Final report

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Horticulture Innovation Australia – Asia Fruit Logistica 2026

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Public summary

This project helped Australian horticulture exporters and growers build their presence in key overseas markets by taking part at Asia Fruit Logistica 2026 in Hong Kong. The goal was to create a one unified Australian pavilion that showcased local produce and industry strengths, giving exhibitors a professional platform to connect with international buyers, industry partners and event delegates.

The project covered the planning, design, delivery and management of a 414sq.m Australian pavilion at the trade show. Pico Australia worked closely with exhibitors, offshore partners and service providers to deliver a refreshed pavilion design that met Australia's Nation Brand guidelines. This included designing and building the pavilion, coordinating exhibitors, developing artwork, managing logistics, handling installation and dismantling, set-up for chilled produce displays, and running hospitality and visitor engagement activities. To draw in more visitors, we also added chef-led tasting sessions, premium coffee service and a branded kangaroo mascot. Project management support ran from early planning right through to the event's completion.

The result was a strong, cohesive Australian presence that positioned local horticulture as a premium choice in the market. The refreshed design gave the pavilion a clear national identity while still meeting the varied needs of individual exhibitors. Strong coordination meant exhibitor requirements were met, products were displayed well, and support services ran smoothly. Overall, the project showed the value of Australian growers and exporters working together at international trade shows to raise their profile, promote their products and build lasting business relationships.

The project also generated useful insights for future trade exhibitions. Key recommendations include starting exhibitor artwork and signage earlier, placing the hospitality area more centrally to boost visitor engagement, adding live cooking demonstrations to produce displays, and using coordinated staff and presenter uniforms to strengthen brand presence. These findings, along with the full project outcomes, are set out in the post-event report available to stakeholders.

Introduction

This project supported the Australian horticulture industry's participation in Asia Fruit Logistica 2026, one of the region's leading fresh produce trade shows, held in Hong Kong. The focus was on creating a coordinated Australian presence through a 414sq.m national pavilion that brought growers, exporters and industry representatives together under one roof. The pavilion showcased Australian horticultural products, reinforced Australia's reputation for premium produce, and gave businesses a platform to connect with international buyers and trade stakeholders.

The project was designed to give Australian horticulture businesses an affordable, professional runway into key export markets. On their own, individual exhibitors often struggle to make a strong impact at large international trade shows because of the complexity involved in event logistics, design and onsite operations. By bringing everyone together under one Australian pavilion, exhibitors could share resources, present consistent branding, access centralised support, and benefit from a stronger, more unified presence in the market. The project also helped promote Australian produce through activities like tasting experiences, chef demonstrations and hospitality services, all designed to attract and engage potential customers and business partners.

This project matters to industry because it helped raise the visibility and competitiveness of Australian horticulture overseas. The refreshed pavilion presented Australian produce as a premium choice, while giving growers and exporters the chance to showcase their products, build business relationships and explore new export opportunities. Working together strengthened the industry's collective presence in the market and showed the real value of coordinated trade promotion in supporting export growth. The project also delivered practical lessons for future trade shows, including engaging exhibitors earlier, improving pavilion layouts, and finding better ways to activate and engage visitors. These lessons will help shape future events, ensuring ongoing value for industry participants.

Overall, this project played a key role in supporting Australia's horticulture export goals, providing an effective platform for promoting the industry, engaging stakeholders and growing international markets.

Methodology

The specific activities delivered for the project were:

- The 414sq.m Australian pavilion floor space was sub divided & designed to create a refreshed Australian pavilion design structure to suit the participating exhibitor booth requirements with a common hospitality booth space forming an Australian pavilion design that positioned Australian horticulture as a premium product in market & as a collaborative platform for growers, exporters & industry bodies to showcase their products in key export markets
- Worked together with our local Pico Hongkong team in fabricating, installing & dismantling of the Australian pavilion structure that was seamlessly delivered & handed over on time as per tender requirements
- Met the expectations & requirements of each of the participating co-exhibitors
- Pico Australia personnel provided the support in Australia prior to the event & supervised the install build handover to the Hort Innovation Trade Events Manager from bump-in to completion
- Assisted in editing /modifying existing artwork designs in accordance with the Nation brand guidelines to provide a consistent look & feel to the pavilion/exhibitor booths need
- Worked with co-exhibitors in enhancing their booth structures in terms of design structure or graphic artwork applications
- Worked with the offshore refrigerated equipment supplier in providing the refrigerated produce display requirements
- Worked with sourcing & engaging the value-added activities of produce tasting thru Chef presentations by a local Chef & presenter using Australian grower produce to prepare tasting platters for delegates / invited guests at the networking functions
- Seamlessly worked with third party service provider to support the service of premium coffee / supplies with a coffee barista service for the exhibition period
- Co-ordinated the design & purchase of a life size kangaroo mascot with hiring of local staff as mascots during exhibition days

Results and discussion

- Continuous engagement between Hort Innovation Australia's Trade Event Manager, Pico & the co-exhibitors helped in understanding & providing the assistance & elements needed to each exhibitor
- The refreshed pavilion design worked in highlighting the Australian Nation brand & forming a unified look/feel of the 414sq.m exhibitor booth space
- Exhibitor booth floor layouts worked in exhibitors having their display items, info desk, furniture items, branding signage & lighting positioned appropriately within their own allocated booth spaces
- Co-ordination with exhibitors pertaining to their furniture, electrical & refrigeration equipment needs helped in exhibitors receiving the items needed
- Co-ordination with 3rd party suppliers for the Chef demonstration & the barista coffee service worked in providing the live presentations & coffee service to exhibitors/delegates
- Commence co-ordination with exhibitors a bit early on their need for artwork / signage creation to assist us with finalizing the individual booth structure layouts & firm up the overall design structure
- Look into an option of centralizing the hospitality booth to be more central in creating a more engaging pavilion floor space
- Probably look at the option of the Chef having onsite prep & live cooking demonstration of the Australian produce
- Look at options of supporting the Chef presentations with probably an Australian presenter of East Asian heritage
- Possibly look at sourcing a Nation branded jacket / apron for the Chef & barista to portray a more planned / professional service

Recommendations

1. Start working with exhibitors earlier
Begin talking to exhibitors and collecting their artwork earlier in the planning process.
Set up a clear schedule for engaging with exhibitors before the event.
Bring deadlines forward for artwork, branding materials and booth requirements.
Finalise booth layouts and pavilion designs sooner, so there's less need for late changes.
***Benefit**:* Better-coordinated designs, happier exhibitors, and a smoother project overall.

2. Keep up the strong teamwork with stakeholders
Continue the collaborative way of working between the Trade Events Manager, event contractor, exhibitors and suppliers.
Hold regular check-ins and updates with stakeholders throughout planning and delivery.
Set up a clear way to gather and respond to exhibitor needs early.
***Benefit**:* Everyone stays on the same page, and exhibitor needs are consistently met.

3. Stick with the unified Australian pavilion approach
Keep using one cohesive design that reflects the Australian Nation Brand and presents a united industry front.
Build on what worked well in the 2026 pavilion design.
Keep branding, signage and visual style consistent across all exhibitor areas.
***Benefit**:* Australian horticulture stands out more, and produce is seen as a premium international offering.

4. Make the pavilion more engaging for visitors
Rethink where the hospitality area sits and how it works to create a more interactive experience.
Look at moving the hospitality area to a more central spot in the pavilion.
Design the space to encourage networking, product tasting and conversations with exhibitors.
Benefit: Visitors stay longer, make more connections, and the pavilion feels more alive.

5. Do more live produce demonstrations
Put Australian produce front and centre with live cooking demonstrations.
Add onsite food prep and cooking demos.
Highlight what makes the produce special — its quality and how it can be used.
Benefit: Visitors engage more, and Australian produce gets better exposure.

6. Make presentations feel more locally relevant
Bring in presenters who connect well with the local
audience.
Consider an Australian presenter of East Asian heritage to help with chef demos and storytelling.
Tailor presentations so they resonate more with buyers and audiences in the region.
***Benefit**:* Better audience engagement and a stronger, more relatable story about Australian produce.

7. Make the branding more consistent across all staff
Strengthen how professional and consistent the pavilion feels overall.
Get branded uniforms, aprons or jackets (using the Australian Nation Brand) for chefs, baristas and hospitality staff.
Build these branding standards into future supplier contracts.
Benefit: A more polished, professional pavilion that reinforces Australia's premium image.

8. Keep the visitor extras that worked well
Hold onto the visitor activities that were a hit during the event.
Continue chef-led tastings, quality coffee service and other hospitality touches.
Look for new interactive experiences to get visitors involved.
Benefit: Visitors keep coming back, stay engaged, and exhibitors get more chances to connect with buyers.

In short: Future Australian pavilions should build on what worked — the teamwork, unified branding and visitor activities from Asia Fruit Logistica 2026 — while planning earlier and adding more hands-on experiences to get the best results for Australian horticulture.