



Best Management Practice Quick Guide

An on-farm guide to Almond360



**ALMOND BOARD
OF AUSTRALIA**

**Hort
Innovation**
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**ALMOND
FUND**

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"The value I got out of (Almond360) was that I could identify the key drivers within our own business of where we needed to improve."

Rob Cox, Amaretto Almonds



"It really is something that is fast and relatively easy. If you aren't as efficient as you could be, there could be an opportunity to save money."

**Melina Mueller,
Walker Flat Almonds**

What is Almond360?

Almond360 is an almond industry adaptation of Hort360, an online best management practice (BMP) portal that helps growers assess their operations and compare their performance with other growers.

Almond360 is developed by the Almond Board of Australia in consultation with almond growers and other industry experts to ensure it meets the needs of Australian almond growers.

Benefits

Almond360 is designed to help almond growers identify risks and opportunities within their businesses.

Responding to these risks and opportunities may help to:

**Improve
business
management**

**Identify where
costs can be
reduced**

**Gain
efficiencies**

**Have a more
positive
impact on the
environment
and local
communities**



Register for Almond360 today

Modules

Almond360 is made up of a series of self-assessment modules on different topics designed to give growers a 360-degree view of their farming operations. All modules are multiple-choice and designed to make it easy for users to describe what they do on farm.



Better Business

Almond businesses face many challenges, often related to seasonal and environmental conditions, labour issues, and market volatility. Having the right processes in place can help producers better manage these challenges while maintaining financial stability.

- ✓ Implement a Business Management Plan
- ✓ Enable structured decision-making
- ✓ Monitor performance
- ✓ Plan for the future
- ✓ Implement sustainability and environmental management plans



Biodiversity

Increased biodiversity in almond orchards can help to improve air and water quality, build fertile, well-structured soils through the action of fungi, worms and bacteria, support beneficial birds and insects that aid pest and disease control, and reduce salinity.

- ✓ Meet regulatory requirements
- ✓ Implement a Biodiversity Management Program
- ✓ Promote native vegetation and crop diversity to support farm biodiversity



Biosecurity

Preventing pest incursions is a more cost-effective control option and contributes to the long-term sustainability, marketability and profitability of the Australian almond industry.

- ✓ Implement a Biosecurity Management Plan
- ✓ Conduct monitoring and surveillance to detect potential biosecurity threats early
- ✓ Ensure staff are trained in biosecurity procedures and best practices
- ✓ Manage site access and operation effectively to maintain strong biosecurity controls



Energy and Emissions

Increasing the energy efficiency of farm operations can help reduce costs, prevent interruptions to energy supply, optimise productivity, increase resilience in a changing climate, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

- ✓ Optimise energy efficiency across farm operations to reduce energy use and costs
- ✓ Manage fuel storage to prevent leaks and contamination
- ✓ Monitor and reduce greenhouse gas emissions



Integrated Pest and Disease Management

When not managed appropriately, pests and diseases can have significant economic impacts on almond production. Integrated Pest and Disease Management (IPDM) is an approach that does not have hard and fast rules, although a generally agreed aim of IPDM is to reduce reliance on chemical pesticides.

- ✓ Develop an Integrated Pest and Disease Management program
- ✓ Implement a schedule of monitoring for pests and disease
- ✓ Use cultural techniques to prevent and minimise pests and disease
- ✓ Implement pest and disease management strategies



Irrigation

Water is an important resource for almond production. Appropriate irrigation design, management, maintenance, and the use of scheduling technology can improve water use efficiency.

- ✓ Ensure a secure and reliable water supply and availability
- ✓ Evaluate infrastructure performance at the offtake
- ✓ Monitor and improve on-farm system efficiency
- ✓ Optimise scheduling and overall management practices
- ✓ Implement and review sustainability strategies



Managing Waste

Effective on-farm waste management protects soil, water and air quality, supports worker health and safety, and helps maintain community expectations (social licence to operate).

- ✓ Meet legislative requirements
- ✓ Implement a Waste Management Plan
- ✓ Identify opportunities to prevent, reuse or recycle waste
- ✓ Ensure waste is stored appropriately to prevent contamination and environmental harm
- ✓ Maintain records of waste management activities to support compliance





Nutrient

Almond trees require a balanced supply of nutrients and fertilisers to optimise the quality and yield of the current crop while supporting tree health and yield potential for the next season.

- ✓ Develop a Nutrient Management Plan
- ✓ Conduct soil and tissue monitoring to inform nutrient management decisions
- ✓ Understand your fertilisers
- ✓ Apply fertilisers correctly to maximise efficacy and minimise environmental impacts
- ✓ Store fertilisers safely to protect people, maintain product quality, and prevent environmental impacts



People and Place

The way your business operates can have an impact on both its employees and the broader community. Identify opportunities for your business to have a positive impact and improve workplace culture.

- ✓ Meet legislative requirements
- ✓ Improve workplace culture by fostering a positive, inclusive and safe environment
- ✓ Implement policies and procedures for personnel and farm labour management.
- ✓ Demonstrate leadership by engaging with and supporting the local community



Pollination

European honeybees (*Apis mellifera*) play an important role in almond production. Working closely with your beekeeper to provide a safe environment during blossom supports bee health and the long-term sustainability of both industries.

- ✓ Manage hive access to support healthy hives
- ✓ Promote bee health throughout pollination
- ✓ Maximise pollination efficiency to improve crop yield
- ✓ Ensure chemicals are used safely during bloom
- ✓ Reduce health and safety risks during pollination



Pesticide

Applying the **right amount** of the **right pesticide** at the **right time** is a key principle in successfully controlling pests and protecting the orchard environment.

- ✓ Plan spray applications appropriately to ensure safe and effective pesticide use
- ✓ Ensure staff and contractors receive appropriate training in chemical handling and application
- ✓ Spray equipment set up to maximise the efficacy of applications and minimise off-target impacts
- ✓ Maintain spray diaries to support planning and compliance
- ✓ Minimise off-site impacts such as spray drift, run-off and environmental contamination



Soil

Healthy soils support optimal plant growth by performing key functions such as storing and supplying water and nutrients, supporting biological activity, maintaining structure, and preventing erosion.

Improved soil health offers many benefits. It reduces runoff and erosion, retains more nutrients in organic forms, and limits nutrient loss to the environment.

- ✓ Apply management practices suited to soil type and topography
- ✓ Conduct regular monitoring to evaluate soil physical and chemical properties
- ✓ Implement sustainability strategies to maintain and improve soil health
- ✓ Mitigate soil-related risks such as sodicity, acidification, and erosion



Workplace Health and Safety (WHS)

Creating a safe work environment and fostering a safety culture are important to the long-term sustainability of your business. At the end of the day, we want everyone to get home safely.

- ✓ Meet legislative requirements related to WHS
- ✓ Develop a WHS policy to guide safe work practices
- ✓ Implement safe work procedures as part of the WHS management system
- ✓ Provide staff training and induction to ensure understanding of WHS practices
- ✓ Ensure the safe use, handling and storage of chemicals
- ✓ Promote employee wellbeing

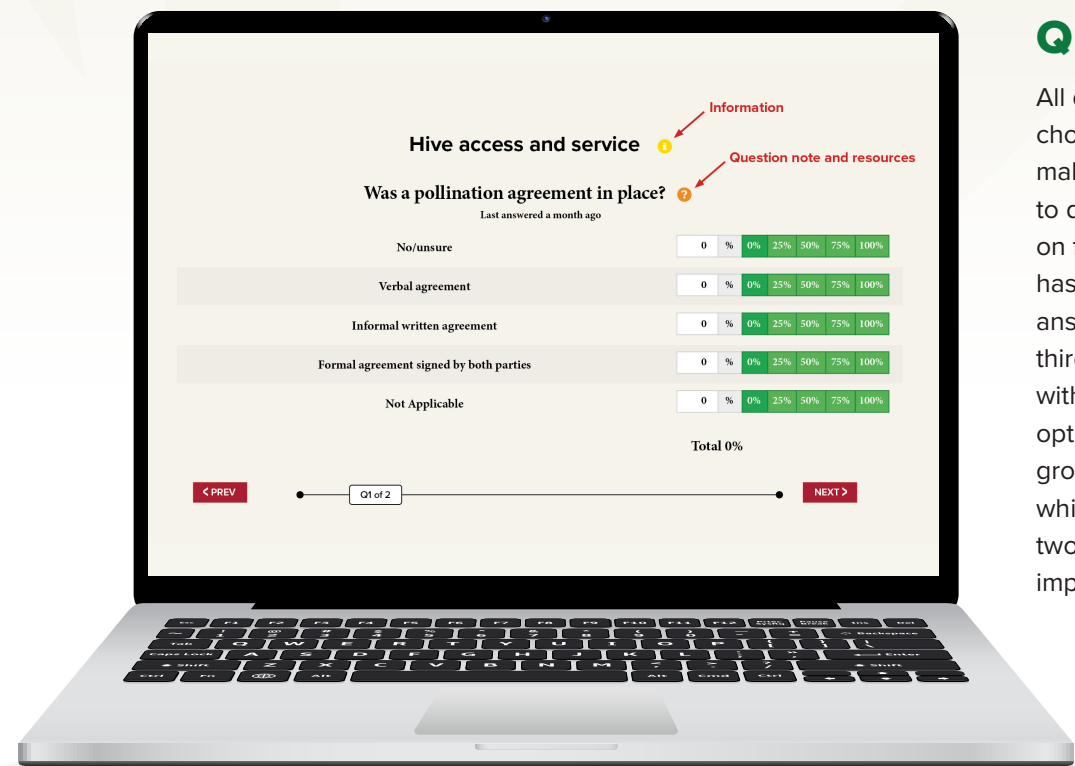


More about Almond360

How does it work?

The portal is free to use and is not audited, but it is designed to be a tool that helps growers assess their practices and identify areas for improvement whilst minimising administrative burden. On average, growers take 10-30 minutes to complete a module.

There is no pass or fail with Almond360. The best approach for almond growers is to be honest with themselves, as this will help them to gain a better understanding of the risks and opportunities present within their business.



Questions

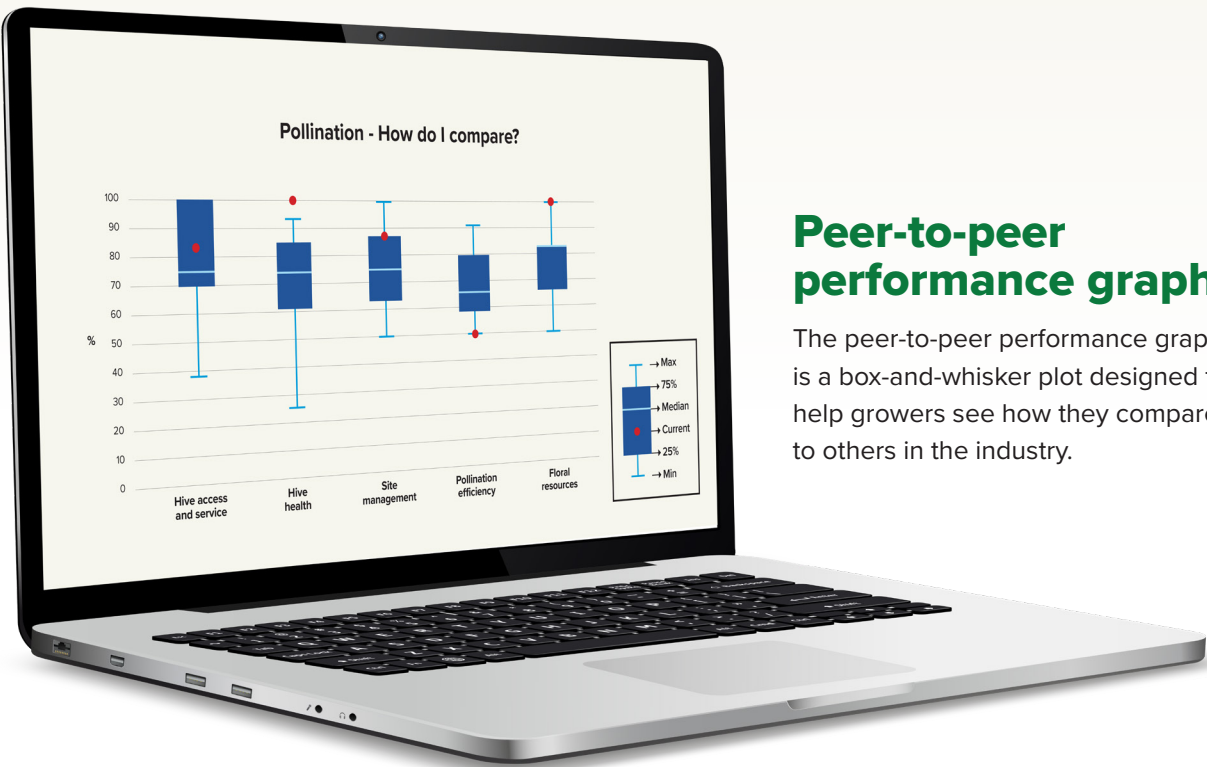
All questions are multiple choice and designed to make it easy for growers to describe what they do on farm. Each question has four multiple-choice answers. Generally, the third option is aligned with BMP, and the fourth option indicates that the grower is exceeding BMP, whilst options one and two indicate room for improvement.

Action plan

When each module is completed, an action plan is generated and includes a risk assessment for each question, external resources, actions to reduce risks, and a peer-to-peer performance graph. Growers will also receive a score for each question, with a score of 75% or higher indicating that best management practice is met or exceeded.

Risks, resources and actions

Each question is aligned to a risk assessment, which rates the responses as very high, high, moderate or low risk. In addition to the risk assessment, questions are aligned with actions and additional resources to help growers respond to risks and improve their on-farm practices. The actions are statements which describe how growers can respond to identified risks.

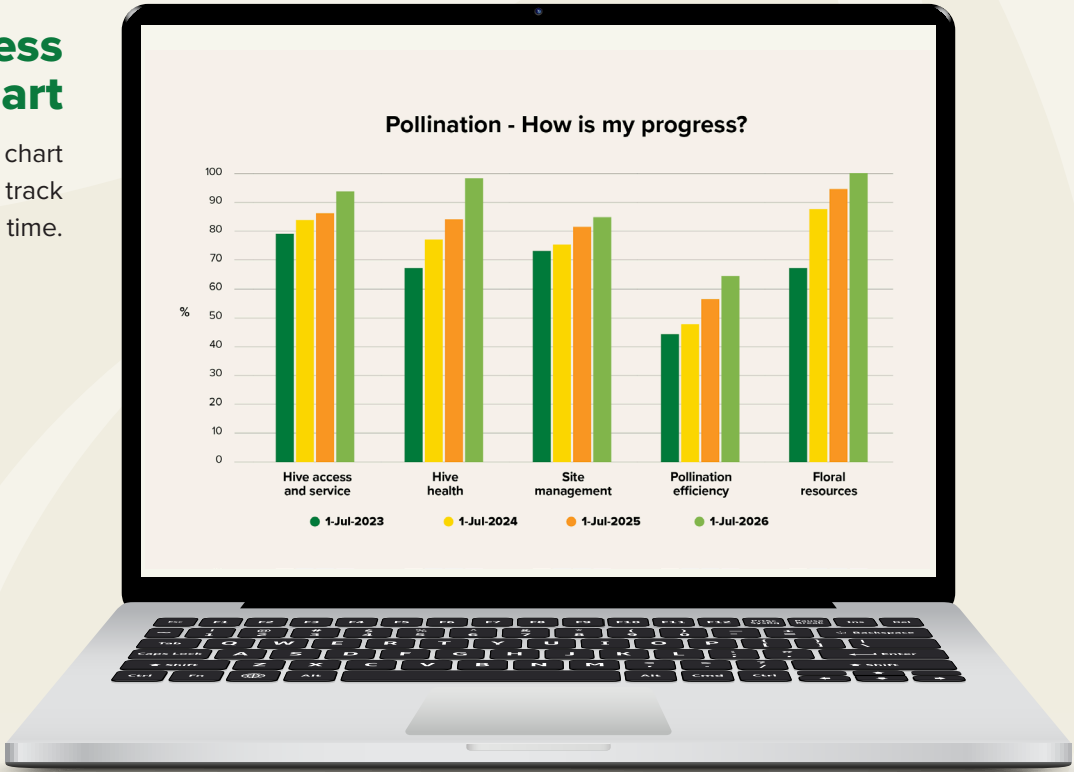


Peer-to-peer performance graph

The peer-to-peer performance graph is a box-and-whisker plot designed to help growers see how they compare to others in the industry.

Progress chart

The progress chart allows growers to track their progress over time.



Annual checklist

Complete each module at the most appropriate time of year to align with your operations, averaging just over one module per month across the 13 modules available.

JANUARY – FEBRUARY

- ☐ Irrigation
- ☐ Energy and Emissions

MARCH – APRIL

- ☐ Nutrient
- ☐ Soil

MAY – JUNE

- ☐ Better Business
- ☐ Managing Waste
- ☐ Biodiversity

JULY – AUGUST

- ☐ Pollination
- ☐ Biosecurity

SEPTEMBER – OCTOBER

- ☐ Integrated Pest and Disease Management
- ☐ Pesticide

NOVEMBER – DECEMBER

- ☐ Workplace Health and Safety
- ☐ People and Place



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