Final Report Cherry Industry Conference 2026

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Final report

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Public summary

The Cherry Industry Conference 2026, known as Cherry 2026, was delivered by Cherry Growers Australia (CGA) in Adelaide from 30 May to 1 June 2026. The project provided a national forum for growers, exporters, researchers, supply chain partners, sponsors and industry stakeholders to come together, share knowledge, strengthen relationships and discuss key priorities for the Australian cherry industry.

The project was developed to support improved industry connection, communication, knowledge sharing and collaboration, in line with the Cherry Strategic Investment Plan 2022–2026. The conference program was shaped around current industry needs, including productivity, profitability, export readiness, market development, biosecurity, research adoption, new technologies and future industry capability.

Cherry 2026 delivered a three-day program that included a Trade/Export Workshop, Welcome Reception, full-day National Cherry Industry Conference, Trade Show, Gala Dinner and Cherry Industry Awards, Industry Tour and Biosecurity Workshop. Strong attendance was recorded across the program, with 101 participants at the Export Workshop, 150 attending the Welcome Reception, 190 attending the full-day conference, 149 attending the Gala Dinner, 111 participating in the Industry Tour and 61 attending the Biosecurity Workshop.

Post-event feedback confirmed the value of the event for the industry. Survey results showed that 96% of conference respondents rated the conference Excellent or Good, 93% rated the program content Excellent or Good, 94% rated speakers and sessions Excellent or Good, and 98% indicated they would attend the next national conference. Networking was a standout outcome, with 100% of conference survey respondents reporting that they made new or stronger industry connections.

The project successfully delivered all planned outputs and contributed to stronger industry connection, improved knowledge exchange and increased visibility of current research, export, market development and biosecurity priorities. Key learnings will support future national cherry industry events, including the value of strong networking opportunities, grower-focused and technical content, high-profile keynote speakers, well-facilitated panel discussions and sufficient time for Industry Tour engagement.

Keywords

cherry industry; Australian cherries; industry conference; grower engagement; knowledge exchange; industry connection; export readiness; biosecurity; research adoption; industry networking; Cherry 2026;

Introduction

The Cherry Industry Conference 2026, known as Cherry 2026, was developed to provide a national forum for the Australian cherry industry to come together, share knowledge, strengthen relationships and engage with current and emerging industry priorities.

The Australian cherry industry operates in a changing environment, with growers, exporters and supply chain partners responding to cost pressures, workforce challenges, market access requirements, biosecurity risks, climate variability and the need to maintain fruit quality and profitability. At the same time, new research, technology, export opportunities and industry development activities continue to create opportunities for improvement and growth.

Cherry 2026 was designed to support improved communication, knowledge sharing and collaboration across the industry, in line with the Cherry Strategic Investment Plan 2022–2026. The project aligned with priorities relating to industry communication, extension, resilience, biosecurity capability and a more united, visible and capable Australian cherry industry.

The conference program was shaped around current industry needs and included practical grower content, research updates, export and market development sessions, biosecurity discussion, panel sessions, networking events, a trade exhibition, the Cherry Industry Awards and an Adelaide Hills Industry Tour. The event provided opportunities for growers, researchers, exporters, sponsors, exhibitors and supply chain stakeholders to engage directly with one another and consider practical information relevant to their businesses and the broader future of the Australian cherry industry.

Cherry 2026 was delivered by Cherry Growers Australia in partnership with Conference Solutions and supported by Hort Innovation using the cherry research and development levy and contributions from the Australian Government.

Methodology

Cherry 2026 was delivered as a national industry development and extension event for the Australian cherry industry. The project used a conference-based delivery model to bring together growers, exporters, researchers, supply chain partners, sponsors, exhibitors and industry stakeholders for knowledge sharing, networking and practical industry engagement.

Project delivery was guided by the project monitoring and evaluation (M&E) plan, which identified the project's alignment with Cherry Strategic Investment Plan outcomes relating to improved industry communications, knowledge sharing, extension, resilience, biosecurity capability and a united, visible and capable industry. The M&E Plan also outlined the project logic, key evaluation questions, performance expectations, data collection methods and reporting approach.

Planning and delivery were undertaken by Cherry Growers Australia in partnership with Conference Solutions, with support from the Cherry 2026 Conference Committee. The planning process included program development, venue and supplier coordination, speaker and sponsor engagement, communications planning, registration management, risk monitoring, development of the Industry Tour, and coordination of the Trade/Export Workshop, Biosecurity Workshop, Welcome Reception, Trade Show, Gala Dinner and Cherry Industry Awards.

The three-day program was delivered in Adelaide from 30 May to 1 June 2026. The program included a Trade/Export Workshop, the opening of the Trade Show and Welcome Reception on Saturday 30 May, the full-day National Cherry Industry Conference, Trade Show, Gala Dinner and Cherry Industry Awards on Sunday 31 May, and the Industry Tour and Biosecurity Workshop on Monday 1 June. The Industry Tour was delivered across Adelaide Hills orchards and industry sites and provided practical exposure to orchard systems, protected cropping, technology, sustainability, water management, business diversification, packhouse operations and automation.

Communications and engagement activities were delivered before, during and after the event through CGA communication channels, including the CGA website, newsletters, email communications, social media, media releases and post-event video and audio-visual content. Approved professional images from the event were made available through the CGA Member Area, and additional links to videos, media releases and media coverage were used to extend the reach of conference outcomes beyond the delegates who attended in person.

Project performance was evaluated using registration and attendance records, post-event delegate surveys, Industry Tour and Gala Dinner feedback, Conference Committee review, verbal feedback, communications outputs and retained project records. Survey results were collated and reviewed by the Conference Committee at a post-event meeting on 24 June 2026. These findings were used to assess project delivery, identify key outcomes and capture recommendations for future national cherry industry events.

Photos/images/other audio-visual material

Photos and audio-visual materials from Cherry 2026 are held by Cherry Growers Australia. The images included in this report are approved conference images used to support project reporting and industry communication.

High-resolution copies of images used in this report can be supplied separately for printing purposes, with available photographer details, image descriptions and usage information.

Description: Conference delegates at a Cherry 2026 conference session, Adelaide Convention Centre 31 May.

Credit: Cherry Growers Australia.

Photographer: James Field Photography

Date taken: 31 May 2026

Usage: Image retained by Cherry Growers Australia for project reporting and industry communication purposes.

Description: Conference delegates and industry participants from the Cherry 2026 Industry Tour, Ceravolo's Orchard.

Credit: Cherry Growers Australia.

Photographer: James Field Photography

Date taken: 1 June 2026

Usage: Image retained by Cherry Growers Australia for project reporting and industry communication purposes.

Results and discussion

Cherry 2026 was delivered successfully in Adelaide from 30 May to 1 June 2026, with all core project activities completed. The event provided a national forum for the Australian cherry industry, combining conference sessions, workshops, networking, a trade exhibition, an Industry Tour, Gala Dinner and Cherry Industry Awards.

Attendance was strong across the three-day program, with participation recorded across all key project outputs.

Table 1. Cherry 2026 participation summary

Activity	Date	Attendance
Trade/Export Workshop	30 May 2026	101
Welcome Reception	30 May 2026	150
National Cherry Industry Conference	31 May 2026	190
Gala Dinner and Cherry Industry Awards	31 May 2026	149
Industry Tour	1 June 2026	111
Biosecurity Workshop	1 June 2026	61

Post-event evaluation confirmed strong delegate satisfaction and demonstrated that the project achieved its intended purpose of supporting knowledge exchange, industry connection and engagement with current industry priorities. A total of 47 conference day surveys and 50 Industry Tour/Gala Dinner surveys were received. Survey questions used a rating scale of **Excellent, Good, Fair and Poor**, with results reported as the combined percentage of respondents selecting Excellent or Good where appropriate.

Survey results showed that 96% of conference respondents rated the conference Excellent or Good, 93% rated the program content Excellent or Good, 94% rated speakers and sessions Excellent or Good, and 98% indicated they would attend the next national conference. Networking was a standout result, with 100% of conference survey respondents reporting that they made new or stronger industry connections. The newly introduced QR-coded name tags for effortless contact sharing were very well received and supported this outcome by making it easier for delegates to exchange contact details and continue conversations beyond the event.

The Industry Tour was one of the strongest rated components of Cherry 2026. Of the 50 Industry Tour/Gala Dinner survey respondents, 37 rated the tour Excellent, 12 rated it Good and one rated it Fair, meaning 98% rated the tour Excellent or Good. The tour also demonstrated clear value for practical learning, with 70% of respondents indicating that it provided ideas, practices or technologies they could apply, and a further 24% responding Maybe.

The most valued part of the tour was orchard visits and grower discussions, selected by 52% of respondents, followed by technology demonstrations, the packhouse visit, sustainability and water initiatives, networking opportunities and protected cropping systems.

Additional feedback from the SARDI/NOS cherry field walk evaluation supported the value of practical, in-field learning. The field walk received an average rating of 5.00 out of 5 for being worth attending, 4.86 out of 5 for content presentation and 4.33 out of 5 for giving participants greater confidence to investigate similar orchard systems for their own business or clients.

The Industry Tour visited Ceravolo's Orchards, with three sessions:

- Session 1 - Sustainability and water management
- Session 2 - Ashton Valley Juice production and business diversification
- Session 3 - Packhouse tour, automation and robotics

The Industry Tour visited Flavell's Orchards, with three sessions:

- Session 1 - Training Systems - UFO, Pergola, V Trellis Systems (PIRSA)
- Session 2 - Protected cropping and robotics (G2 and Agri Automation Australia)
- Session 3 - Drone technology for bird deterrents and crop nutrition (Falcon UAV, Muirs)

The Gala Dinner and Cherry Industry Awards supported the project's objective of strengthening industry pride and recognition. The Together, We Grow theme was well received, and the event created an opportunity to celebrate leadership, contribution and achievement across the Australian cherry industry. Industry awards recipients were selected through a robust nomination assessment process. Award criteria were developed and published, and nominations reviewed by an awards committee. This year, four nominees were selected for awards:

- Young Achievement: Matt Batinich NSW
- Industry Leadership: Andrew Smith VIC
- Lifetime Achievement: Geoff Hall NSW
- Lifetime Achievement Kym Green SA

The level of sponsorship interest was indicative of the value the conference provided to stakeholders. Additional networking time was built into the program and conversations with the trade show exhibiters was evident throughout the conference. Formal sponsor and exhibitor feedback was also collected following the event. While the response base was limited, with two responses received, feedback was positive and supported the value of the event for sponsor engagement, industry connection and relationship building. Future events should continue to collect structured feedback from delegates, sponsors and exhibitors, with a focus on improving sponsor and exhibitor response rates.

Table 3. Cherry 2026 presentation summary

Sponsorship	Number	Sponsor
Welcome Reception	1	Achmea Farm Insurance
Gala Dinner	1	Steritech
Industry Conference	3	Unitec, Tomra, Voen
Industry Tour	5	Falcon UAV, Muirs, G2, Agri Automation Australia
Exhibitors	25	ABC Software, Ag Nova Tech, AgPick, Agrinova, Biostart, Cravo, Cropx, Dataphyll Ellips, Falcon UAV, G2, GS1, HORT 11, Hybrid Ag, JTech, MAF Oceania, Muirs, Netpro, New Edges Microbials (NEM), Pick & Packer, Redpath, Reemoon Sorting AUS, Ryset Australia, Visy 13

The program was well received by all delegates. The most highly valued session was Professor David Hughes' keynote, *The Premium Advantage: What Global Fruit Markets Can Teach Australian Cherry Growers*, selected by 60% of conference survey respondents. Other highly valued sessions included;

- *Growing Demand at Home and Abroad Q&A*,
- *Unlocking Production Opportunities*,
- *Driving Demand for Australian Cherries*,
- the Technical Panel Discussion,
- the Grower Panel and
- *Setting the Scene* sessions

Table 2. Cherry 2026 sponsorship summary

Presenter	Organisation	Presentation Title
Alison Jones	CGA	Cherry Growers Australia - One Industry, Moving Forward
Dumi Mhlanga	Hort Innovation	Hort Innovation Strategic Investment Priorities for the Australian Cherry Industry
Jessica Fearnley-Pattison	NSW DPIRD	Emerging Cherry Leaders: Reflections and Voices Shaping the Future
Wayne Prowse	Fresh Intelligence Consulting	Global Production and Trade Trends - from Australia's perspective
Jessica Fearnley-Pattison	NSW DPIRD	Climate Impacts on Cherry Production: What We're Learning
Craig Shepherd	Applied Agricultural Remote Sensing Centre	The Australian Cherry Industry: Scale, Growth and Outlook
Sam Turner	Turner & Co	Future Technologies for Efficiencies
Robert Poole,	CVA Australia	Making Compliance Work for Your Business
Michael Rogers	Agri Labour Australia	Smarter Labour Management in the Orchard
Professor David Hughes - Dr Food		The Premium Advantage: What Global Fruit Markets can Teach Australian Cherry Growers
Jonathan Cox,	Stratforms	Trends in International Marketing
Deb Beverley,	Hort innovation	Delivering Quality for our Domestic Markets
Mark Loeffen,	Delytics	Monitoring Cherry Supply Chain Quality
Tristan Kitchener,	Kitchener Partners	Building Demand to Match Supply
Penny Measham	CGA	Cherry Growers Australia's Strategic Direction and Future
Grower Panel Session		Production Challenges and Opportunities: Panel Discussion & Q&A Irrigation - Ian Goodwin, AgVic Production - Sam Smee, Muirs Cherry Varieties - Chris Owens, Bloom Fresh Producing Cherry Quality and Nutrition - Nigel Swarts, TIA Protected Cropping - Summer Song, NSW DPIRD
Technical Panel Session		Grower Perspectives: Where to Invest Time and Resources: Panel Discussion & Q&A VICTORIA - Andrew Smith, Smiths Fruit SOUTH AUSTRALIA – Kym Green NEW SOUTH WALES - Matt Batinich, Cherrymore SOUTH AUSTRALIA - Joe Ceravolo, Ceravolos Orchards

The post-event review identified several opportunities for future improvement. Delegates and committee members supported retaining strong networking opportunities, continuing the Emerging Cherry Leaders session in the main program, engaging a high-profile keynote speaker, and maintaining panel discussion formats. Areas for improvement included allowing more time for panel discussions and audience questions, increasing technical and agronomic content, allowing more time at Industry Tour stops, and considering a full-day Industry Tour.

Overall, the results demonstrate that Cherry 2026 achieved strong participation, high delegate satisfaction and clear value for the Australian cherry industry. Detailed evaluation findings are provided in Appendix 2: Cherry 2026 delegate feedback summary. Detailed survey data and raw survey exports are retained on file by Cherry Growers Australia.

Photos/images/other audio-visual material

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High-resolution copies of images used in this report can be supplied separately for printing purposes, with available photographer details, image descriptions and usage information.

Speaker presentations

Cherry 2026 photos

Description: Production challenges and opportunities Technical Panel discussion, Adelaide Convention Centre 31 May.

Credit: Cherry Growers Australia.

Photographer: James Field Photography

Date taken: 31 May 2026

Usage: Image retained by Cherry Growers Australia for project reporting and industry communication purposes.

Description: Kym Green asking a question during a panel session during the Cherry 2026 conference.

Credit: Cherry Growers Australia.

Photographer: James Field Photography

Date taken: 31 May 2026

Usage: Image retained by Cherry Growers Australia for project reporting and industry communication purposes.

Description: Brett Fifield, Hort Innovation CEO addressing the guests at the National Wine Centre Gala Dinner Cherry 2026.

Credit: Cherry Growers Australia.

Photographer: James Field Photography

Date taken: 31 May 2026

Usage: Image retained by Cherry Growers Australia for project reporting and industry communication purposes.

Description: Delegates and industry tour participants at Andy Flavells orchard for the Cherry 2026 Industry Tour in the Adelaide Hills

Credit: Cherry Growers Australia.

Date taken: 1 June 2026

Usage: Image retained by Cherry Growers Australia for project reporting and industry communication purposes.

Outputs

The following outputs were delivered through Cherry 2026 in line with the project M&E Plan and final event program. Supporting evidence includes the final digital program, attendance records, delegate feedback, post-event review, communications outputs and media materials retained by Cherry Growers Australia.

Table 1. Output summary

Output	Description	Detail
Trade / Export Workshop	The Trade / Export Workshop, 'Moving to a Digital Export Future', was delivered on Saturday 30 May 2026 at the Adelaide Convention Centre as part of the Cherry 2026 program. The workshop was targeted to growers, exporters and supply chain stakeholders and focused on export development, showcasing the new digital systems and future trade readiness.	101 participants attended (of which nearly 45% were growers). Supporting evidence includes the final digital program, attendance records and project records retained by Cherry Growers Australia. Refer Appendix 1: Cherry 2026 final digital program.
Welcome Reception and networking function	The Welcome Reception was delivered on Saturday 30 May 2026 at the Adelaide Convention Centre as the opening networking function for Cherry 2026. The event provided an informal opportunity for growers, exporters, researchers, sponsors, exhibitors and industry stakeholders to connect ahead of the main conference program.	150 participants attended (of which approx.. 35% were growers, the major participant group of approx.. 40% were industry stakeholders). The reception supported the project's focus on strengthening industry connections and was supported by delegate name tags with QR-coded contact sharing. Supporting evidence includes the final digital program, attendance records, event photography, delegate feedback and project records retained by Cherry Growers Australia. Refer Appendix 1: Cherry 2026 final digital program.
Industry Trade show	The Industry Trade Show was delivered on from Saturday 30 May to Sunday 31 May 2026 at the Adelaide Convention Centre as part of National Cherry Industry Conference. The Trade Show provided an opportunity for suppliers, technology providers, service providers, sponsors and industry partners to showcase products, services and innovations relevant to the Australian cherry industry.	The Trade Show included 33 exhibitors and was open to delegates from the Trade/Export Workshop and Welcome Reception on Saturday 30 May through to the conclusion of the full-day National Cherry Industry Conference on Sunday 31 May 2026. The Trade Show was accessible during scheduled breaks, networking periods and key delegate movement times across the two-day program. Supporting evidence includes the final digital program, exhibitor records, sponsorship and exhibitor records, event photography, sponsor and exhibitor feedback and project records retained by Cherry Growers Australia. Refer Appendix 1: Cherry 2026 final digital program.

Full Day National Cherry Industry Conference	The full-day National Cherry Industry Conference was delivered on Sunday 31 May 2026 at the Adelaide Convention Centre. The program included keynote presentations, industry updates, technical sessions, grower and expert panel discussions, market development content and presentations focused on research, production, export, technology and future industry priorities.	190 participants attended the full-day conference, including exhibitors and staff. Approximately 40% of all attendees were growers. Supporting evidence includes the final digital program, attendance records, delegate feedback summary, event photography, presentation materials and project records retained by Cherry Growers Australia. Refer Appendix 1: Cherry 2026 final digital program Appendix 2: Cherry 2026 delegate feedback summary.
Gala Dinner and Cherry Awards Ceremony	The Gala Dinner and Cherry Industry Awards Ceremony was delivered on Sunday 31 May 2026 at the National Wine Centre. The event provided a formal networking and celebration opportunity for growers, industry stakeholders, sponsors, exhibitors and partners, and recognised contribution, leadership and achievement across the Australian cherry industry.	149 participants attended the Gala Dinner and Cherry Industry Awards Ceremony with nearly 50% grower attendance. The event supported the project's objective of strengthening industry pride, recognition and connection under the Cherry 2026 theme, Together, We Grow. Supporting evidence includes the final digital program, attendance records, event photography, delegate feedback and project records retained by Cherry Growers Australia. Refer Appendix 1: Cherry 2026 final digital program Appendix 2: Cherry 2026 delegate feedback summary.
Industry Tour	The Industry Tour was delivered on Monday 1 June 2026 in the Adelaide Hills. The tour provided practical, in-field learning opportunities for growers, researchers, exporters, service providers and industry stakeholders through visits to two orchard sites, Flavell's Fruit Sales and Ceravolo's Orchard, followed by lunch and networking at Ginko Golding Wines.	111 participants attended the Industry Tour and attracted the largest grower participation of approx.. 55%. The tour included site rotations focused on training systems, protected cropping, robotics, drone technology, bird deterrents, crop nutrition, sustainability, water management, value-added production, business diversification, packhouse operations, automation and robotics. Supporting evidence includes the final digital program, attendance records, Industry Tour feedback, event photography, SARDI/NOS field walk evaluation and project records retained by Cherry Growers Australia. Refer Appendix 1: Cherry 2026 final digital program Appendix 2: Cherry 2026 delegate feedback summary.

Biosecurity Workshop	The Biosecurity Workshop, Tackling Threats Together, was delivered on Monday 1 June 2026 at the Adelaide Convention Centre following the Industry Tour. The workshop was targeted to growers, industry stakeholders and supply chain participants and focused on biosecurity awareness, preparedness and shared responsibility across the Australian cherry industry.	61 participants attended the Biosecurity Workshop with approx.. 35% grower attendance across cherry, summerfruit and apple production. Supporting evidence includes the final digital program, attendance records, workshop records, delegate feedback and project records retained by Cherry Growers Australia. Refer Appendix 1: Cherry 2026 final digital program
Evaluation and Post Event Review	Post-event evaluation was completed to assess delegate satisfaction, program relevance, knowledge exchange, networking outcomes and opportunities for future improvement. Evaluation activities included delegate surveys, Industry Tour and Gala Dinner feedback, sponsor and exhibitor feedback, verbal feedback from delegates and stakeholders, targeted post-event follow-up calls, SARDI/NOS field walk evaluation and Conference Committee review.	47 conference day surveys and 50 Industry Tour/Gala Dinner surveys were received. Sponsor and exhibitor feedback was also collected, with two responses received. Additional verbal feedback was received during and after the event, and targeted post-event follow-up calls were undertaken by the CGA CEO to gather further stakeholder feedback. The Conference Committee reviewed event outcomes and feedback at a post-event meeting on 24 June 2026. Supporting evidence includes the delegate feedback summary, survey data, sponsor and exhibitor feedback, committee review records and project records retained by Cherry Growers Australia. Refer Appendix 2: Cherry 2026 delegate feedback summary.
Conference Communications, Presentations and Media Outputs	Conference communications, presentations and media outputs were delivered before, during and after Cherry 2026 to support event promotion, delegate engagement, sponsor recognition and post-event sharing of outcomes. Communications plans were developed and implemented across CGA channels, including the CGA website, email communications, newsletters and social media. Activities also included media releases, presentation materials, post-event video content, media coverage and a dedicated Emerging Cherry Leaders montage video.	Communications were delivered across CGA channels before, during and after Cherry 2026, including website updates, email and newsletter communications, social media content, media releases, presentation materials, video content and media coverage. Social media analytics for the reporting period demonstrated strong visibility and engagement across CGA channels: • **LinkedIn:** 60,799 impressions and 1,791 engagement actions. • **Facebook:** 67,269 views and 1,200 content interactions. • **Instagram:** 23,658 views and 672 content interactions. Supporting evidence includes communications plans, social media analytics, website and event page records, email and

		newsletter communications, media release links, presentation materials, video links, media coverage and communications records retained by Cherry Growers Australia. Refer Appendix 3: Cherry 2026 communications and media summary.
Event Branding and Delegate Materials	Event branding and delegate materials were developed to support the professional delivery of Cherry 2026 and provide a consistent delegate, sponsor and exhibitor experience. Materials included event branding, signage, sponsor and exhibitor recognition materials, digital program materials, delegate name tags, exhibitor bags, gifts and conference collateral.	Delegate name tags included QR-coded contact sharing to support networking and easier exchange of contact details between participants. Supporting evidence includes final design files, signage records, name tag records, digital program materials, event photography and project records retained by Cherry Growers Australia.

Photos/images/other audio-visual material

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High-resolution copies of images used in this report can be supplied separately for printing purposes, with available photographer details, image descriptions and usage information.

Outcomes

The following outcomes were achieved through the delivery of Cherry 2026 and are aligned with the project M&E Plan and Cherry SIP priorities.

Table 2. Outcome summary

Outcome	Alignment to fund outcome, strategy and KPI	Description	Evidence
Greater industry collaboration and knowledge exchange	Aligns with Cherry SIP Outcome 3, improved industry communications, knowledge sharing and extension.	Cherry 2026 provided a national forum for growers, exporters, researchers, service providers, sponsors and industry stakeholders to share knowledge, discuss current priorities and strengthen industry relationships through conference sessions, panel discussions, workshops, the Trade Show, networking functions and the Industry Tour.	Strong participation was recorded across all program components, including 190 conference delegates, 101 Trade/Export Workshop participants, 150 Welcome Reception attendees and 111 Industry Tour participants. Survey results showed that 100% of conference survey respondents made new or stronger industry connections.
Stronger industry networks and stakeholder engagement	Aligns with Cherry SIP Outcomes 3 and 5, supporting improved communication and a more united, visible and capable industry.	The event strengthened connections across the cherry industry by creating multiple formal and informal opportunities for delegates, sponsors, exhibitors and industry partners to connect. The newly introduced QR-coded name tags for effortless contact sharing supported networking and was well received by delegates.	Networking was a standout result, with 100% of conference survey respondents reporting new or stronger industry connections. Sponsor and exhibitor follow-up was completed after the event, and additional verbal feedback was gathered through CGA follow-up conversations and post-event stakeholder engagement.
Improved understanding of export, production, R&D and biosecurity priorities	Aligns with Cherry SIP Outcomes 3 and 4, supporting knowledge sharing, research adoption, resilience and biosecurity capability.	Cherry 2026 improved access to information on key industry priorities through the Trade/Export Workshop, National Cherry Industry Conference, technical and grower panels, the Industry Tour and Biosecurity Workshop. Program content focused on export readiness, production challenges, market development, research, technology, protected	Survey results showed that 93% of conference respondents rated the program content Excellent or Good, 94% rated speakers and sessions Excellent or Good, and 91% indicated they planned to adopt a new practice, tool or idea from the program. The Industry Tour also received strong feedback for practical, in-field learning.

		cropping, automation and biosecurity awareness.	
Enhanced industry pride, visibility and recognition	Aligns with Cherry SIP Outcome 5, supporting a united, visible and capable Australian cherry industry.	Cherry 2026 increased industry visibility and pride through the Gala Dinner and Cherry Industry Awards, the Together, We Grow theme, sponsor and exhibitor recognition, media and communications activity, event photography, video content post-event sharing of outcomes.	The Gala Dinner and Cherry Industry Awards were attended by 149 participants and provided a formal opportunity to recognise contribution, leadership and achievement across the Australian cherry industry. Communications activity across CGA channels supported wider promotion and post-event visibility, with selected social media analytics showing strong reach and engagement across LinkedIn, Facebook and Instagram.

Monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation for Cherry 2026 was guided by the project M&E Plan and focused on delivery, participation, delegate satisfaction, knowledge exchange, networking outcomes, relevance to industry priorities and opportunities for future improvement.

Table 3. Key Evaluation Questions

Key Evaluation Question	Project performance	Continuous improvement opportunities
Effectiveness	Cherry 2026 achieved its intended delivery outcomes, with all planned components completed across the three-day program. Strong participation was recorded across the conference, workshops, networking functions, Trade Show, Gala Dinner and Awards, Industry Tour and Biosecurity Workshop, demonstrating effective delivery and strong industry engagement.	Future events should retain the three-day format, while allowing more time for high-value components identified through feedback, including technical sessions, panel discussions, audience questions and Industry Tour site engagement.
Relevance	Delegate feedback confirmed that the program was relevant to current industry needs. The strongest responses were linked to practical, grower-focused content, market development, production challenges, technical discussion, export readiness and future industry priorities.	Future programs should continue to balance strategic industry content with practical grower-focused and technical sessions, including production, varieties, market development, technology and biosecurity.
Process appropriateness	The event format was appropriate for the target audience, combining formal conference sessions, panel discussions, workshops, a Trade Show, networking functions, an Industry Tour and industry recognition. Feedback indicated that delegates valued the mix of structured learning, practical field engagement and informal networking.	Future events should maintain a mix of conference, trade, networking and field-based activities, while improving flow between sessions, allowing more time for audience questions and strengthening facilitation of panel discussions.
Engagement	Cherry 2026 successfully engaged growers, exporters, researchers, sponsors, exhibitors, service providers and industry stakeholders. Networking was a standout result, supported by the Welcome Reception, Trade Show, Gala Dinner, Industry Tour and QR-coded name tags for effortless contact sharing.	Future events should continue to prioritise delegate connection, with strong networking spaces, practical contact-sharing tools, sponsor and exhibitor engagement, and opportunities for follow-up conversations after the event.

Efficiency	The project was delivered within the planned timeframe and benefited from coordinated planning between Cherry Growers Australia, Conference Solutions, the Conference Committee, sponsors, exhibitors, venues and industry partners. Shared planning, coordinated event logistics and existing CGA communication channels supported efficient delivery.	Future events should continue to use coordinated project planning, clear supplier timelines and early communications planning. Sponsor, exhibitor and delegate feedback should be collected as soon as possible after the event to improve response rates and support future planning.

Recommendations

Future national cherry industry events should continue to build on the successful Cherry 2026 format, with a focus on practical grower value, strong networking, industry visibility and clear links to current research, export, production and biosecurity priorities.

Key recommendations include:

- Retain the three-day format, including workshops, conference sessions, Trade Show, networking functions, Gala Dinner and Industry Tour.
- Allow more time for technical sessions, panel discussions, audience questions and grower-led discussion.
- Consider a full-day Industry Tour or longer site visits to allow more time for practical, in-field learning and discussion.
- Continue using tools that support delegate connection, including QR-coded name tags for effortless contact sharing.
- Continue collecting structured delegate, sponsor and exhibitor feedback soon after the event to support future planning and improvement.

Refereed scientific publications

Not applicable. No refereed scientific publications were produced through this project.

References

Cherry Growers Australia. *Cherry 2026 Final Digital Program*. 2026.
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Intellectual property

No commercial project IP or commercialisation to report.

Project materials developed for Cherry 2026 included the final digital program, event communications, website and event page content, signage, delegate materials, presentation materials, photography, video content and project records. These materials are retained by Cherry Growers Australia for project reporting, industry communication and future event planning purposes.

Materials developed by Cherry Growers Australia are retained as CGA project materials. Where materials include third-party content, including speaker presentations, sponsor or exhibitor materials, logos, photography, video or supplier-created content, use remains subject to the relevant permissions, acknowledgements or usage rights.

No royalties, licence fees, patents, trademarks, plant breeder's rights or commercialisation activities were generated through this project, and no IP-related issues were identified.

Acknowledgements

Cherry Growers Australia acknowledges Hort Innovation for supporting Cherry 2026 through the cherry research and development levy and contributions from the Australian Government.

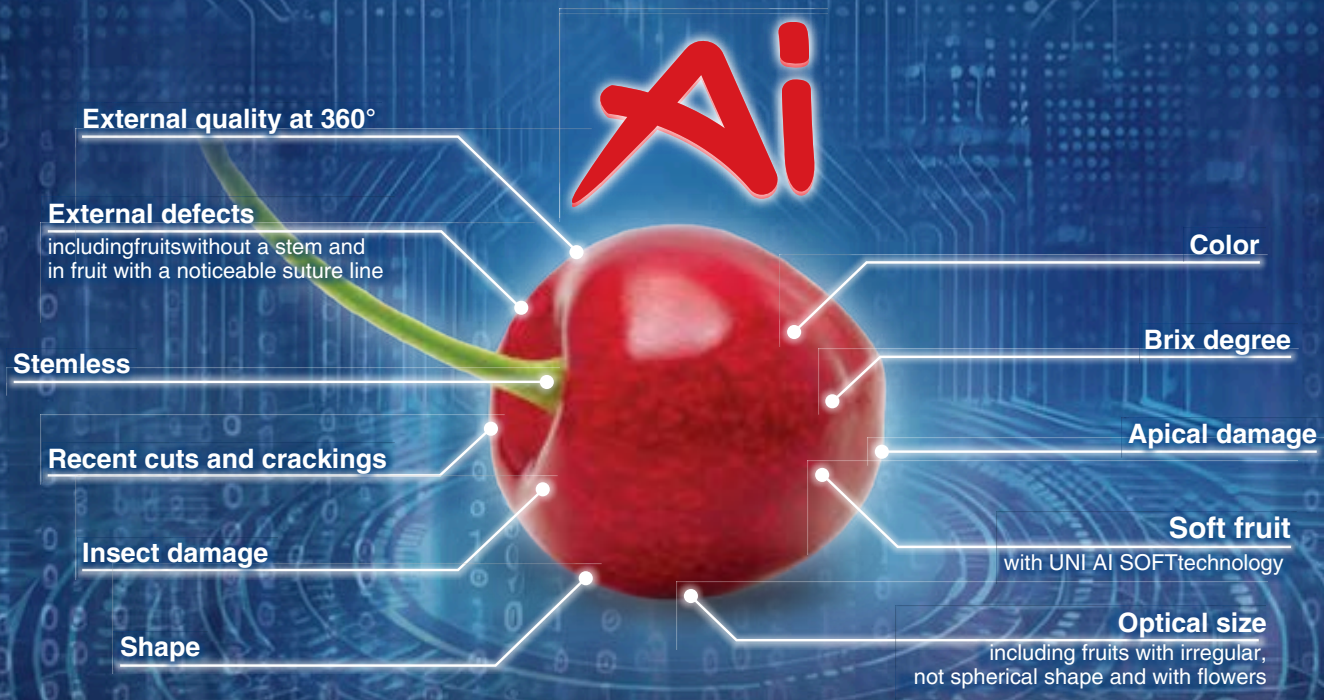
Cherry Growers Australia also acknowledges the Cherry 2026 Conference Committee, Conference Solutions, sponsors, exhibitors, speakers, panellists, Emerging Cherry Leaders, delegates and industry stakeholders who contributed to the planning, delivery and success of the event.

CGA also thanks the Industry Tour host businesses and partners, including Flavell's Fruit Sales, Ceravolo's Orchard and Golding Wines, for supporting practical in-field learning and industry connection as part of the Cherry 2026 program.

Appendices

NATIONAL CHERRY INDUSTRY CONFERENCE

30 May - 01 June 2026, Adelaide, SA



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WELCOME

Welcome to Cherry 2026, the Australian National Cherry Industry Conference.

This conference is an important moment for our industry to come together, reflect on the season just passed, and look ahead to what is next for Australian cherries.

We recognise that it has been a challenging period for many across the industry, with ongoing cost pressures and broader uncertainty impacting businesses. We also appreciate the commitment it takes to step away and attend, and we thank you for being here.

This year's program has been shaped directly from grower and industry feedback, with a stronger focus on practical content, panel discussions, and real conversations that matter to your business. We have also allowed more time throughout the program to connect with one another, because some of the most valuable insights are shared between sessions, over coffee, or out in the orchard.

Over the three days, you will hear from industry leaders, researchers, and fellow growers, covering key areas including production, market development, and the future direction of our industry. The Industry Tour remains a highlight, offering the opportunity to see innovation in action and continue those conversations in a practical setting.

Cherry 2026 is also about recognising the people behind our industry. The Gala Dinner and Cherry Industry Awards provide a chance to celebrate excellence, leadership, and the contribution of those helping drive our industry forward.

We thank our sponsors, partners, and contributors for their support in bringing this event together, and we acknowledge Hort Innovation for their support of the conference through the Cherry Fund.

Thank you for being part of Cherry 2026. We hope you find it valuable, practical, and worth your time.

Penny Measham
Chief Executive Officer
Cherry Growers Australia

Hort Innovation CHERRY FUND

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PIRSA is proud to sponsor the National Cherry Industry Conference 2026

We are committed to advancing the prosperity and sustainability of South Australian primary industries and acknowledge the outstanding contribution of growers across the state.

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Program Overview

Saturday 30 May

Afternoon
Trade / Export Workshop
Adelaide Convention Centre

Evening
Welcome Reception
Adelaide Convention Centre

Sunday 31 May

Full Day
National Cherry Industry Conference
Adelaide Convention Centre

Evening
Gala Dinner and Industry Awards
National Wine Centre of Australia

Monday 1 June

Morning
Industry Tour
Adelaide Hills Orchards Bus Tour

Afternoon
Biosecurity Workshop
Adelaide Convention Centre

Saturday 30 May

Adelaide Convention Centre

TIME	SESSION
2.00pm - 3.00pm	Registrations Open
3.00pm - 5.00pm	**Trade / Export Workshop** *Moving to a Digital Export Future*
5.00pm - 7.00pm	**Welcome Reception** *Trade Show and Networking.* *Canapés and drinks served*

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National Cherry Industry Conference 2026

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Sunday 31 May

Adelaide Convention Centre

TIME	SESSION
8:00am – 8:30am	Registrations, Coffee and Tea
8:30am – 8:35am	**MC Opening Address** *Cassandra Hough, ABC South Australia Country Hour Host*
8.35am - 8.40am	**Welcome and Acknowledgement of Kaurna Country** *Uncle Mickey*
8.40am - 8.50am	**Cherry Growers Australia - One Industry, Moving Forward** *Alison Jones, Chair of the Board, Cherry Growers Australia*
8.50am - 9.00am	**Hort Innovation Strategic Investment Priorities for the Australian Cherry Industry** *Dumi Mhlanga, Hort Innovation*
9.00am - 9.15am	**Emerging Cherry Leaders: Reflections and Voices Shaping the Future** *Jessica Fearnley-Pattison & Emerging Cherry Leaders*
SESSION 1 – SETTING THE SCENE	
9.15am - 9.30am	**Global Production and Trade Trends - from Australia's perspective** *Wayne Prowse, Fresh Intelligence Consulting*
9.30am - 9.45am	**Climate Impacts on Cherry Production: What We're Learning** *Jessica Fearnley-Pattison, NSW DPIRD*
9.45am - 10.00am	**The Australian Cherry Industry: Scale, Growth and Outlook** *Craig Shepherd, Applied Agricultural Remote Sensing Centre*
10.00am - 10.15am	**Future Technologies for Efficiencies** *Sam Turner, TurnerCo*
10.15am - 10.25am	**Platinum Sponsor Presentation** *Unitec*
10.25am - 11.10am	**Morning Tea** *Networking and Trade Show*

Sunday 31 May

Adelaide Convention Centre

TIME	SESSION
SESSION 2 – UNLOCKING PRODUCTION OPPORTUNITIES	
11.10am – 11.25am	**Making Compliance Work for Your Business** *Robert Poole, CVA Australia*
11.25am - 11.40am	**Smarter Labour Management in the Orchard** *Michael Rogers, Agri Labour Australia*
11.40am - 12.10pm	**Production Challenges and Opportunities: Panel Discussion & Q&A** *Irrigation - Ian Goodwin, AgVic* *Production - Sam Smee, Muirs* *Cherry Varieties - Chris Owens, Bloom Fresh* *Producing Cherry Quality and Nutrition - Nigel Swarts, TIA*
12.10pm - 12.40pm	**Grower Perspectives: Where to Invest Time and Resources: Panel Discussion & Q&A** *VICTORIA - Andrew Smith, Smiths Fruit* *TASMANIA - Andrew Hall, REID Fruits* *NEW SOUTH WALES - Matt Batinich, Cherrymore* *SOUTH AUSTRALIA - Joe Ceravolo, Ceravolos Orchards*
12.40pm - 12.45pm	**Gold Sponsor Presentation** *Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development - Hon Clare Scriven MLC*
12.45pm - 2.00pm	**Lunch** *Networking and Trade Show*

Sunday 31 May

Adelaide Convention Centre

TIME	SESSION
SESSION 3 – DRIVING DEMAND FOR AUSTRALIAN CHERRIES	
2.00pm - 2.40pm	**Keynote - International Guest Speaker** **The Premium Advantage: What Global Fruit Markets can Teach Australian Cherry Growers** *Professor David Hughes - Dr Food*
2.40pm - 2.55pm	**Trends in International Marketing** *Jonathan Cox, Stratforms*
2.55pm - 3.10pm	**Delivering Quality for our Domestic Markets** *Deb Beverley, Hort innovation*
3.10pm - 3.25pm	**Monitoring Cherry Supply Chain Quality** *Mark Loeffen, Delytics*
3.25pm - 3.40pm	**Building Demand to Match Supply** *Tristan Kitchener, Kitchener Partners*
3.40pm - 3.45pm	**Gold Sponsor Presentation** *Tomra*
3.45pm - 4.15pm	**Afternoon Tea** *Networking and Trade Show*
4.15pm - 4.50pm	**Q&A - Growing Demand at Home and Abroad** *Jonathan Cox, Statforms* *Tristan Kitchener, Kitchener Partners* *Deb Beverley, Hort Innovation* *Mark Loeffen, Delytics*
4.50pm - 4.55pm	***Cherry Growers Australia's Strategic Direction and Future*** *Penny Measham, CEO*
4.55pm - 5.00pm	***MC Close*** *Cassandra Hough, ABC South Australia Country Hour Host*

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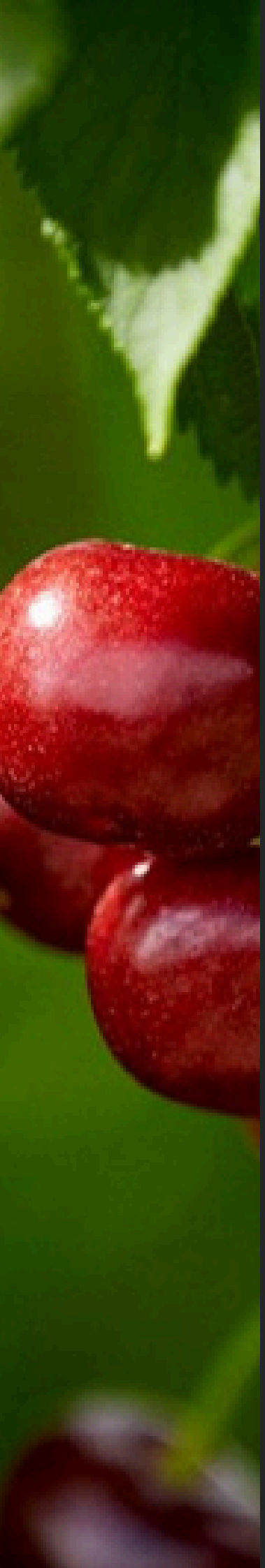

GALA DINNER & INDUSTRY AWARDS

Together, We Grow

An evening to celebrate the people, partnerships and progress that shape our industry.

Under the theme *Together, We Grow*, the night reflects the collective effort that drives Australian cherries forward. It is about shared ambition, collaboration across regions and generations, and the momentum we build when we work side by side.

In a warm and welcoming atmosphere, we will bring our community together to connect, reflect and look ahead. Through the Cherry Industry Awards, we will recognise the leadership, innovation and impact that individuals and businesses are making across the sector.

The evening will also create moments to capture and share the connections that make our industry unique. It's a moment to pause, celebrate how far we have come, and reaffirm the strength of an industry that grows stronger together.

The National Wine Centre of Australia *7.00pm - 10.30pm*
Buses depart from Adelaide Convention Centre *6.45pm*
Dress code: Cocktail attire (jacket optional)

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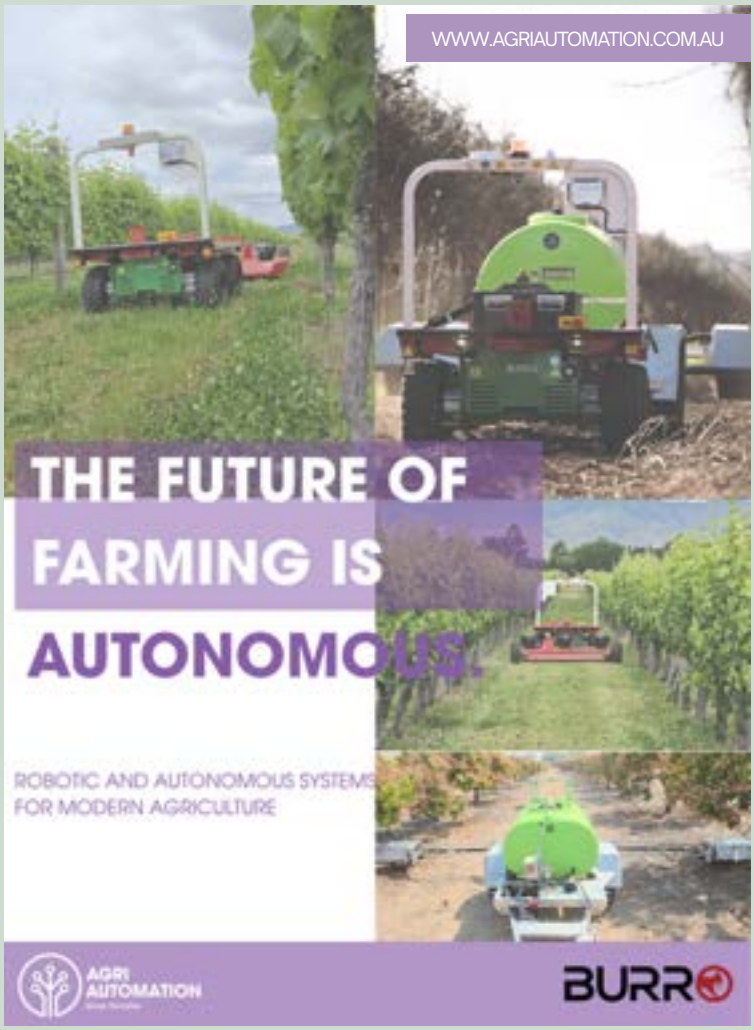


Monday 1 June

Adelaide Hills Orchards

TIME	SESSION
7.00am	Meet at the Adelaide Convention Centre, North Terrace entrance for bus departure
7.15am sharp	Buses depart for Adelaide Hills
8.15am	**Breakfast** *Hosted by Muirs at Flavells Fruit Sales*
8.30am - 9.45am	**Orchard 1 - Flavells Fruit Sales** *Upon arrival you will be allocated your group for rotation. Each group will rotate through all of the following sessions.* ***Session 1** - Training Systems - UFO, Pergola, V Trellis Systems* ***Session 2** - Protected cropping and robotics* ***Session 3** - Drone technology for bird deterrents and crop nutrition*
9.45am - 10.15am	Travel to Ceravolos Orchard
10.15am - 11.45am	**Orchard 2 - Cervolos Orchard** *Upon arrival you will be allocated your group for rotation. Each group will rotate through all of the following sessions.* ***Session 1** - Sustainability and water management* ***Session 2** - Ashton Valley Juice production and business diversification* ***Session 3** - Packhouse tour, automation and robotics*
11.45am - 12.00pm	Travel to Ginko Golding Wines, Lobethal
12.00pm - 1.30pm	**Lunch at Ginko Golding Wines** *On-farm demonstrations, networking and a sit-down lunch celebrating the best of the Adelaide Hills.* *Still and sparkling water, orange juice, soft drinks, percolated coffee and tea provided.* *Bar open and drinks available for purchase.*
1.45pm - 2.45pm	Travel to Adelaide Convention Centre
3.30pm - 5.30pm	**Biosecurity Workshop** *Tackling Threats Together*

Our Speakers

Master of Ceremonies

Cassandra Hough

Master of Ceremonies (MC)

Cassandra Hough is the host of ABC South Australia's Country Hour, bringing warmth, curiosity and a deep connection to rural Australia to everything she does.

A journalist with roots in regional Queensland and South Australia, Cassie will guide us through the day keeping conversation flowing and the program on track.

Conference Speakers

Alison Jones

Chair of CGA Board and CEO Wandin Valley Farms

Welcome from Cherry Growers Australia

Alison Jones grew up on her family cherry farm in Wandin, Victoria, and has spent her career deeply connected to the Australian cherry industry. She is CEO of Wandin Valley Farms and was elected Chair of the Board of Cherry Growers Australia in 2025.

Alison is passionate about supporting growers and strengthening the future of the Australian cherry industry.

Dumi Mhlanga

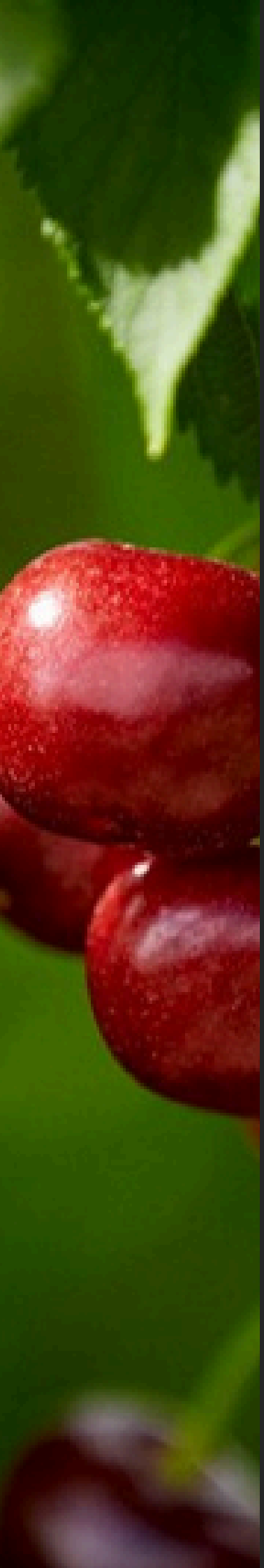
Senior Industry Service Manager, Hort Innovation

Session: Strategic Investment Priorities for the Australian Cherry Industry

With more than 30 years' experience across a wide mix of crops and countries, Dumi Mhlanga brings energy, fresh ideas and a grower-first approach to the hort industry.

Dumi's horticulture story began in 1994 after graduating in Production Horticulture and later completing a Masters in Agribusiness at the University of Melbourne. In his career to date he has worked across Australia, South Africa and Zimbabwe, getting hands-on with everything from stone fruit, apples, pears and cherries through to walnuts, cut flowers, organic herbs and protected cropping.

Growing up on a farming family in Zimbabwe gave Dumi a deep respect for farming life and a strong connection to the land — values that continue to drive his passion for supporting growers and helping industries find new ways to thrive.



EMERGING CHERRY LEADERS

Reflections and Voices Shaping the Future

The Emerging Cherry Leaders program (CY 22002) is building something the Australian cherry industry has never had before, a dedicated pipeline of young leaders equipped with the skills, knowledge and networks to drive the industry forward.

Now in its second year, the program brings together 12 participants from across NSW, Victoria and Tasmania, combining face-to-face workshops, technical webinars, orchard visits and study tours to develop leadership capability and improve industry knowledge. The program is delivered by NSW Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development in partnership with Cherry Growers Australia and funded by Hort Innovation.

Today, the 2025-26 cohort share their reflections on the experience, what they have learned, what has changed for them, and what they see ahead for the industry.

The cherry industry is being watched. Other horticulture sectors are looking at what we have built here. This is what investing in people looks like.

Scan the QR code to learn more about the program.

Our Speakers

Wayne Prowse

Founder, Fresh Intelligence Consulting

Session: Global Production and Trade Trends - from Australia's perspective

Wayne Prowse, founder of Fresh Intelligence Consulting, delivers data-driven insights across global fresh produce markets. With extensive experience in agricultural trade analysis, Wayne is recognised for his expertise in cherries, and other high-value horticultural sectors.

He works closely with growers, exporters, and industry bodies to interpret market trends, pricing dynamics, and international trade flows. His analysis supports strategic decision making across supply chains, particularly in navigating seasonal shifts and emerging export opportunities. Wayne is a trusted voice in the industry, known for clear, commercially relevant intelligence.

Jessica Fearnley-Pattison

Development Officer, NSW DPIRD

Session: Climate Impacts on Cherry Production: What we are Learning

Jessica is passionate about communicating and working with growers and the industry on challenging issues. Her main research areas include developing adaptation strategies to a changing climate, improving soil health and extension.

Jessica is the National Extension Manager for the Australian cherry industry and is the project lead for the industry's extension and communication project, funded by Hort Innovation. Jessica is currently studying for her PhD through a partnership between NSW DPIRD and the University of Tasmania and is investigating soil carbon sequestration in perennial orchards.

Craig Shepherd

Senior Researcher (BSc) Applied Agricultural Remote Sensing Centre (AARSC)

Session: The Australian Cherry Industry: Scale, Growth and Outlook

Craig Shepherd has over 30 years professional experience in the mapping of landscape attributes—particularly land cover and land use. Craig holds a Bachelor of Science majoring in Environmental Science and Geography from Macquarie University, and is particularly focused on the application of web-based Geographic Information System (GIS) technology.

Craig applies a range of location-based tools to capture spatial data, analyse and compile mapping products and deliver spatial information via an ever-growing range of web applications. A selection of these can be launched from the AARSC Industry Applications and Maps page here.

Our Speakers

Sam Turner

Founder, TurnerCo

Session: Future Technologies for Efficiencies

Sam Turner is the founder of TurnerCo, an agricultural consulting and content platform focused on modern, sustainable farming practices and biotech. He is also an Autonomist at Ornata Technologies, where he is working to bring real autonomy to Australian agriculture through autonomous machinery.

With over 20 years of experience across production, agronomy, export strategy, industry advocacy, and protected cropping, Sam brings a rare breadth of knowledge to the challenge of transforming how Australia farms. He holds a degree in Agricultural Science from La Trobe University and has completed postgraduate studies in Agribusiness at Marcus Oldham College.

Robert Poole

Partner, CVA Australia

Session: Making Compliance Work for Your Business

Robert Poole is a Partner at Corporate Value Associates (CVA Australia), former Partner at KPMG Australia and former FMCG senior executive. He advises across all parts of the food and fibre supply chain, from corporate farming to grocery retail and international trade, with a focus on strategy, business improvement, sustainability and policy.

Robert grew up on a family farm in northern Victoria and has maintained strong links to primary production throughout his career. Most recently he led a major review of compliance in the Australian vegetable sector, assessing costs and recommending practical improvements to reduce the burden on growers.

Michael Rogers

CEO, Agri Labour Australia

Session: Smarter Labour Management in the Orchard

Michael Rogers brings more than 15 years' experience across horticulture, food manufacturing and meat processing, working within companies, industry bodies and government. He has been actively engaged with workforce issues — including the PALM scheme, working holiday makers, training and workforce planning — through government committees, working groups and board-level roles for over a decade.

Michael is currently CEO of Agri Labour Australia, a workforce solutions company employing more than 2,500 people across fruit, vegetables, nuts and other key agri-food sectors, and Chief Operating Officer of Health Plus People.

Our Speakers

Ian Goodwin

Research Leader Horticulture Production Sciences, Agriculture Victoria
Panel Session: Production Challenges and Opportunities

Dr Ian Goodwin is the Research Leader in Horticulture Production Sciences in Agriculture Victoria based at the Tatura SmartFarm. Ian has over 40 years' experience in horticulture research and innovation with a focus on irrigation, intensive production systems and climate challenges. He spent many years studying deficit irrigation strategies and developing water budgets to assist fruit industries to cope with irrigation shortfalls.

Currently, Ian's team at Tatura is studying tree physiology and water relations in bespoke research orchards including the Sundial Orchard, the Panels over Pears experiment and the Narrow Orchard Systems project. He also leads the Survival Signatures project, which aims to provide growers with tools to minimise the long-term impact of low water allocations.

Sam Smee

Agronomist, Muirs
Panel Session: Production Challenges and Opportunities

Sam Smee is an agronomist with more than 25 years' experience supporting growers across a range of high value crops. He holds a Bachelor of Agricultural Science and began his career in poppy, pyrethrum and essential oils production before specialising in fruit agronomy.

Sam's connection to cherries began as a seasonal picker for Domeney Bros. in southern Tasmania during his school holidays — an early experience that sparked an appreciation for the industry that has come full circle in his current work.

For the past 10 years, Sam has worked with Muirs in Tasmania, focusing on cherry production and helping growers consistently produce high quality fruit through practical, evidence-based advice tailored to local growing conditions.

Chris Owens

Head Plant Breeder at Bloom Fresh
Panel Session: Production Challenges and Opportunities

Chris Owens, Ph.D. is the Head Plant Breeder at Bloom Fresh and has been in his current role since 2016. Dr. Owens leads a large team that is developing improved varieties of sweet cherries and table grapes as well as heading Bloom's R&D department in the area of fruit genetics.

Bloom Fresh is a global leader in fruit varietal development with more than 70 varieties and significant acreage around the world. Dr. Owens holds a BS in Horticulture from the University of Maryland, an MS in Pomology from Cornell University, and a PhD in Plant Breeding & Genetics from Michigan State University. Dr. Owens has spent close to 30 years in the field of fruit breeding, primarily focusing on developing improved varieties of cherries and table grapes.

Our Speakers

Nigel Swarts

Associate Professor, Head of Horticulture, Tasmanian Institute of Agriculture
Panel Session: Production Challenges and Opportunities

Associate Professor Nigel Swarts is Head of Horticulture at the Tasmanian Institute of Agriculture, University of Tasmania. His research focuses on tree physiology, with particular expertise in tree crop nutrition, water and nutrient use efficiency, and improving productivity in cool-climate horticulture systems.

Nigel leads major industry-collaborative research programs spanning apples, cherries, berries and vegetable crops, working closely with growers to deliver practical, adoptable outcomes. He is passionate about industry-driven research that enhances sustainability, profitability and resilience in horticultural production.

Andrew Smith

Grower and Owner, Smiths Fruit
Panel Session: Grower Perspectives: Where to Invest Time and Resources

Andrew Smith is a third-generation cherry grower and owner–manager of Smiths Fruit in Taminick, Victoria, continuing a proud family farming legacy spanning more than 140 years.

Combining traditional orchard knowledge with modern horticultural practices, Andrew focuses on soil health, crop nutrition, and orchard system performance to consistently produce premium cherries.

Alongside managing the family orchard and packhouse, he works with Hybrid-Ag as a horticultural nutrient agronomist, helping growers translate practical experience into effective nutrition strategies — bringing a grower's perspective grounded in real-world orchard experience.

Giuseppe ‘Joe’ Ceravolo

Grower, Ceravolos Orchards
Panel Session: Grower Perspectives: Where to Invest Time and Resources

Giuseppe Ceravolo, better known as Joe, is an apple, cherry and pear grower from South Australia. He is a third-generation orchardist who joined the family business in 1992 after completing a Mechanical Engineering Degree at Adelaide University. He manages several orchards owned by the family across the Adelaide Hills, mainly focusing on more than a hundred hectares of apples and ten hectares of cherries.

He is a director of the family companies as well as being a director of APAL, a director of the local co-op and a member of the Cherry SIAP committee.

Our Speakers

Professor David Hughes – Keynote Speaker

Emeritus Professor of Food Marketing Imperial College London

Keynote Session: The Premium Advantage: What Global Fruit Markets can Teach Australian Cherry Growers

Dr. David Hughes is Emeritus Professor of Food Marketing at Imperial College London. As "Dr. Food", he is a much sought-after speaker at international conferences and seminars on global food industry issues, particularly consumer and retail trends.

David has lived and worked in Europe, North America, the Caribbean, Africa and Southeast Asia. He was co-owner of a hydroponic branded fresh herb business in Florida. For 20 years, he was a Non-Executive Director of Berry Gardens, a major player in the UK fresh berry sector and, for 10 years, he was Sainsbury Professor of Food Business at The University of London. David is a frequent visitor to Australia.

At Cherry 2026, David will explore how global fruit consumption is evolving and where Australian cherries sit within that landscape. His session will focus on the opportunity to build a premium brand position in both domestic and export markets, drawing on real-world examples from other fruit categories to highlight what successful premium positioning looks like in practice and what lessons Australian growers can apply.

Jonathan Cox

General Manager, Stratforms

Session: Trends in International Marketing - Asia Focus

Jonathan Cox is a leading Asia-Pacific market entry strategist with more than 25 years' experience building and selling Australian brands across China, India and the United States. As Managing Director of Stratforms Global Limited, he specialises in taking premium Australian food, beverage and agricultural products into competitive consumer markets, with a focus on creating sustainable export pathways for Australian growers.

Fluent in Mandarin and based between Guangzhou and Melbourne, Jonathan is widely regarded for his hands-on understanding of cross-border e-commerce, digital brand activation and the regulatory frameworks increasingly vital for Australian producers entering Asia.

Our Speakers

Deb Beverley

Marketing Manager, Retail, Hort Innovation

Session: Delivering Quality for our Domestic Markets

Deb is a highly experienced FMCG and retail marketing professional with over 25 years' experience across sales, marketing and category management. She has worked with some of Australia's most recognised brands, including Tip Top, Tooheys & Blackmores, as well as global brands such as Heineken, Doritos and Ferrero.

Known for her strong expertise in shopper behaviour and retail engagement, Deb has partnered closely with Australia's leading retailers to deliver effective in-store activations and category solutions. Since joining Hort Innovation Australia in early 2025, she has led retailer engagement programs focused on driving shopper demand for Australian fresh produce through retail activations, shopper communications, and staff education initiatives.

Mark Loeffen

Managing Director, Delytics

Session: Monitoring Cherry Supply Chain Quality

Mark Loeffen is leading the Hort Innovation Cherry Quality Improvement project for Cherry Growers Australia. A highly experienced manager, analytics expert and quality specialist, Mark has led major quality improvement projects across a range of horticultural industries.

His work with the New Zealand navel orange industry is a standout example — new minimum maturity standards lifted consumer acceptability from 64% to 96% in a single season. Earlier in his career, Mark was a general manager at the Meat Industry Research Institute of New Zealand and founding CEO of Seafood Innovations.

Tristan Kitchener

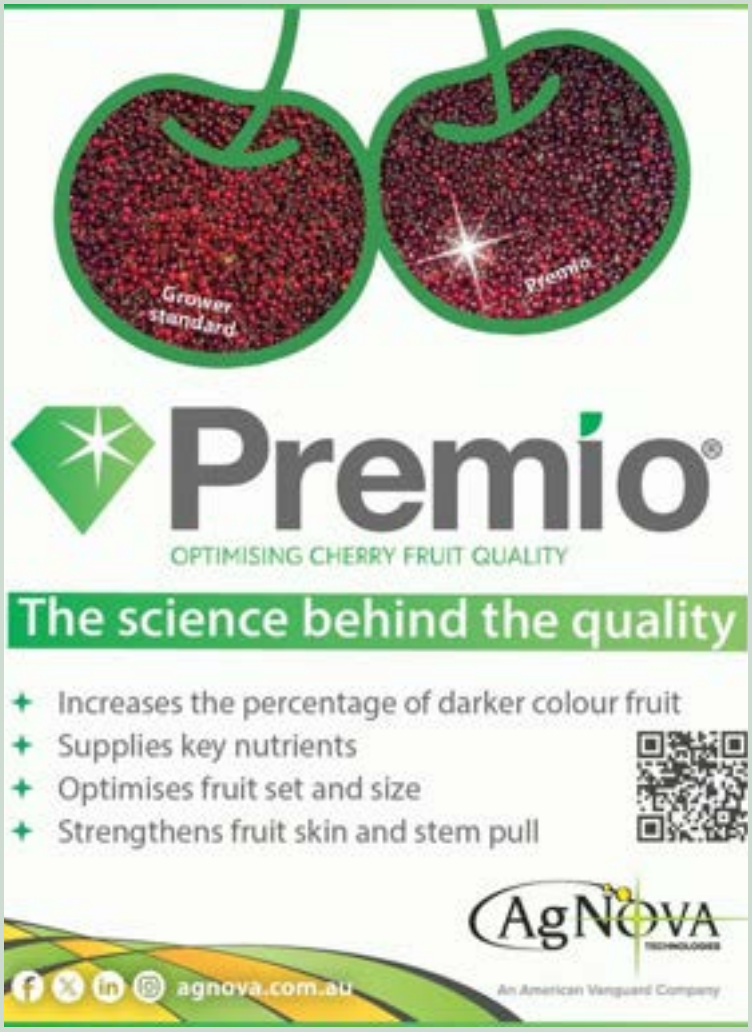
Independent Consultant, Kitchener Partners

Session: Building Demand to Match Supply

Tristan Kitchener brings a rare perspective to the cherry industry — he's both a retail strategist and a part-owner of a cherry packing and marketing business in Orange, NSW. With over 25 years across the grocery value chain, including senior roles at Coles and Sainsbury's in the UK, he has a practical understanding of how retailers operate and what drives demand.

At Cherry 2026, Tristan will explore why growing demand must keep pace with production, and how protecting Australian cherries' reputation for quality and premium positioning is key to the industry's long-term value.

Exhibitors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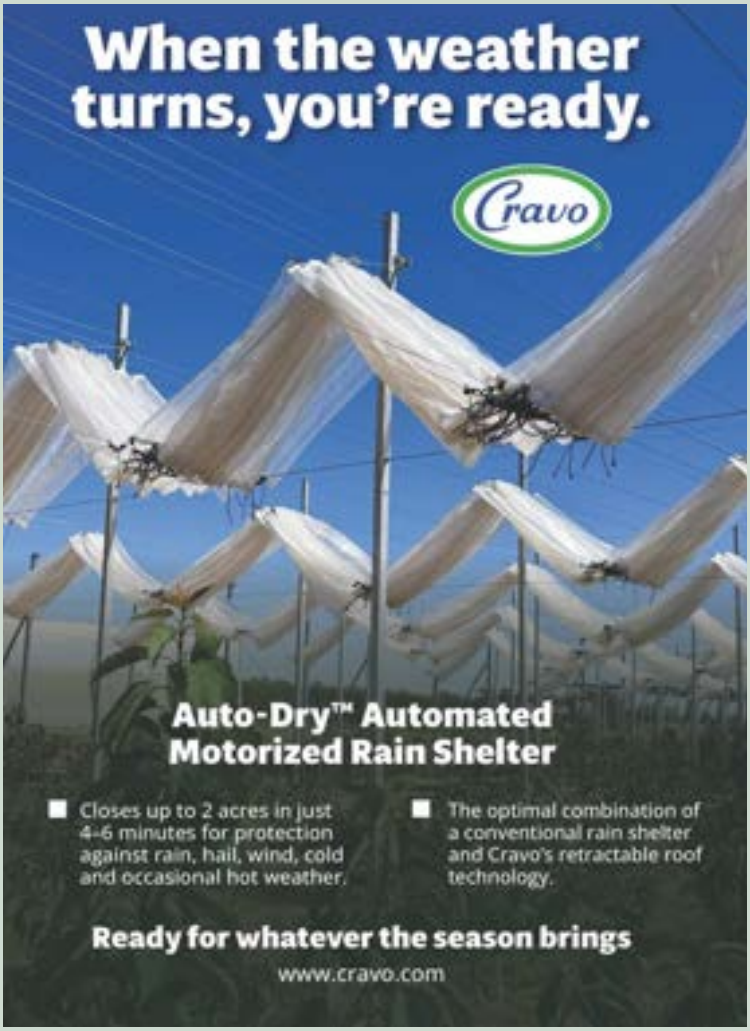
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When it comes to frost protection for your crops, don't take any chances. As wind machine specialists, we take our reputation and expertise seriously, and we're committed to providing crop security.
Run your numbers through our ROI calculator and, if you like what you see, give us a call.
Ian Mason | National Sales Manager
M: 0448 111 384 | P: 1800 797 629
www.frostboss.com | FrostBoss® Australia Pty Ltd

GS1 Australia
DISCOVER HOW GS1 AUSTRALIA IS FUTURE-PROOFING THE CHERRY INDUSTRY
CHERRY-PICKED PRECISION
From orchard to export, RFID and QR code traceability connects Australian cherries to trusted data.
Delivering real-time visibility to scale production and export with confidence, punnet after punnet.

Exhibitors

HYBRID AG
Unlock What Your Soil Tests Are Really Telling You
We calculate the exact kg/ha of every nutrient your soil needs — so every dollar goes where it counts
The gap: You've paid for the soil tests — but has anyone actually calculated the exact kg/ha of each nutrient required to bring your soil into balance?
What we can do for you: We'll review your existing soil data — or run fresh tests — then calculate a precise prescription blend matched to your block
What you stand to gain: A clear picture of what's limiting your trees — and a practical plan to improve packout, grade %, colour, brix, and shelf life.
SCAN FOR A FREE SOIL TEST REVIEW + GO IN THE DRAW TO WIN A KINCROME TOOLKIT
Limited Spots Available
VISIT TABLE 21 FOR YOUR CHANCE TO WIN
Working with cherry growers across Victoria, SA, and NSW

j-tech systems
Better Labelling, Packaging and Automation
Punnets, Trays & Clamshells
Our INFIA 100% R-PET punnets, lids and clamshells are certified 100% recycled, made from post consumer plastic and built to perform.
jtechsystems.com.au
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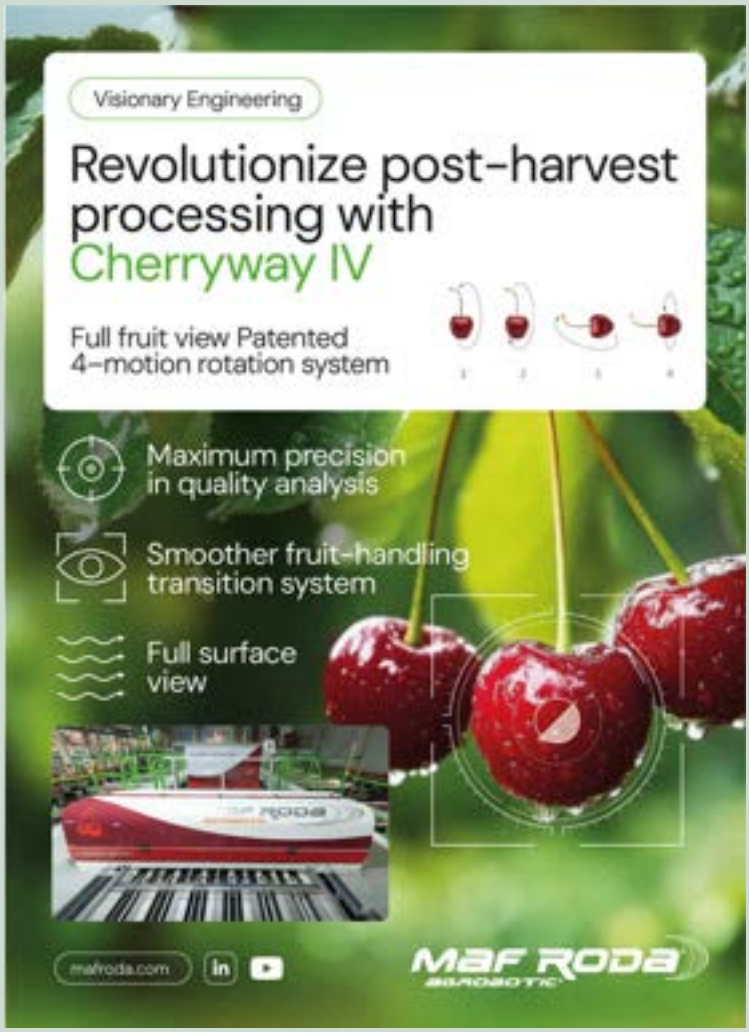
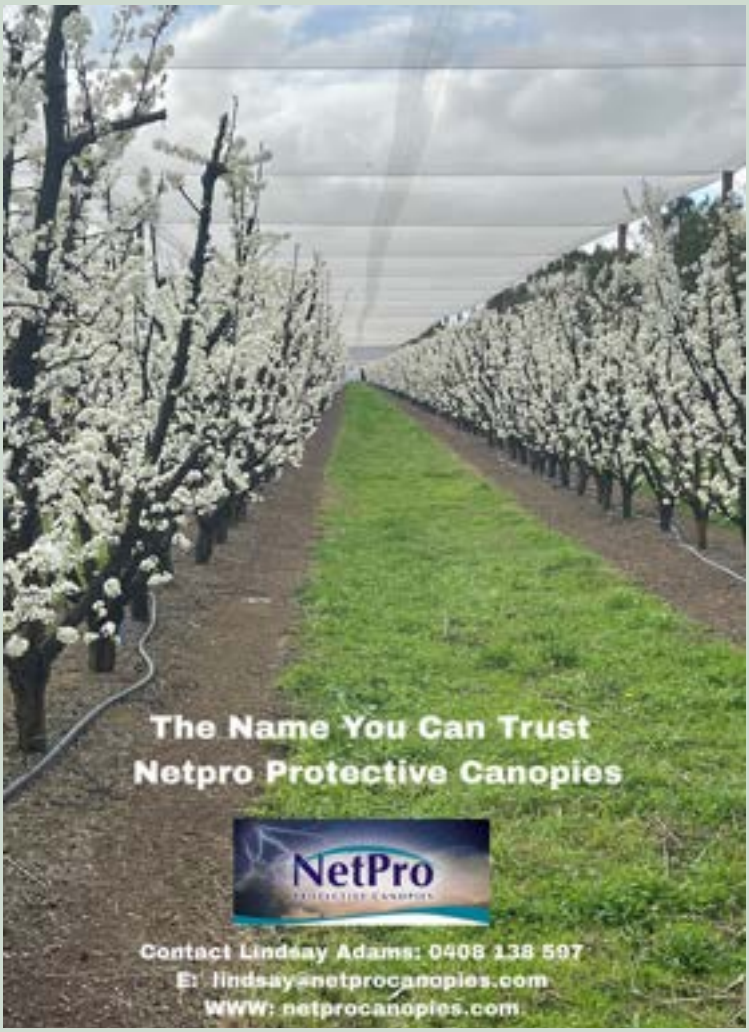
backed by jenkins group


Visionary Engineering
Revolutionize post-harvest processing with Cherryway IV
Full fruit view Patented 4-motion rotation system
Maximum precision in quality analysis
Smoother fruit-handling transition system
Full surface view
mafroda.com
MAF RODA


The Name You Can Trust
Netpro Protective Canopies
NetPro
Contact Lindsay Adams: 0408 138 597
E: lindsay@netprocanopies.com
WWW: netprocanopies.com

Exhibitors

Protect and reduce loss
Increased firmness (16–35%) and yield (47%), with up to 58% fewer cracked cherries vs untreated plants.
LALSTIM OSMO SP supports by:
• Improving early establishment of young trees
• Sustains plant performance under abiotic stress
• Maintains osmotic balance
• Rapid uptake, lasting benefits
• Minimises yield losses caused by fruit injury such as bursting, mottling, and cracking
• Minimises post-harvest fruit losses
nem
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CALL YOUR LOCAL SALES MANAGER TO FIND OUT MORE
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3 Maloney Drive, Wodonga Vic 3690, Australia.
+61 2 6025 0044 www.nem.com.au

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Your Trusted Partner
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and Permanent
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admin@pickandpackers.com.au
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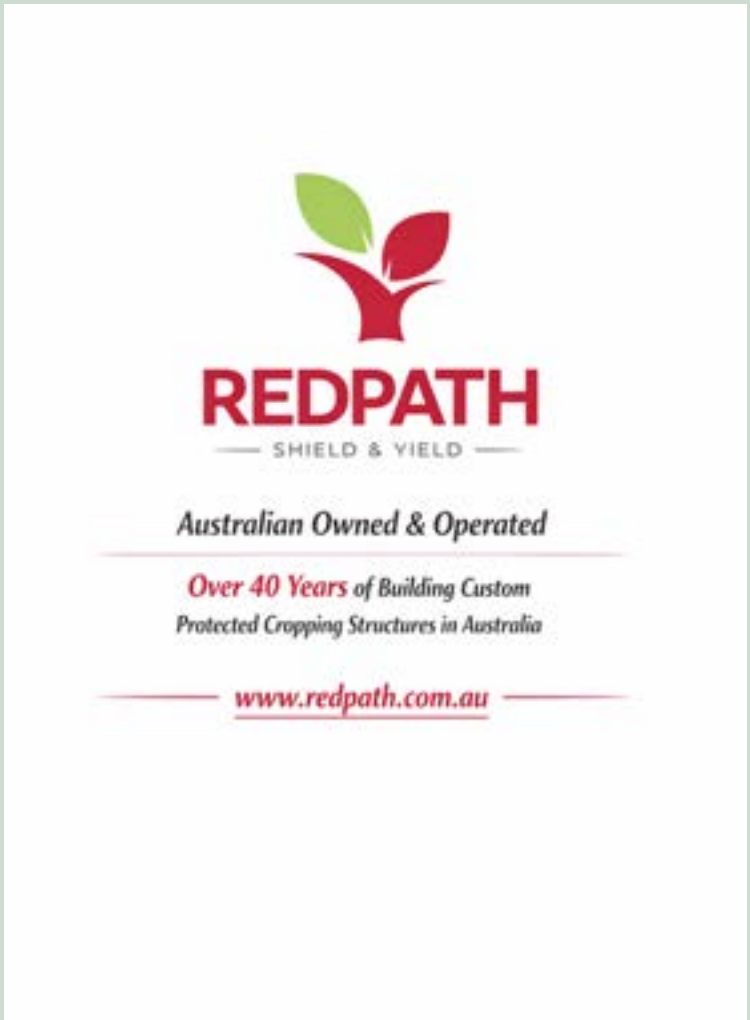
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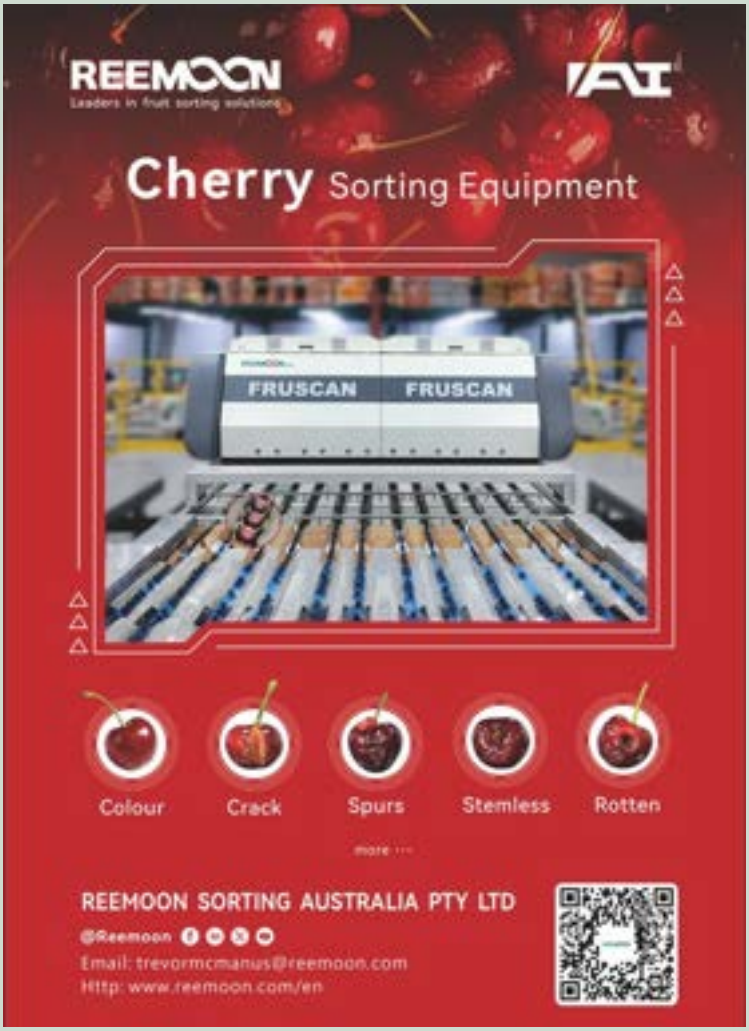
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Leaders in fruit sorting solutions
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Colour
Crack
Spurs
Stemless
Rotten
more
REEMOON SORTING AUSTRALIA PTY LTD
@Reemoon
Email: trevormcmanus@reemoon.com
Http: www.reemoon.com/en

NOTES

NOTES

Thank You

for attending Cherry 2026

Contact

Website
www.cherrygrowers.org.au/cherry2026

Email
cherry@con-sol.com

Email
comms@cherrygrowers.org.au

Appendix 2: Cherry 2026 Delegate Survey

Cherry 2026

Delegate Feedback

Conference Committee Meeting
24 June 2026

190 delegates attended · 47 conference surveys · 50 tour/dinner surveys

96%
Rated the conference Excellent or Good

100%
Made new or stronger connections

93%
Found program content Excellent or Good

91%
Plan to adopt a new practice or idea

98%
Will attend the next national conference

94%
Rated speakers and sessions Excellent or Good

Cherry 2026 | Session highlights & event ratings

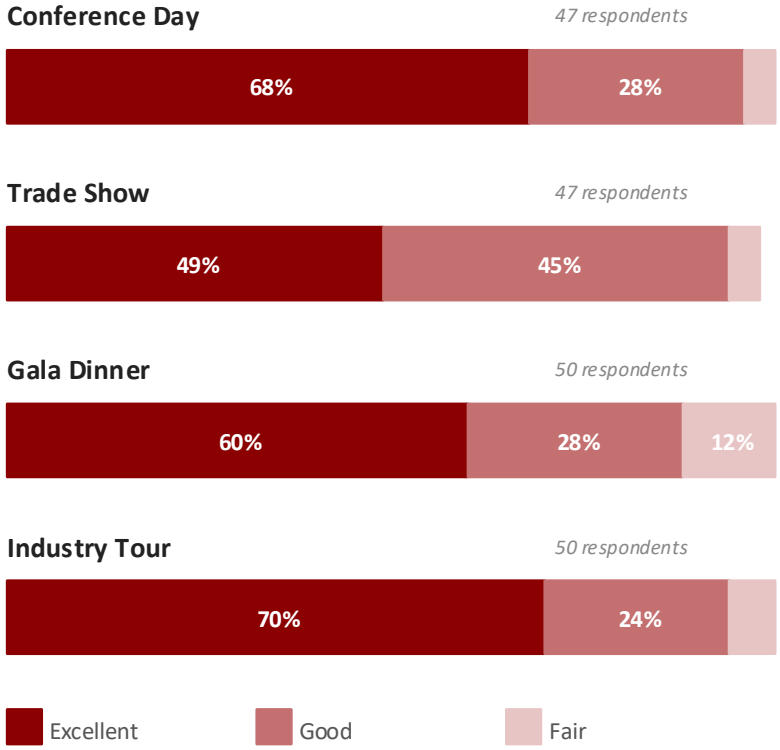
Most valuable sessions

% of 47 conference day respondents who selected multiple responses

What delegates want more of

More technical depth- varieties · More time at industry tour stops · Deeper panel discussions · On-bus commentary

Event ratings



Appendix 3: Cherry 2026 Communications and Media Summary

Purpose	Summary of communications and media activity delivered to support Cherry 2026. This appendix summarises the campaign by stage and channel and does not list every individual post, tile or email. Full communications records are retained by Cherry Growers Australia.

Campaign stage	Main activity	Evidence / outputs	Notes
Early awareness and Save the Date	Announced Cherry 2026 as the National Cherry Industry Conference to be held in Adelaide, South Australia from 30 May to 1 June 2026. Media Release and messaging introduced the event, promoted learning, connection and celebration, and encouraged the media and industry to watch for updates.	Save the Date social media plan; early social media content; newsletter references; CGA media release on the website and media engagement records, plus CGA website event page records.	Key evidence includes the Save the Date media release and November 2025 newsletter. Links are provided in the Links and Evidence sheet.
Registration, awards and sponsorship promotion	Promoted registrations, Cherry Industry Awards nominations, sponsorship opportunities and the value of attending Cherry 2026.	January and February communications plans; registration posts; awards posts; sponsorship posts; newsletter and email records.	Shows structured early campaign delivery.
Program, speaker and session promotion	Highlighted program themes, speaker profiles, panel sessions, export readiness, production opportunities, market development, Industry Tour, Gala Dinner and Cherry Industry Awards.	March and April communications plans; speaker spotlight posts; program posts; sponsor recognition posts; event page updates.	Shows promotion of key project content and target audience value.
Final registration and delegate engagement	Delivered final registration reminders, delegate-focused messaging, Industry Tour updates, sponsor recognition, networking promotion and final call-to-attend messaging in the lead-up to the event.	May communications plan; social media posts; email reminders; website/event page updates.	Focuses on conversion and delegate engagement in the final month.
Post-event communications and media	Shared Cherry 2026 outcomes, recognised industry participation, promoted event highlights and extended the reach of the project beyond delegates who attended in person.	Post-event article/media release; video links; media coverage; social media posts; event photography records.	Insert final links in the Links and Evidence sheet.

Selected analytics	Result	Source / record	Notes
LinkedIn	60,799 impressions and 1,791 engagement actions	LinkedIn analytics retained by CGA	
Facebook	67,269 views and 1,200 content interactions	Facebook analytics retained by CGA	
Instagram	23,658 views and 672 content interactions	Instagram analytics retained by CGA	

Evidence item	Description
Cherry 2026 event page	Event information, registration information, program promotion and updates.
Final digital program	Final program supporting dates, locations, speakers, sessions and event components.
Post-event article or wrap-up	Public summary of event outcomes and highlights.
Media releases page	CGA media releases page containing Cherry 2026 related media and news content.
Cherry 2026 wrap-up video	Post-event video content sharing event highlights and outcomes.
Emerging Cherry Leaders video	Video content developed to support the Emerging Cherry Leaders component.
ABC Country Hour / media coverage	External media coverage related to Cherry 2026.
Social media channels and campaign records	Social media activity was delivered across CGA LinkedIn, Facebook and Instagram channels throughout the campaign period. Full campaign records, including post examples, tiles, captions and analytics, are retained by Cherry Growers Australia.
Photo / Member Area reference	Approved event photography is retained by Cherry Growers Australia. High-resolution copies of images used in the final report can be supplied separately if required, subject to available image details, usage rights and moral rights requirements.

Link / file reference
https://www.cherrygrowers.org.au/cherry-2026/
https://www.cherrygrowers.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/Cherry-2026-Program-Final-Digital.pdf
https://www.cherrygrowers.org.au/cherry-2026-a-moment-the-industry-needed/
https://www.cherrygrowers.org.au/media-releases/
https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7480123836063981568
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ln1bwUa72ok
https://www.abc.net.au/listen/programs/sa-country-hour/sa-country-hour/106740114
LinkedIn - https://www.linkedin.com/company/cherry-growers-aus YouTube - https://www.youtube.com/@CherryGrowersAustralia Facebook - https://www.facebook.com/cherrygrowers Instagram - https://www.instagram.com/cherrygrowersaustralia/