerging challenges.



Spotlight:

Nationwide VegNET program

One of the vegetable industry's key levy-funded investments, VegNET is tasked with keeping Australian vegetable growers informed about current R&D activities, results and resources – supporting the adoption of industry best practice and bolstering vegetable productivity and profitability in key growing areas across the country.

The program is nationally coordinated by AUSVEG and delivered 'on-the-ground' by regional development officers (RDOs) in key vegetable-growing regions who are responsible for developing and executing regional extension plans. This includes identifying each region's key priority issues and key regional

resources and links – a critical step in ensuring growers receive assistance and information that meets their needs and will help them grow better crops and operate more efficient and profitable businesses.

In 2025/26, the RDOs visited an average of two vegetable farms every day, listening to growers and linking them with the information and resources they need. To date, 50 per cent of vegetable growers across the country have been directly engaged with the VegNET program, accounting for 68 per cent of the total area under vegetable production.



Other programs supported during 2025/26 included:

- 🍇 **Almond** – Helping growers adopt best practice, improve business performance and access practical tools, technical resources and expert support.
- 🍏 **Apple and pear** – Supporting growers to improve orchard productivity, fruit quality and profitability through practical learning, demonstrations and peer-to-peer knowledge sharing.
- 🥑 **Avocado** – Providing regionally tailored advice and best practice resources to improve fruit quality, productivity and business performance.
- 🍌 **Banana** – Turning research into practical on-farm outcomes through demonstration trials, grower engagement and targeted extension support.
- 🍇 **Berries** – Connecting growers with the latest research, technologies and practical tools to support productivity and continuous improvement.
- 🍒 **Cherry** – Improving access to research, technology and industry knowledge to help growers boost efficiency, resilience and export readiness.
- 🍌 **Custard apple** – Helping growers improve production, postharvest practices and decision making through targeted industry development and knowledge sharing.
- 🍇 **Dried grape** – Providing growers with benchmarking, training and extension activities that support higher productivity, quality and business performance.
- 🌰 **Macadamia** – Strengthening grower capability and on-farm decision making through practical resources, local networks and improved access to industry data.
- 🥭 **Mango** – Building industry capability and promoting the adoption of innovations that improve yield, quality, profitability and sustainability.
- 🥥 **Papaya** – Supporting growers to improve disease management, soil health and sustainability through trials, workshops and practical resources.
- 🍍 **Pineapple** – Giving growers access to trials, production data and industry knowledge that supports innovation and long-term industry sustainability.
- 🌰 **Pistachio** – Building grower capability and accelerating adoption of best practice to support a rapidly expanding Australian industry.
- 🥔 **Potato** – Connecting growers with regionally relevant expertise, research and resources that improve farm performance and profitability.
- 🍅 **Processing tomato** – Supporting growers with on-farm trials, benchmarking and extension activities that drive profitable and sustainable production.
- 🍌 **Summerfruit** – Helping growers access the latest research and practical insights to improve fruit quality, innovation and industry sustainability.
- 🍇 **Table grape** – Providing growers with the tools and information needed to manage risk, adapt to change and future-proof their businesses.
- 🌱 **Turf** – Supporting turf businesses with training, research and industry development activities that strengthen skills and create new opportunities.
- 🥬 **Vegetable** – Delivering regionally focused support that helps growers adopt research outcomes and improve productivity and profitability.

These investments ensure growers have access to the knowledge, networks and practical support they need to adopt innovation, improve productivity and build resilient, profitable businesses.



Smart Berries
Forth, Tasmania

Smart Berries Australia is a grower, distributor and marketer of premium quality blueberries, raspberries and blackberries. They have farms located across Australia to provide berries all year round.

6

Work simply and effectively

Good governance, transparency and truly listening to what government, growers and research partners want us to hear are the elements that underpin Hort Innovation and allow us to work simply and effectively with stakeholders.

Ensuring good governance

PRIORITY 5.1

Quality compliance and governance

Strong governance, clear accountability and efficient systems help us deliver better outcomes for growers and work effectively with industry, government and research partners. We are committed to being transparent, listening to feedback and continuously improving how we plan, manage and report our work.

Our Constitution

Hort Innovation is guided by our Constitution, which outlines the organisation's purpose and our broad priorities as the research and development corporation for Australian horticulture. It is available on our website.

At the Annual General Meeting (AGM) on 28 November 2025, members approved amendments, primarily to reflect the recent changes to legislation and the new Statutory Funding Agreement (SFA) with the Commonwealth.

Our legislation and governance principles

Hort Innovation operates within the requirements of legislation and governance principles relevant to a research and development corporation, a not-for-profit and registered charity and a corporate entity. These include:

- Primary Industries Levies and Charges Disbursement Act 2024 (Cth).
- Primary Industries Levies and Charges Disbursement (Declared Bodies) Rules 2024.
- Primary Industries Levies and Charges Disbursement (Horticultural Industry Body) Declaration 2024.
- Corporations Act 2001 (Cth).
- Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012 (Cth).
- The Australian Institute of Company Directors (AICD) Not for Profit Governance Principles 3rd Edition.
- Our Code of Conduct.

Hort Innovation is also subject to the reporting requirements under the Modern Slavery Act 2018 (Cth). We submit an annual modern slavery statement outlining the steps we have taken to mitigate the risk of modern slavery in our operations and supply chain.





Our Statutory Funding Agreement

Hort Innovation has a 10-year funding agreement in place with the Commonwealth Government (the Statutory Funding Agreement 2024–2035). The agreement takes a principles-based approach to reporting and accountability and requires us to demonstrate our performance to DAFF against five key performance principles and 14 key performance indicators each financial year.

The five key performance principles cover:

- 1. Stakeholder engagement** – Engaging stakeholders to identify research and development activities and associated priorities that provide benefits to the industry.
- 2. Research and development and marketing activities** – Ensuring research and development activities, marketing activities and associated priorities are strategic, collaborative and targeted to improve profitability, productivity, competitiveness and preparedness for future opportunities and challenges through a balanced portfolio.
- 3. Collaboration** – Undertaking strategic and sustained cross-industry and cross-sectoral collaboration that addresses shared challenges and draws on experience from other sectors.
- 4. Governance** – Ensuring governance arrangements and practices fulfil legislative requirements and align with contemporary Australian best practice for open, transparent and proper use and management of funds.

5. Monitoring and evaluation –

Demonstrating positive outcomes and delivery of research and development activities, marketing activities and associated benefits to levy payers, charge payers and the Australian community in general, and show continuous improvement in governance and administrative efficiency.

Each year, we meet with DAFF to demonstrate performance against these five principles and their corresponding performance indicators. Information about this process is published on our website.

Managing risk and compliance

Hort Innovation is committed to building trust with all stakeholders through quality compliance and governance processes.

Hort Innovation's Compliance Policy sets the Board's expectations for a culture of acting lawfully, ethically and responsibly. It is supported by policies and procedures covering legislative and contractual obligations, our Code of Conduct, good governance principles, and ethical and community standards.

Employees have access to company policies and procedures through an online portal. New employees complete compliance training as part of onboarding, with refresher training and attestation required annually.

In 2025/26, we continued to review company policies to ensure they were fit for purpose, easy to understand and had clear accountabilities. Hort Innovation's Intellectual Property Policy and Procurement Policy were an area of particular focus.

Critical business support services such as human resources, information technology, intellectual property, communications and finance are well established with skilled knowledge, processes and systems to ensure the ongoing management of financial and non-financial risk and compliance.

We also further streamlined our compliance management system to improve accessibility and reporting to management and the Board. Our annual Letters of Assurance process provides a clear line of accountability from General Managers through the Chief Financial and Chief Executive Officer to the Board Chair. The Directors' Report is the final step in this compliance framework.

Our Risk Management Policy sets out the Board's expectations with regard to risk management. It is supported by a Risk Management Framework, which the Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) reviews annually to ensure it remains appropriate for the level of risk the company is prepared to accept.

In 2025/26, we continued to embed our Risk Management Framework through new training and tools designed to strengthen risk awareness and support a positive risk culture across the organisation.

Continued >>



Ensuring good governance (continued)

Risk Appetite Statement

At Hort Innovation, we embrace a culture which recognises and manages risk. To achieve our strategy and to create impact for growers requires us to understand, manage and, where appropriate, accept risk.

Our Risk Appetite Statement considers the most significant risks we face in pursuing our strategy. This statement is approved by the Board annually and sets out its appetite for risk and tolerance limits in identified key risk areas.

Hort Innovation considers risks in three categories – company risks, investment risks and external risks:

● **Company risks** are risks that could impact delivering our strategic objectives. The Risk Appetite Statement includes key risk areas for the company such as strategy, conduct of People & Culture, Work, Health & Safety (WH&S) compliance, financial, operations and reputation.

● **Investment risks** are risks associated with projects and programs. The Risk Appetite Statement includes key risk areas for investment risks such as delivery partner performance, Frontiers, strategic levy and the investment process.

● **External risks** are from external sources and are beyond the reach of risk appetites set by the Board as there are no current controls or treatments that can mitigate them. However, given these risks may become either company, investment or WH&S risks, they are still monitored and considered by Management with regular reporting to the Board.

The full Risk Appetite Statement is a cornerstone of our Risk Management Framework. It guides employees in their roles and is supported by policies, guidelines, enterprise risk reporting and training.

The Executive team is responsible for compliance with this Risk Appetite Statement, the Risk Management Policy and related guidelines.

The Risk Management Committee (RMC), comprising senior management and the Governance and Risk team, meets quarterly in advance of each Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) meeting. The principal objective of the RMC is to support the company to operate within the risk tolerances set out by the Board and expressed in the Risk Appetite Statement.

The RMC also supports the ARC through regular reviews of the risk register and compliance requirements, and the assessment of the adequacy of risk controls. The WH&S committee meets regularly to advise RMC on opportunities for reducing people-related risks so far as is reasonably practicable.

Our internal audit processes

Our internal audit program supports our compliance and continuous improvement across Hort Innovation. The Board approves an annual internal audit plan based on the recommendation of the ARC.

In 2025/26, our internal audit partner, BDO Services P/L, audited the HIVE investment management system and the management of voluntary contributions, grants, royalties and interest. A separate audit into contract compliance by delivery partners was in draft form as at 30 June 2026. The findings, recommendations and management response to each of these audits are presented to the ARC. The Board receives quarterly reports on the implementation of each recommendation.

Working responsibly with suppliers

Hort Innovation is committed to our partnership with all our suppliers as we strive to deliver impactful R&D and marketing investments for growers. Our Supplier Code of Conduct sets expectations for suppliers across ethical business practices, anti-corruption, workers' rights and conflicts of interest. It also reflects the prohibition on agri-political activity connected with services provided to Hort Innovation, which is a requirement under our funding agreement.

The Supplier Code of Conduct and related policies, including the Bribery, Fraud and Corruption Control Policy, Whistleblower Policy and Privacy Policy are available on our website.



Our approach to managing conflicts of interest

Fair and impartial decision making is essential across our investment, procurement and project review processes.

Our Conflict-of-Interest Policy requires employees to act honestly, in good faith and free from unmanaged conflicts of interest. Employees must identify and declare actual or perceived conflicts of interest as soon as they arise. This policy applies to all Hort Innovation employees and directors.

In 2025/26, we digitised conflict-of-interest reporting and continued to embed training and tools for managing conflicts of interest in our investment advisory processes.

Our approach to managing data and privacy

As an organisation with an annual turnover of more than \$3 million, Hort Innovation is subject to the Privacy Act 1988 (Cth) and the 13 Australian Privacy Principles.

We continue to strengthen our policy and procedures to ensure they are robust, effective and appropriate.

There were no notifiable privacy breaches during the reporting period.

Our approach to business continuity

Our Business Continuity Plan (BCP) supports our response to events such as major technology disruption, significant office service issues, international travel incidents and pandemics.

Managed by the Recovery Management Team, the plan is supported by annual training and third-party testing. The BCP was successfully tested in November 2025, with observations and recommendations informing a workplan for continuous improvement.

Independent external financial report

In line with the requirements set out under the *Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission (ACNC) Act 2012 (Cth)*, Hort Innovation prepares annual financial statements and reports which are independently audited before submission to the ACNC. Under our funding agreement, the audited statements are provided to DAFF and included in this Annual Report.

Measuring the performance of our investments

PRIORITY 5.2

Transparent relationships

Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) helps us understand whether investments are progressing as intended, delivering outcomes and creating value for the horticulture sector.

At a project level, M&E plans set out the intended pathway from activities and outputs to outcomes and impacts. They help delivery partners report on the progress, assess performance and identify opportunities to improve project delivery.

Independent project evaluations are undertaken for a sample of projects to assess efficiency, effectiveness, relevance and the appropriateness of delivery processes. The findings help us work with delivery partners to improve investment delivery and inform future investment recommendations.

Frontiers M&E Framework

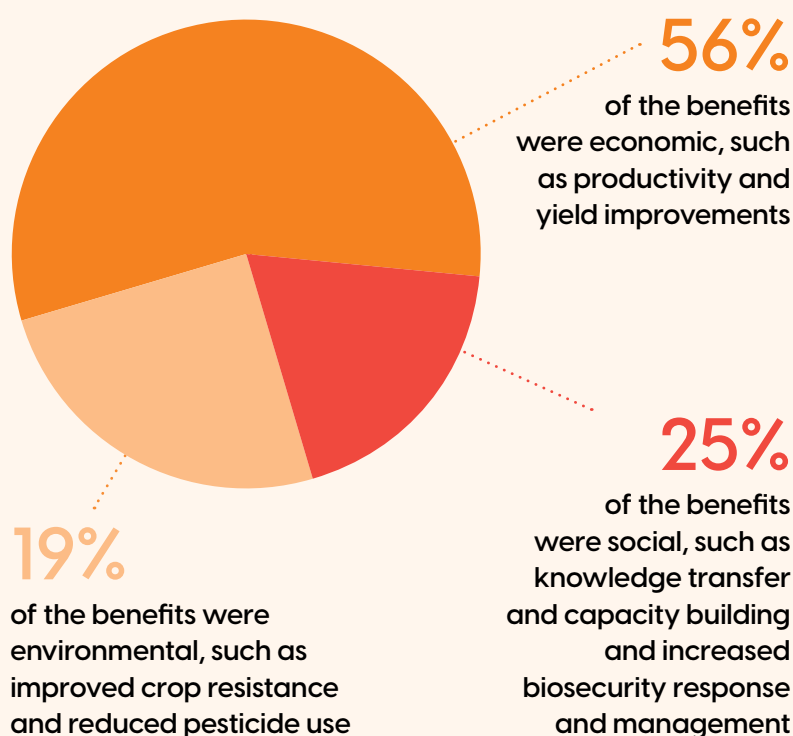
In 2025/26, we introduced the Frontiers Monitoring and Evaluation Framework to strengthen how impact is planned, measured and reported across Frontiers investments.

Supported by a dedicated planning guide and template, the framework provides consistent guidance for delivery partners and aligns project-level evaluation with Frontiers investment pathways. It also enables results to be brought together across different funding models, providing a clearer evidence-based view of how Frontiers investments create value for growers.

Benefit-to-cost ratio of investments

Each year, we commission an independent evaluation of a random sample of levy-funded projects to assess the benefit-to-cost ratio. The results for 2025/26 were:

- **\$45.6 million** Estimated value of benefits the sampled projects are expected to generate over 30 years (in present value terms).
- **5.8:1** The benefit-to-cost ratio of the 2025/26 sample (five-year average is 3.88:1).
- **32** Identified impacts broken down into economic (56 per cent), social (25 per cent) and environmental (19 per cent).





Protecting Australia's banana industry

By helping contain Banana Bunchy Top Virus (BBTV) within established control zones in New South Wales, this project protected an industry worth hundreds of millions of dollars and helped avoid potentially significant ongoing management costs. Industry representatives noted that widespread infection in major growing regions could result in costs running to tens of millions of dollars annually, while still offering no guarantee of control.

BBTV is the most serious viral disease affecting bananas. The project combined farm surveillance, grower education, destruction of infected plants and ongoing monitoring to limit the disease's spread and protect production regions across Australia, particularly North Queensland where most Australian bananas are grown.

A key outcome has been a shift towards greater grower ownership of biosecurity. Growers are now more actively involved in identifying symptoms, reporting suspected infections and removing affected plants, building stronger industry capability and shared responsibility for managing risk.

The benefits reach far beyond the containment zone. By supporting ongoing disease prevention, the project helps safeguard grower livelihoods, regional communities and long-term industry resilience, while protecting the diverse range of banana varieties supplied to Australian consumers.

10.6 to 1
benefit-to-cost ratio



Turning feedback into action

PRIORITY 5.2

Transparent relationships

Feedback from growers, delivery partners and peak industry bodies (PIBs) helps us to understand how well we are working with the sector and where we need to improve.

Grower and Partner Survey

Our annual Grower and Partner Survey gathers feedback on how we engage with stakeholders and deliver outcomes for the horticulture sector. The findings inform continuous improvement priorities and help us track changes in stakeholder experience over time.

In 2024, Hort Innovation established a baseline for stakeholder engagement

and satisfaction. This marked the beginning of a more structured approach to tracking performance and informing future planning. In 2025 and 2026, we continued this work by distributing the survey again, inviting feedback from a broad range of stakeholders. The results have demonstrated progress with engagement across the board, with areas for improvement identified as we enter our new company strategy.



57%

Grower engagement
Increase from 51%



74%

Delivery partner engagement
Increase from 62%



84%

Peak industry body engagement
Decrease from 88%

Measuring company performance

We monitor our operational performance and progress against the Hort Innovation Strategy 2024-2026 through:

- Half-yearly strategy performance reviews reported to the Board.
- Monthly monitoring of company performance by the Executive Team.
- Data and reporting systems to strengthen how performance information is collected and managed.
- Customer relationship management (CRM) reporting that tracks stakeholder engagement and satisfaction.
- Real-time financial reporting through FinOps.

Driving continuous improvement

PRIORITY 5.3

Minimise complexity

In 2025/26, we began the Investing for Performance Program to strengthen how we plan, manage and deliver investments. The focus was on building the foundations for clearer decision making, greater transparency and more consistent value delivery for growers.



Strengthening governance and accountability

We digitised our end-to-end investment process maps, improving visibility and consistency across the investment lifecycle.

A refreshed Procurement Policy was also approved in 2025/26, establishing a more structured framework for future procurement and strengthening transparency and accountability in decision-making.



Improving data and insights

We implemented new systems to strengthen data governance, management and analytics.

We also enhanced stakeholder-facing platforms, including the new Hort Innovation website and Hort IQ, both incorporating artificial intelligence functionality. Together, these investments are supporting clearer reporting, better visibility of investment outcomes, and more informed decision-making across the organisation.



Streamlining processes

We continued to simplify and standardise core processes through better system integration and digital tools. This work is reducing complexity and enabling faster, more consistent delivery across investment activities.



Improved planning and financial visibility

In 2025/26, we delivered phase one of a new forecasting system designed to improve financial planning capability, providing greater visibility of the investment pipeline and supporting more proactive prioritisation and funding decisions.



Building capability for the future

We established foundational capability in emerging areas, including artificial intelligence (AI) policy and governance, assessment of potential AI uses and early AI-enabled tools.

Cybersecurity improvements included the introduction of mobile device management and core platform enhancements. These investments strengthen organisational resilience and provide a platform for future innovation and growth.



Refining our information systems

During 2025/26 we refined reporting dashboards to provide clearer and more accessible performance information. We also improved system notifications to streamline communications and reduce reliance on manual follow-up.



**Almond Centre of Excellence
Loxton, South Australia**

The Almond Centre of Excellence (ACE) is home to world-class research and development activities that test new technologies, varieties and production practices under commercial orchard conditions to support a productive, sustainable and globally competitive Australian almond industry.

Financial Report

For the year ended 30 June 2026

Horticulture Innovation Australia Limited
(A company limited by guarantee)
ACN 602 100 149

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General information

The financial statements cover Horticulture Innovation Australia Limited (the "Company" or "Hort Innovation") as an individual entity.

Horticulture Innovation Australia Limited is a not-for-profit unlisted public company limited by guarantee, incorporated and domiciled in Australia. Its registered office and principal place of business is:

Level 15, 141 Walker St
North Sydney
NSW 2060

A description of the nature of the Company's operations and its principal activities are included in the Directors' report, which is not part of the financial statements.

The financial statements were authorised for issue, in accordance with a resolution of Directors, on 25 August 2026. The Directors have the power to amend and reissue the financial statements.



Directors' Report

The Directors present their report, together with the financial statements, on the Company for the year ended 30 June 2026.

Directors

The following persons were Directors of the Company during the whole of the financial year and up to the date of this report, unless otherwise stated:

- Julie Bird (Chair).
- John Said (Deputy Chair).
- Victoria Taylor.
- Michael Nixon.
- Robert Mullins.
- Jan Vydra.
- Elke Cleverdon.
- Stephen McCutcheon.
- Cameron Mackay.

Company Secretary

Emma Braun

Meetings of directors

Directors	Role	Board		Audit and Risk Committee		People and Performance Committee		Investment Committee	
		Eligible	Attend	Eligible	Attend	Eligible	Attend	Eligible	Attend
Julie Bird	Chair	9	9	-	-	4	3	-	-
John Said	Deputy Chair	9	9	2	2	4	4	-	-
Jan Vydra	Director	9	9	3	3	-	-	4	4
Elke Cleverdon	Director	9	9	5	5	-	-	3	3
Robert Mullins	Director	9	8	-	-	2	1	6	6
Michael Nixon	Director	9	9	-	-	4	3	3	3
Cameron Mackay	Director	9	9	-	-	-	-	6	6
Stephen McCutcheon	Director	9	9	5	5	-	-	-	-
Victoria Taylor	Director	9	9	2	2	2	2	4	4

Director bios



Julie Bird

Chair

BTeach, MBA (Exec), GAICD

Julie is the current Chair of the Board, being first appointed to this position in 2020 and re-appointed to the role of Chair for each subsequent year. She was elected as a Director of Hort Innovation in 2018 and re-elected for a further term in both 2021 and 2025.

Julie is an experienced non-executive director in the agribusiness sector with a broad background in Australian horticulture spanning nuts, summerfruit, citrus, apples and pears.

She currently serves as a non-executive Director of Cotton Research & Development Corporation and Grain Producers SA and is a member of the Steering Committee for the Australian Pollination Strategy. She is also the owner of a retail floristry business "Say It With Flowers" based in Malvern, Victoria.

Previously Julie was Independent Chair of Australian Seafood Industries, non-executive Director and Deputy Chair of Plant Health Australia, CEO of the Almond Board of Australia, and non-executive Director of United Almonds Limited and the Australian Nut Industry Council. She has also served as Independent Chair of the Apple and Pear Industry Advisory Committee and the South Australian Apiary Industry Advisory Group.

Julie holds a Bachelor of Teaching, a Master of Business Administration (MBA Executive) and is a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors Company Directors Course.



John Said

Deputy Chair

MAICD

John was elected as a Director of Hort Innovation in 2023, and elected Deputy Chair in 2024 and 2025.

John is currently the CEO of Fresh Select (Aust) Pty Ltd and Founder and Chairman of Nutri V Pty Ltd. He is a former director of the Australian Fresh Produce Association and is an alumni of the Australian Rural Leadership Program.

John has had years of experience as a member and Chair of various Boards across both national and global horticultural associations, equipping him with high level skills and knowledge in governance and compliance. Having established and successfully managed a thriving fresh produce company for the last 30 years, John brings great strength in strategy and business management. His visionary leadership approach has seen the Fresh Select business grow and diversify into not only a fresh produce farming and distribution business, but it has commercialised products to deal with food waste and ensure sustainability.

John has a thorough understanding and expertise in all aspects of supply chain, research and development, technology and systems across both the Australian and international landscapes, having travelled extensively over his 30 years in the industry and developed key stakeholder relationships all over the world including England, America, Europe and Asia.

John has devoted the majority of his working life to the horticulture industry. Prior to this, he spent some early years as an aircraft maintenance engineer.

John is a member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.



Victoria Taylor

Director

Grad Cert (Water Policy and Governance), GAICD

Victoria was elected as a Director of Hort Innovation in 2020 and re-elected in 2023.

Victoria is an experienced Board member and is the current Chair of the Agrifood Innovation Institute at the Australian National University, a non-executive Director of WaterNSW and a member of the Board of the NSW Rural Assistance Authority.

She is also a Member of the Industry Advisory Group for the ARC Industrial Transformation Research Hub for Protected Cropping at La Trobe University.

She is a former Chair of the Rice Marketing Board for the State of New South Wales, a former Independent Director of Australian Dairy Farmers Ltd., and was Executive Officer of the National Horticulture Research Network between 2015-2019 and Head of Sector Building and Advocacy at Cellular Agriculture Australia between 2023-2025.

She holds a Graduate Certificate in Water Policy and Governance from Charles Sturt University and is a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors Company Directors Course.





Elke Cleverdon

Director

MBA, FCPA, FAICD

Elke was elected to the Board of Hort Innovation in 2022 and has served on Board committees supporting governance, strategic investment and international market access.

She brings more than 30 years' leadership experience across agriculture, banking, public health and member-based organisations, with expertise in governance, finance, audit, risk management and strategic oversight.

Elke is Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee and a Director of Cattle Australia, where she also serves on the Cattle Levy Review Committee. She is Deputy Chair of the Murrumbidgee Local Health District and Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee of Australian Cocoa Limited. Previously, she was a non-executive Director of SWS Bank for six years, including serving as Chair of its Audit and Risk Committee.

Elke has strong connections to agriculture as a rural financial coach, adviser to primary producers and long-time producer. Since 1993, she has jointly owned and operated a broadacre and mixed-farming enterprise near Harden, New South Wales. She also spent 16 years as Chief Financial Officer of a regional mutual bank.

Elke is a Fellow of CPA Australia, a Fellow of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and holds a Master of Business Administration.



Cameron Mackay

Director

MAICD

Cameron was elected to the Board in November 2024.

He spent 12 years on the board of the Australian Banana Growers Council, with two years as Chairman. He has also completed the Mt Eliza Produce Executive Program and has been a Member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors since 2009.

He is a non-executive Director of his family business, Mackay Group Holdings, which has been running for almost 80 years, being a third-generation member of the board. After completing qualifications as a Mechanical Engineer (Automotive), he joined the family business and after five years' work in all aspects of operations, he progressed through a range of management positions. During the last 30 years, he has been an integral contributor as the business has grown to a vertically integrated agri-business with over 500 employees, growing bananas, papayas, avocado, lychees, passionfruit, cocoa, and coffee.

His role has also been closely involved in research collaborations in Central America, together with the development of sustainability programs the business has committed to as a significant agricultural operation in the Wet Tropics catchment of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park.

Cameron is a member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

Continued >>



Director bios (continued)



Stephen McCutcheon

Director

BEcon, GradDip.Public Law, GAICD

Stephen was elected to the Board of Hort Innovation in 2022.

Born and bred on a mixed farming enterprise, he has extensive experience working with agriculture and food industries in private and public sector settings. This includes several years in rural lending with major banks and a 20-year career with the now Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) working initially with a number of horticultural industries to implement economic reforms and later, in senior executive roles, leading the Australian Government's role in national biosecurity and food safety policy and programs.

Stephen served as Chief Executive Officer of Food Standards Australia New Zealand from 2007-2017 and was a non-executive Director and Chair of Plant Health Australia Limited from 2017 to 2023.

He is currently a Governing Board Member of the Joint Accreditation System for Australia and New Zealand. He is also Chair of the Australian Government's Nature Repair Committee and a member of DAFF's Scientific Advisory Group established under the *Biosecurity Act 2015*.

Stephen has a Bachelor of Economics degree from Sydney University and a Graduate Diploma in Public Law from the Australian National University. He is a Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors Course.



Bob Mullins

Director

BSc Agr, MTechMgt, PhD, GAICD

Bob was elected as a Director of Hort Innovation in 2021 and re-elected in 2024.

Bob is an experienced director of commercial and not-for-profit businesses in Australia and internationally. Currently, he is a non-executive director of Future Food Systems Ltd, New Edge Microbials Group Pty Ltd and InterGrain Pty Ltd.

Bob was raised on a wheat farm and has enjoyed an international career in technology-based businesses supporting high-value horticulture. He has broad business experience having held senior commercial and technical leadership roles in Australia, Malaysia, Korea, Singapore and the United States.

Bob is motivated by the challenge of leveraging research and technology to deliver practical, profitable, and sustained innovation for growers. After early roles as a plant breeder and R&D manager in sugar cane, he joined a plant biotech and robotics start-up before moving to Asia to join Syngenta Seeds. Bob led vegetable seeds businesses across APAC and the Americas contributing to extended periods of profitable growth, business development and commercialisation of innovative technologies.

Bob is a Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors Company Directors Course and has degrees in Agricultural Science, Technology Management and Plant Breeding.



Michael Nixon

Director

Michael was elected as a Director of Hort Innovation in 2020 and re-elected in 2023. He is passionate about Australian horticulture and grew up in agriculture, with his family farming sheep, cattle and wheat.

Michael has grown a broad range of horticultural crops suited to the climate as part of his Carnarvon-based business, River Lodge. He's been involved in several industry organisations and committees at a national level and is a former board member of both AUSVEG and the Australian Banana Growers' Association.

Michael is the previous Chair of the Gascoyne Food Council and part of the team that created its 'Better Practice' arm. He was heavily involved in community organisations in marketing and promoting the wellbeing of the horticultural industry in his region. Realising the importance of the role he has since retired his work in community organisations to focus on his directorship at Hort Innovation.



Jan Vydra

Director

GAICD

Jan was appointed to the Hort Innovation Board in 2019 and re-elected in 2022 and 2025.

He is a senior agribusiness, ag-tech and food systems leader with more than two decades' experience across fresh produce, controlled environment agriculture, major retailer supply chains, regulated cropping, venture investment and industry governance.

A first-generation farmer, Jan co-founded one of Australia's leading fresh herb businesses in 2008, building his experience in innovation, sustainable farming and scalable food production. He previously held senior sales and operational roles at Yarra Valley Farms, helping grow the fresh fruit and vegetable distribution business nationally.

Jan has also founded and commercialised ventures in horticultural software, traceability and regulated production systems. This included Green Farmers, which secured one of Australia's early regulated crop cultivation and production licences and was later divested.

He is currently Chief Commercial Officer at YieldX, where he helps scale protected cropping technology across 26 countries, with a focus on improving growers' returns on capital. He also advises venture capital firms in the Australian ag-tech sector.

Jan is a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors, a Nuffield Scholar and has been recognised as Australian Young Farmer of the Year and Rabobank Emerging Agribusiness Leader of the Year.



Emma Braun

Company Secretary

Emma is Hort Innovation's Company Secretary and joined the company in November 2024.

Emma has worked as an in-house lawyer and company secretary for over 30 years and has private and public sector experience across multiple jurisdictions and sectors in developing and mature markets.

Emma has a Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Laws (with Honours) and a Master of Laws from the University of Melbourne, and a Diploma of Applied Corporate Governance from the Governance Institute of Australia. She has also undertaken postgraduate studies in executive leadership and is a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

She is admitted to practice in the Supreme Courts of Victoria and New South Wales, the High Court of Australia, and is a Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Secretaries and Administrators (UK) and of the Governance Institute of Australia.

Other information

Members

As at 30 June 2026, Hort Innovation was owned by 2036 members, 87.1 per cent being Australian horticultural growers, with the remaining 12.9 per cent carrying on another form of enterprise in the Australian horticulture industry supply chain.

Contributions on winding up

In the event that the Company is wound up, each member has undertaken to contribute an amount not exceeding \$2.00.

Corporate governance

Hort Innovation adopts best corporate governance practice drawing upon the ASX Corporate Governance Principles and Recommendations, as appropriate for its governance structure as a non-listed, not-for-profit corporation.

The Company has in place a number of governance documents and practices in respect of the Directors, the Board and its operations, including but not limited to the following:

- Constitution.
- Board Charter.
- Audit and Risk Committee Charter.
- Investment Committee Charter.
- People and Performance Committee Charter.
- Charter of the Committees of the Board.
- Director Nomination Committee Charter.
- Committee Compensation Guidelines.
- Code of Conduct.
- Delegations of Authority.
- Conflicts of Interest Policy.

- Risk Appetite Statement and Risk Management Policy.
- Bribery, Fraud and Corruption Control Policy and Fraud Control Plan.
- Intellectual Property Policy.
- Employment Policies such as Respect at Work, Safety at Work and associated Standard Operating Procedures.
- Procurement Policy.
- Privacy Policy.

A lens on governance in day-to-day operations

Risk management

A Risk Management process exists within Hort Innovation addressing Strategic, Emerging, Operational Risks with update reports provided to the Audit and Risk Committee at each of the Committee meetings.

Business continuity

Hort Innovation's Business Continuity Framework has been developed and is managed through the Recovery Management Team to respond to matters such as major technology disruption, major office service issues, international travel issues and pandemics.

Modern slavery

Hort Innovation is an organisation subject to the reporting requirements under the Modern Slavery Act 2018 (Cth). Under the legislation, Hort Innovation is required to disclose in a modern slavery statement the steps it has taken to mitigate the risk of modern slavery in its operations and supply chains are free from modern slavery. Hort Innovation submits its Modern Slavery Statement on annual basis in accordance with the Modern Slavery Act 2018 (Cth).

Nature of operations and principal activities

The principal activities of the Company during the period were investment in R&D and marketing programs for the Australian horticulture industry. These activities are expected to continue into the future.

Significant changes in the state of affairs

There have been no significant changes in the state of affairs of the Company during the year.

Objectives and performance goals

The Company invests in R&D, marketing, international trade and extension programs, all working towards outcomes, recommendations and resources to help increase the productivity, profitability and global competitiveness of Australia's horticulture sector.

Environmental regulation

The Company is not subject to any particular or significant environmental regulations under the law of the Commonwealth or of a state or territory.

Other information (continued)

Insurance of officers

During the period, the Company incurred an insurance premium in respect of a contract insuring Horticulture Innovation Australia Limited Directors and Officers against liabilities arising as a result of work performed in their capacity as Directors and Officers of the Company. Details of the nature of liabilities covered, or the amount of premium paid in respect of the insurance contract, are not detailed here.

Auditor's independence declaration

A copy of the auditor's independence declaration as required under section 307C of the Corporations Act 2001 is set out immediately after this Directors' report.

This report is made in accordance with a resolution of Directors, pursuant to section 298(2)(a) of the Corporations Act 2001.

Indemnification of auditors

To the extent permitted by law, Hort Innovation has agreed to indemnify its auditors, RSM Australia Partners, as part of the terms of its audit engagement agreement against claims by third parties arising from the audit (for an unspecified amount). No payment has been made to indemnify RSM Australia Partners during or since the financial year ended 30 June 2026.

On behalf of the Directors



Julie Bird, Chair

Dated this 25th day of August 2026

Review of operating results

The operating deficit for the year ended 30 June 2026 was \$294,108 (2025: surplus of \$8,573,609).



John Said, Deputy Chair

Dated this 25th day of August 2026

Events subsequent to balance sheet date

No matter or circumstance has arisen since 30 June 2026 that has significantly affected, or may significantly affect the Company's operations, the results of those operations, or the Company's state of affairs in future financial years.



Horticulture Innovation Australia Limited

Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income

for the year ended 30 June 2026

	Note	Year ended 30 June 2026 \$	Year ended 30 June 2025 \$
Levies, commonwealth matching, Co-investment, grants and other	3	206,129,905	210,565,572
Expenses			
Occupancy expenses		(343,821)	(536,674)
Employee benefits expense	4	(20,292,382)	(18,488,410)
Research and development programs		(153,748,912)	(150,766,540)
Marketing programs		(21,571,849)	(21,726,337)
Depreciation and amortisation expenses	4	(1,864,532)	(1,728,097)
IT expenses		(2,881,706)	(2,657,859)
Travel expenses		(1,558,965)	(1,504,865)
Other expenses		(4,161,846)	(4,583,181)
Net (deficit)/surplus for the year	16	(294,108)	8,573,609
Other comprehensive income for the year		–	–
Total (loss)/income for the year		(294,108)	8,573,609

The above statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Horticulture Innovation Australia Limited

Statement of Financial Position

as at 30 June 2026

	Note	As at 30 June 2026 \$	As at 30 June 2025 \$
Assets			
Current assets			
Cash and cash equivalents	5	54,506,358	45,608,954
Trade and other receivables	6	1,017,601	682,108
Contract assets	7	10,738,603	10,483,586
Financial assets	8	52,531,436	61,945,220
Prepayments		642,667	564,428
Total current assets		119,436,665	119,284,296
Non-current assets			
Investments accounted for using the equity method	9	1,630,000	-
Plant and equipment	10	5,159,930	1,243,600
Intangibles	11	242,969	751,125
Total non-current assets		7,032,899	1,994,725
Total assets		126,469,564	121,279,021
Liabilities			
Current liabilities			
Trade and other payables	12	8,875,679	5,343,565
Contract liabilities	13	2,619,959	4,099,424
Provisions	14	1,475,908	1,240,939
Lease liabilities	15	628,851	660,273
Total current liabilities		13,600,397	11,344,201
Non-current liabilities			
Provisions	14	217,350	656,890
Lease liabilities	15	3,723,298	55,303
Total non-current liabilities		3,940,648	712,193
Total liabilities		17,541,045	12,056,394
Net assets		108,928,519	109,222,627
Funds			
Retained surpluses	16	108,928,519	109,222,627
Total funds		108,928,519	109,222,627

The above statement of financial position should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Horticulture Innovation Australia Limited

Statement of Changes in Equity

for the year ended 30 June 2026

	Retained Surplus			
	Research and development \$	Marketing \$	Corporate \$	Total funds \$
Balance at 1 July 2024	73,186,092	17,215,982	10,246,944	100,649,018
Surplus for the year	8,305,482	(1,760,498)	2,028,625	8,573,609
Other comprehensive income for the year	-	-	-	-
Total comprehensive income for the year	8,305,482	(1,760,498)	2,028,625	8,573,609
Balance at 30 June 2025	81,491,574	15,455,484	12,275,569	109,222,627

	Retained Surplus			
	Research and development \$	Marketing \$	Corporate \$	Total funds \$
Balance at 1 July 2025	81,491,574	15,455,484	12,275,569	109,222,627
Deficit for the year	(900,715)	(771,309)	1,377,916	(294,108)
Other comprehensive income for the year	-	-	-	-
Total comprehensive income for the year	(900,715)	(771,309)	1,377,916	(294,108)
Balance at 30 June 2026	80,590,859	14,684,175	13,653,485	108,928,519

The above statement of changes in equity should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.



Horticulture Innovation Australia Limited

Statement of Cash Flows

for the year ended 30 June 2026

	Note	Year ended 30 June 2026 \$	Year ended 30 June 2025 \$
Operating activities			
Other income		1,986,270	1,590,517
Levies received		74,489,169	75,047,278
Receipts from Commonwealth matching and government grants		97,989,547	115,722,966
Receipts from co-investment		45,702,699	58,405,572
Payments to suppliers and employees		(32,440,086)	(26,460,224)
Payments to research and development providers		(164,943,075)	(168,887,545)
Marketing program payments		(23,579,554)	(23,973,158)
Interest received		4,123,342	3,761,209
Net cash from operating activities		3,328,312	35,206,615
Investing activities			
Payments for investments in term-deposits		9,413,784	(60,005,758)
Lease incentives received		2,406,682	-
Purchase of plant and equipment		(3,474,934)	(117,304)
Purchase of intangibles		-	(20,759)
Investment in Joint Ventures		(2,103,158)	-
Net cash from/(used in) investing activities		6,242,374	(60,143,821)
Financing activities			
Principal repayments of lease liability		(596,396)	(579,284)
Interest on lease liability		(76,886)	(30,994)
Net cash used in financing activities		(673,282)	(610,278)
Net increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents		8,897,404	(25,547,484)
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the financial year		45,608,954	71,156,438
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the financial year	5	54,506,358	45,608,954

The above statement of cash flows should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.



NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
for the year ended 30 June 2026

Note 1. Material accounting policy information

The accounting policies that are material to the Company are set out either in the respective notes or below. The accounting policies adopted are consistent with those of the previous financial year, unless otherwise stated.

New or amended Accounting Standards and Interpretations adopted

The Company has adopted all of the new or amended Accounting Standards and Interpretations issued by the Australian Accounting Standards Board (AASB) that are mandatory for the current reporting period.

Any new or amended Accounting Standards or Interpretations that are not yet mandatory have not been early adopted.

Basis of preparation

The financial report is a general purpose financial report, which has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of AASB 1060 General Purpose Financial Statements – Simplified Disclosures for For-Profit and Not-for-Profit Tier 2 Entities and other authoritative pronouncements of the Australian Accounting Standards Board and the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profit Commission. The financial report has also been prepared on a historical basis, except for financial assets and liabilities, which have been measured at fair value. The financial report is presented in Australian dollars, which is Horticulture Innovation Australia Limited's functional and presentation currency.

Where an amendment to policy has resulted in a reclassification of expenses, comparatives have been restated to present a true comparison.

Statement of compliance

The Company is a not-for-profit entity which is not publicly accountable. Therefore the financial statements comply with AASB 1060 General Purpose Financial Statements – Simplified Disclosures for For-Profit and Not-for-Profit Tier 2 Entities and the Corporations Act 2001.

Income tax

The Company is registered with the ACNC and is exempt from income taxation under section 50-40 of the Income Tax Assessment Act 1997.

Other taxes

Revenues, expenses and assets are recognised net of the amount of GST except:

- When the GST incurred on a purchase of goods and services is not recoverable from the taxation authority, in which case the GST is recognised as part of the cost of acquisition of the asset or as part of the expense item as applicable.
- Receivables and payables, which are stated with the amount of GST included.

The net amount of GST recoverable from, or payable to, the taxation authority is included as part of receivables or payables in the Statement of Financial Position. Cash flows are included in the cash flow statement on a gross basis and the GST component of cash flows arising from investing and financing activities, which is recoverable from, or payable to, the taxation authority is classified as part of operating cash flows. Commitments and contingencies are disclosed net of the amount of GST recoverable from, or payable to, the taxation authority.

Current and non-current classification

The Company has presented current and non-current assets, and current and non-current liabilities, as separate classifications in the statement of financial position. The Company classifies an asset as current where it is cash or a cash equivalent or when it expects to realise the asset within twelve months of the reporting date. The Company classifies a liability as current where the liability is due to be settled within twelve months after the reporting date.

Investment in joint ventures

A joint venture is a type of joint arrangement whereby the parties that have joint control of the arrangement have rights to the net assets of the joint venture. Joint control is the contractually agreed sharing of control of an arrangement and exists only when decisions about the relevant activities require the unanimous consent of the parties sharing control.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

for the year ended 30 June 2026

The Company accounts for its investment in the joint venture using the equity method. Under the equity method, the investment in the joint venture is initially recognised at cost. The carrying amount of the investment is subsequently adjusted to recognise the Company's share of the profit or loss and other comprehensive income of the joint venture after the date of acquisition. Distributions received from the joint venture reduce the carrying amount of the investment.

The Company's share of the profit or loss of the joint venture is recognised in profit or loss. The Company's share of movements in other comprehensive income of the joint venture is recognised in other comprehensive income.

The financial statements of the joint venture are prepared for the same reporting period as the Company. Where necessary, adjustments are made to align the accounting policies of the joint venture with those of the Company. Goodwill relating to the joint venture is included in the carrying amount of the investment and is not tested for impairment separately.

After applying the equity method, the Company assesses at each reporting date whether there is objective evidence that the investment in the joint venture is impaired. If such evidence exists, the Company recognises an impairment loss as the difference between the recoverable amount of the investment and its carrying amount. Any impairment loss is recognised in profit or loss.

Upon the loss of joint control, the Company measures and recognises any retained investment at its fair value. Any difference between the carrying amount of the joint venture upon loss of joint control and the fair value of the retained investment, together with any proceeds from disposal, is recognised in profit or loss.

Impairment of assets

The Company assesses at each reporting date whether there is an indication that an asset may be impaired. If any such indication exists, or when annual impairment testing for an asset is required, the Company makes an estimate of the asset's recoverable amount. An asset's recoverable amount is the higher of its fair value less costs to sell and its value in use and is determined for an individual asset, unless the asset does not generate cash inflows that are largely independent of those from other assets and the asset's value in use cannot be established to be close to its fair value. In such cases the asset is tested for impairment as part of the cash-generating unit to which it belongs. When the carrying amount of an asset or cash-generating unit exceeds its recoverable amount, the asset or cash-generating unit is considered impaired and is written down to its recoverable amount.

Impairment losses relating to continuing operations are recognised in those expense categories consistent with the function of the impaired asset unless the asset is carried at revalued amount (in which case the impairment loss is treated as a revaluation decrease).

Other financial assets

The classification and measurement requirements of IFRS 9 did not have a significant impact on the Company. The Company continued measuring at fair value all financial assets previously held at fair value under IAS 39.

Economic dependency

The Company is economically dependent on levies, voluntary contributions, R&D co-investment and Commonwealth Government contributions.

Comparatives

Where necessary, comparative figures have been reclassified to conform with changes in presentation of income statement and balance sheet but resulting in no impact to the overall profit for both current year and prior year.

Note 2. Critical accounting judgements, estimates and assumptions

The preparation of the financial statements requires management to make judgements, estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts in the financial statements. Management continually evaluates its judgements and estimates in relation to assets, liabilities, contingent liabilities, revenue and expenses. Management bases its judgements, estimates and assumptions on historical experience and on other various factors, including expectations of future events, management believes to be reasonable under the circumstances. There are no critical accounting judgements, estimates and assumptions that are likely to affect the current or future financial years.



NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
for the year ended 30 June 2026

Note 3. Levies, commonwealth matching, Co-investment, grants and other

	2026 \$	2025 \$
Research and development income		
– Proceeds from levies	39,454,876	39,384,882
– Revenues from commonwealth matching	89,200,984	86,970,215
– Co-investment – recognised at a point in time	43,219,414	48,532,374
– Grant & other contribution	844,519	1,890,293
– Collective industry funds	4,592,871	5,431,097
– Royalty income	(43,480)	465,366
– Interest received	2,925,679	3,151,010
	180,194,863	185,825,237
Marketing income		
– Proceeds from levies	23,895,805	23,745,067
– Interest received	643,179	472,263
– Royalty income	384,294	-
	24,923,278	24,217,330
Other		
– Corporate interest received	492,935	453,492
– Revenue	518,829	69,513
	1,011,764	523,005
Total revenue	206,129,905	210,565,572
Total interest received	4,061,793	4,076,765

Accounting policy for revenue and contributions

The Company has applied AASB 1058 Income of Not-for-Profit Entities and AASB 15 Revenue from Contracts with Customers.

An assessment of all government grants received has been undertaken and revenue from these contracts is deferred until performance obligations are met when the grant is captured by AASB 15. Grant income is recognised upon achievement of milestones and no grant income recognised has unfulfilled conditions or other contingencies attached.

For revenue streams to which AASB 15 does not apply, revenue is recognised to the extent that the economic benefits will flow to the Company and the revenue can be reliably measured.

AASB 1058 clarifies and simplifies the income recognition requirements that apply to not-for-profit (NFP) entities, in conjunction with AASB 15. The income recognition requirements shift the focus from a reciprocal/non-reciprocal basis to a basis of assessment that considers the enforceability of a contract and the specificity of performance obligations. The core principle of the income recognition requirements in AASB 1058 is that when a NFP entity enters into transactions where the consideration to acquire an asset is significantly less than the fair value of the asset principally to enable the entity to further its objectives, the excess of the asset recognised (at fair value) over any 'related amounts' is recognised as income immediately.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
for the year ended 30 June 2026

The following specific recognition criteria must be met before revenue is recognised:

Revenue from the rendering of a services

Revenue from the rendering of a service is recognised upon the delivery of the service to customers.

Interest revenue

Interest revenue is recognised on a proportional basis taking into account the interest rates applicable to the financial assets. Other revenue is recognised when the right to receive the revenue has been established.

Research and development Co-investment and voluntary contributions

Contributions are recognised as revenue upon receipt.

Levy receipts

The Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry collects statutory levies on behalf of the Company. Revenue from levies are recognised as revenue when the levy amount is collected by the DAFF.

Commonwealth Co-investment funds

The Commonwealth Government provides co-investment funding on a fifty cent on the dollar basis on approved R&D projects, up to a level of 0.5% of the gross value of horticultural production. Commonwealth co-contribution funds are recognised as revenue upon incurring the eligible R&D program expenditure.

Industry reserve interest

Interest earned on contributions received in advance from levies to meet future marketing and R&D expenditure is allocated to the respective levy account.

Royalties

Royalty income is recognised upon receipt. All revenue is stated net of the amount of goods and services tax (GST).

Note 4. Expenses

	2026 \$	2025 \$
Included within expenses are the following significant amounts:		
Employee expenses	18,293,639	16,677,853
Superannuation	1,998,743	1,810,557
Depreciation and amortisation expenses		
Depreciation of property, plant and equipment	698,291	449,990
Depreciation of right-of-use assets	658,085	571,137
Amortisation	508,156	706,970



NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

for the year ended 30 June 2026

Note 5. Cash and cash equivalents

	2026 \$	2025 \$
Current assets		
Cash on hand	1,226	476
Cash at bank	54,505,132	45,608,478
	54,506,358	45,608,954

Accounting policy for cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents in the balance sheet comprise cash at bank and on hand and short term deposits with an original maturity of three months or less. For the purposes of the Cash Flow Statement, cash and cash equivalents consist of cash and cash equivalents as defined above, net of outstanding bank overdrafts.

Bank overdrafts are carried at the principal amount. Interest is charged as an expense as it accrues.

Note 6. Trade and other receivables

	2026 \$	2025 \$
Current assets		
Trade receivables	935,479	682,108
Other receivables	82,122	–
	1,017,601	682,108

Other receivables are recognised at amortised cost, less any allowance for expected credit losses.

Note 7. Contract assets

	2026 \$	2025 \$
Current assets		
Contract assets	10,738,603	10,483,586

Accounting policy for contract assets

Contract assets represent amounts recognised as income but not yet collected from the Commonwealth Government.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
for the year ended 30 June 2026

Note 8. Financial assets

	2026 \$	2025 \$
Current assets		
Short-term deposits	52,531,436	61,945,220

Accounting policy for short-term deposits

Short term deposits relate to temporary surplus funds, mainly from levies, voluntary and co-investment contributions and Commonwealth co-contributions which are placed in either a term deposit or cash deposit account. For funds deposited in at call accounts, interest is earned on the daily balance at the prevailing daily rate and is paid at the end of the month. Term deposits are held with the Company's bank with interest payable upon maturity of the deposits.

Note 9. Investments accounted for using the equity method

	2026 \$	2025 \$
Non-current assets		
Hort venture fund	1,630,000	-

Investments accounted for using the equity method

Investments in funds accounted for using the equity method are initially recognised at cost and subsequently adjusted for the Company's share of the fund's profit or loss and other comprehensive income. Distributions received reduce the carrying amount of the investment. The Company's share of the fund's profit or loss is recognised in profit or loss. Investments are assessed for impairment at each reporting date and any impairment loss is recognised in profit or loss.



NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

for the year ended 30 June 2026

Note 10. Plant and equipment

	2026 \$	2025 \$
Non-current assets		
Leasehold improvements – at cost	2,668,377	1,443,905
Less: Accumulated depreciation	(127,659)	(1,196,681)
	2,540,718	247,224
Furniture, fixtures and fittings – at cost	87,388	138,813
Less: Accumulated depreciation	(24,299)	(33,831)
	63,089	104,982
Office equipment – at cost	364,583	304,662
Less: Accumulated depreciation	(254,829)	(207,046)
	109,754	97,616
Hardware – at cost	817,997	736,404
Less: Accumulated depreciation	(173,456)	(559,395)
	644,541	177,009
Right of use – leases	1,889,621	3,965,813
Less: Accumulated depreciation	(87,793)	(3,349,044)
	1,801,828	616,769
	5,159,930	1,243,600

Reconciliations

Reconciliations of the written down values at the beginning and end of the current financial year are set out below:

	Leasehold improvements \$	Furniture, fixtures and fittings \$	Office equipment \$	Hardware \$	Right of use – leases \$	Total \$
Balance at 1 July 2025	247,224	104,982	97,616	177,009	616,769	1,243,600
Additions	2,665,328	-	151,028	659,109	1,843,144	5,318,609
Disposals	(21,159)	(7,636)	(87)	(17,021)	-	(45,903)
Depreciation expense	(350,675)	(34,257)	(138,803)	(174,556)	(658,085)	(1,356,376)
Balance at 30 June 2026	2,540,718	63,089	109,754	644,541	1,801,828	5,159,930

Accounting policy for plant and equipment

Plant and equipment is stated at historical cost, or fair value if the asset is donated to the entity, less accumulated depreciation and any accumulated impairment losses. Such cost includes the cost of replacing parts that are eligible for capitalisation when the cost of replacing parts is incurred. Similarly, when each major inspection is performed, the cost is recognised in the carrying amount of the plant and equipment as a replacement only if it is eligible for capitalisation. All other repairs and maintenance are recognised in the profit and loss as incurred.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
for the year ended 30 June 2026

The assets' residual values, useful lives and amortisation methods are reviewed, and adjusted if appropriate, at each financial year end. The depreciation rates used for each class of assets are:

Class of fixed asset	Depreciation rates	Depreciation basis
Leasehold improvements	Based on life of lease	Straight line
Furniture, fixtures and fittings	12.5%	Straight line
Office equipment	50%	Straight line
Hardware	33.3%	Straight line
Right of use – leases	Based on life of lease	Straight line

Disposal

An item of plant and equipment is derecognised upon disposal or when no further future economic benefits are expected from its use or disposal.

Any gain or loss arising on derecognition of the asset (calculated as the difference between the net disposal proceeds and the carrying amount of the asset) is included in profit and loss in the year the asset is derecognised.

Leases

AASB16 Leases has been applied for the reporting year and the Company has applied a single recognition and measurement approach for all leases for which it is the lessee, except for short term leases and leases of low value. Right of use assets are measured at cost, less any accumulated depreciation and impairment losses. They are depreciated on a straight line basis over the term of the lease. At the commencement date of the lease, the Company recognises lease liabilities measured at the present value of lease payments to be made over the lease term.

Note 11. Intangibles

	2026 \$	2025 \$
Non-current assets		
Software – at cost	98,386	98,386
Less: Accumulated amortisation	(97,673)	(95,554)
	713	2,832
Project management system – at cost	3,112,048	3,112,048
Less: Accumulated amortisation	(2,869,792)	(2,363,755)
	242,256	748,293



NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

for the year ended 30 June 2026

	2026 \$	2025 \$
	242,969	751,125

Reconciliations

Reconciliations of the written down values at the beginning and end of the current financial year are set out below:

	Software \$	Project management system \$	Total \$
Balance as at 1 July 2025	2,832	748,293	751,125
Amortisation expense	(2,119)	(506,037)	(508,156)
Balance at 30 June 2026	713	242,256	242,969

Accounting policy for intangible assets

Intangible assets acquired are initially measured at cost. Following initial recognition, intangible assets are carried at cost less any accumulated amortisation and any accumulated impairment losses.

The useful lives of intangible assets are assessed to be either finite or indefinite. Intangible assets with finite lives are amortised over the useful life and tested for impairment whenever there is an indication that the intangible asset may be impaired. The amortisation period and the amortisation method for an intangible asset with a finite useful life is reviewed at least at each financial year-end. The amortisation expense on intangible assets with finite lives is recognised in profit or loss in the expense category consistent with the function of the intangible asset.

A summary of the policies applied to the Company's intangible assets is as follows:

Software and program management system

Intangible assets include software which is being amortised over 1 – 3 years and the Company's program management system which is being amortised over 3 – 5 years from the go live date.

Useful life: Finite

Amortisation method use: Amortised over the period of expected future benefit from the related project on a straight-line basis.

Internally generated or acquired: Acquired

Impairment testing: When an indication of impairment exists. The amortisation method is reviewed at each financial year end.

Note 12. Trade and other payables

	2026 \$	2025 \$
Current liabilities		
Trade payables	1,274,374	52,536
Other payables	7,601,305	5,291,029
	8,875,679	5,343,565

Fair value

Due to the short term nature of these payables, their carrying value is assumed to approximate their fair value.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
for the year ended 30 June 2026

Accounting policy for trade and other payables

Trade payables and other payables are carried at amortised costs and represent liabilities for goods and services provided to the Company prior to the end of the financial year that are unpaid and arise when the Company becomes obliged to make future payments in respect of these goods or services. The amounts are unsecured, interest free and are usually paid within 30 days of recognition.

Note 13. Contract liabilities

	2026 \$	2025 \$
Current liabilities		
Contract liabilities	2,619,959	4,099,424

Accounting policy for contract liabilities

Contract liabilities represent grants received but not yet recognised as income. Grant terms and conditions require performance and return of unspent portions.

Note 14. Provisions

	2026 \$	2025 \$
Current liabilities		
Annual leave	1,019,480	950,183
Long service leave	241,998	108,359
Employee on costs	214,430	182,397
	1,475,908	1,240,939
Non-current liabilities		
Long service leave	217,350	244,291
Make good provision	-	412,599
	217,350	656,890

	2026 No.	2025 No.
Number of employees at year end (Full time equivalent)	98.7	97



NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

for the year ended 30 June 2026

Movements in provisions other than employee benefits

2026	Make good provision \$
Balance as at 1 July 2025	412,599
Amount utilised	(412,599)

Accounting policy for employee benefits

Wages and salaries and annual leave

Liabilities for wages and salaries, including non-monetary benefits and annual leave expected to be settled within 12 months of the reporting date are recognised in respect of employees' service up to the reporting date. They are measured at the amounts expected to be paid when the liabilities are settled.

Long service leave

The liability for long service leave is recognised and measured as the present value of expected future payments to be made in respect of services provided by employees up to the reporting date using the projected unit credit method. Consideration is given to expected future wage and salary levels, experience of employee departures, and periods of service. Expected future payments are discounted using marketing yields at the reporting date on corporate bonds with terms to maturity and currencies that match, as closely as possible, the estimated future cash outflows.

Defined contribution superannuation expense

Contributions to defined contribution superannuation plans are expensed in the period in which they are incurred.

Termination benefits

Termination payments include leave entitlements due at termination date, as well as redundancy payments in line with the Company's of Employment and Redundancy policy.

Note 15. Lease liabilities

	2026 \$	2025 \$
Current liabilities		
Lease liability	628,851	660,273
Non-current liabilities		
Lease liability	3,723,298	55,303
	4,352,149	715,576
	2026 \$	2025 \$
At the beginning of the financial year	715,576	1,325,854

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
for the year ended 30 June 2026

Additions	4,289,433	-
Lease payment	(728,998)	(641,743)
Accretion of interest	76,138	31,465
At the end of the financial year	4,352,149	715,576

The lease liability includes one lease for office premises as well as one lease for office equipment. At balance date the terms of these leases range from 36 to 60 months.

	Total lease payments		Present value of lease payments	
	2026 \$	2025 \$	2026 \$	2025 \$
Lease liability				
Within one year	926,789	672,731	894,441	660,273
After one year but not more than five years	4,118,748	55,442	3,391,957	55,303
After more than five years	90,044	-	65,751	-
	5,135,581	728,173	4,352,149	715,576

Accounting policy for lease liabilities

A lease liability is recognised at the commencement date of a lease. The lease liability is initially recognised at the present value of the lease payments to be made over the term of the lease, discounted using the interest rate implicit in the lease or, if that rate cannot be readily determined, the Company's incremental borrowing rate. Lease payments comprise of fixed payments less any lease incentives receivable, variable lease payments that depend on an index or a rate, amounts expected to be paid under residual value guarantees, exercise price of a purchase option when the exercise of the option is reasonably certain to occur, and any anticipated termination penalties. The variable lease payments that do not depend on an index or a rate are expensed in the period in which they are incurred.

Lease liabilities are measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method. The carrying amounts are remeasured if there is a change in the following: future lease payments arising from a change in an index or a rate used; residual guarantee; lease term; certainty of a purchase option and termination penalties. When a lease liability is remeasured, an adjustment is made to the corresponding right-of-use asset, or to profit or loss if the carrying amount of the right-of-use asset is fully written down.

Note 16. Retained surpluses

	2026 \$	2025 \$
Balance at the beginning of the year	109,222,627	100,649,018
Net (deficit)/surplus for the year	(294,108)	8,573,609
Retained surpluses at the end of the year	108,928,519	109,222,627

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

for the year ended 30 June 2026

	2026 \$	2025 \$
Reconciliation of net surplus for the year:		
Corporate net surplus	1,377,916	2,028,625
Research and development net surplus	(900,715)	8,305,482
Marketing net surplus	(771,309)	(1,760,498)
Net (deficit)/surplus	(294,108)	8,573,609

Funds	2026 \$	2025 \$
Funds – corporate		
Funds – corporate	13,653,485	12,275,569
Total corporate funds	13,653,485	12,275,569
Funds – R&D		
Unspent R&D levies	57,566,273	52,781,531
Levy industry strategic reserve	-	5,000,000
Non levy reserves	23,024,586	23,710,043
Total designated funds – R&D	80,590,859	81,491,574
Funds – marketing		
Unspent marketing levies	14,684,175	13,455,483
Levy industry strategic reserve	-	2,000,001
Total designated funds – marketing	14,684,175	15,455,484
Total funds	108,928,519	109,222,627

The net surplus at 30 June 2026 includes a deficit of \$1,672,024 of industry reserves, made up of a deficit of \$900,715 from research and development and a deficit of \$771,309 from marketing.

The company dissolved the Levy industry strategic reserve and returned \$5.0 million in R&D and \$2.0 million in Marketing reserves to the relevant contributing industries.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

for the year ended 30 June 2026

Non Levy Reserves relate to unspent Co-Investment income and government grant funding.

When managing capital, management's objective is to ensure the Company continues as a going concern as well as to maintain optimal returns for all stakeholders.

The Company is not subject to any externally imposed capital requirements.

For the year ended 30 June 2026 the Company has recognised corporate revenue, including corporate recoveries, income and interest of \$32,481,173. Corporate expenditure during this period amounted to \$31,103,257 resulting in a corporate surplus for the year of \$1,377,916. Corporate funds are used to manage the operations of the Company, while research and development and marketing retained funds represent deficit from expenditure in program investments exceeded industry funds received in the financial year.

Note 17. Key management personnel disclosures

Compensation

The compensation made to Directors and other members of key management personnel of the Company is set out below:

	2026 \$	2025 \$
Directors	657,122	622,128
Key management personnel	3,041,943	2,859,747
	3,699,065	3,481,875

At Horticulture Innovation Australia Limited, the key management personnel are the executive team. The executive pay is structured as a total remuneration package with superannuation payments made in accordance with the Superannuation Guarantee Legislation to the executive's choice of superannuation fund for the 2025 -2026 financial year. The balance of the executive's remuneration can be structured at the executive's discretion within the Company salary packaging policy. The Executive is eligible for a performance bonus based on criteria determined in consultation with the Board.

Note 18. Remuneration of auditors

During the financial year the following fees were paid or payable for services provided by RSM Australia, the auditor of the Company:

	2026 \$	2025 \$
Audit services – RSM Australia		
Audit of the financial statements	91,000	88,000
Other services – RSM Australia		
Preparation of the financial statements	5,300	5,150
Consulting services	17,000	34,000
	113,300	127,150



NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

for the year ended 30 June 2026

Note 19. Contingent liabilities

The Company had no contingencies as at 30 June 2026 (30 June 2025: none).

Note 20. Commitments

Estimates of the maximum amounts of commitment liabilities that may become payable:

	2026 \$	2025 \$
Research and development and marketing expenditure liabilities		
Within one year	143,619,595	129,066,996
After one year but not more than five years	227,068,946	270,486,158
After more than five years	271,814	17,085,007
	370,960,355	416,638,161
Bank guarantee facility	2,531,436	1,900,000

Note 21. Related party transactions

The Directors of the Company during the period were:

- Julie Bird (Chair).
- John Said (Deputy Chair).
- Victoria Taylor.
- Michael Nixon.
- Robert Mullins.
- Jan Vydra.
- Elke Cleverdon.
- Stephen McCutcheon.
- Cameron Mackay.

Because of the nature of the skills and other interests of Directors related to horticulture, there is potential for conflict of interest given the broad range of R&D and marketing projects undertaken by the Company. The Company keeps a register of Directors' declared conflicts of interest, and each Board meeting commences with a declaration of conflicts in relation to the agenda items.

Robert Mullins is a Director of Future Food Systems Ltd. During the reporting year Horticulture Innovation Australia Ltd provided funding for a project with Future Food Systems Ltd to the value of \$320,000 (2025: \$487,500).

Julie Bird is a non-executive Director of Cotton Research & Development Corporation. During the reporting year Horticulture Innovation Australia Ltd received Co-Investment contribution CRDC to the value of \$94,609 (2025: \$62,104).

Note 22. Events after the reporting period

No matter or circumstance has arisen since 30 June 2026 that has significantly affected, or may significantly affect the Company's operations, the results of those operations, or the Company's state of affairs in future financial years.

Directors' Declaration

In the Directors' opinion:

- the attached financial statements and notes comply with the Corporations Act 2001, the Australian Accounting Standards – Simplified Disclosures, the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012 and associated regulations, the Corporations Regulations 2001 and other mandatory professional reporting requirements;
- the attached financial statements and notes give a true and fair view of the Company's financial position as at 30 June 2026 and of its performance for the financial year ended on that date;
- there are reasonable grounds to believe that the Company will be able to pay its debts as and when they become due and payable and

Signed in accordance with a resolution of Directors made pursuant to section 295(5)(a) of the Corporations Act 2001.

On behalf of the Directors



Julie Bird, Chair

Dated this 25th day of August 2026



John Said, Deputy Chair

Dated this 25th day of August 2026





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INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT To the Members of Horticulture Innovation Australia Limited

Opinion

We have audited the financial report of Horticulture Innovation Australia Limited (the Company), which comprises the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2026, the statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income, the statement of changes in equity and the statement of cash flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including material accounting policy information, and the directors' declaration

In our opinion, the financial report of Horticulture Innovation Australia Limited has been prepared in accordance with Division 60 of the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012, including:

- (i) giving a true and fair view of the Company's financial position as at 30 June 2026 and of its financial performance and cash flows for the year ended on that date; and
- (ii) complying with Australian Accounting Standards – Simplified Disclosures under AASB 1060 General Purpose Financial Statements – Simplified Disclosures for For-Profit and Not-for-Profit Tier 2 Entities and Division 60 of the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Regulation 2022.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report section of our report. We are independent of the Horticulture Innovation Australia Limited in accordance with the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (the Code) that are relevant to our audit of the financial report in Australia. We have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Other Information

The directors are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the Company's annual report for the year ended 30 June 2026, but does not include the financial report and the auditor's report thereon.

Our opinion on the financial report does not cover the other information and accordingly we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

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In connection with our audit of the financial report, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial report, or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated.

If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact. We have nothing to report in this regard.

Responsibilities of the Directors for the Financial Report

The directors of the Company are responsible for the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards – Simplified Disclosures under AASB 1060 General Purpose Financial Statements – Simplified Disclosures for For-Profit and Not-for-Profit Tier 2 Entities and the Australian Charities and ACNC Act, and for such internal control as the directors determine is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view and is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial report, the directors are responsible for assessing Horticulture Innovation Australia Limited ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the directors either intend to liquidate the Company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

The the directors are responsible for overseeing the Company's financial reporting process.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of this financial report.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial report is located at the Auditing and Assurance Standards Board website at: http://www.auasb.gov.au/auditors_responsibilities/ar4.pdf. This description forms part of our auditor's report.



RSM AUSTRALIA PTY LTD



Peter Kanellis
Partner

Sydney, NSW
Dated: 25 August 2026





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AUDITOR'S INDEPENDENCE DECLARATION

In relation to our audit of the financial report of Horticulture Innovation Australian Limited for the year ended 30 June 2026, and in accordance with the requirements of Subdivision 60-C of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*, I declare that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, there have been:

- (i) no contraventions of the auditor independence requirements of any applicable code of professional conduct; and
- (ii) no non-audit services provided that contravene any applicable code of professional conduct.

RSM AUSTRALIA PTY LTD

Peter Kanellis
Partner

Sydney, NSW
Dated: 25 August 2026

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Hort Innovation Annual Report 2025/26

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**Hort
Innovation**

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