

**AusVeg support to Vegetable Industry
Development Knowledge Management
Sub Program**

Richard Mulcahy
AUSVEG Ltd

Project Number: VG09161

VG09161

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(30 June 2012)

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1.0 Summary

The Vegetable Industry Development Program (VIDP) was created to help vegetable growers build their businesses and remain competitive in an increasingly market-driven and globalised industry. The VIDP brought a fresh approach to industry development, focused from an extension perspective on electronic dissemination of program outputs and the establishment of partnerships with regional service provider networks.

The main sub programs of the VIDP related to: generation of insightful reports on consumer behaviour and market trends, fostering people development within the industry, increasing understanding of economic issues impacting upon businesses, targeted delivery of R&D outcomes, and development of an e-based system for effectively delivering R&D outcomes, information and insights to industry.

AUSVEG was contracted in August 2009 to the specific role of providing national communications support to the Knowledge Management (KM) sub program of the VIDP, in order to raise awareness of the VIDP within the industry. The KM sub program's objective was to ensure that findings and outputs from research were being increasingly applied by industry stakeholders in decision making. Its main product was a national R&D database; an e-based system which indexed HAL R&D reports completed on behalf of the vegetables sector. The search engine and database was integrated within the new AUSVEG website when it was launched in May 2010 and there are now over 600 HAL final reports accessible online.

The objectives of the AUSVEG communications sub program were to:

- Keep the industry up-to-date with VIDP outputs, particularly those relating to the KM sub program.
- Highlight the opportunities that VIDP provides to industry and raise awareness about how to access program outputs.
- Promote utilisation of the KM system by growers and industry stakeholders.
- Increase participation in VIDP activities and uptake of outputs.
- Demonstrate the program's value to industry.

In order to achieve these objectives, AUSVEG successfully conducted a range of communications-related activities. A combination of:

- Media releases to raise awareness within the industry and the community;
- Articles in industry publications such as *Vegetables Australia* magazine;
- Briefings with leading members of the supply chain to increase visibility and adoption of the KM platform by the primary advisors to levy payers;

were used to increase awareness of the program and its outputs, whilst promoting the program's value to industry. AUSVEG also provided additional communications support to other sub programs where linkages into the KM system were required. For example, by publishing articles in its weekly newsletter, including onserts with its magazine and providing general feedback on other communications activities, such as the development of website content and fact sheets.

AUSVEG's target of two media stories per month was easily exceeded over the course of the project, with AUSVEG generating in excess of 800 media mentions, highlighting a range of VIDP products including the Veginsights market reports, new economic findings and the national R&D database.

The expected outcomes of the communications sub program are as follows:

1. Vegetable growers, the supply-chain representatives they deal with, and the research community are better informed about the VIDP, particularly the KM sub-program and how it can benefit them through better access to R&D resources and tools. This has occurred as a result of increased industry communication and media coverage about the program and its activities, as well as targeted face-to-face briefings with leaders in the supply chain and services industries.
2. Effective dissemination of information relevant to the industry has occurred, ensuring that industry stakeholders are well-informed about the VIDP and its objectives.
3. The KM sub-program has received the communications support it required in order to carry out initiatives relating to: effective delivery of R&D outputs to growers and the ongoing development of an online KM system integrated within the AUSVEG website.
4. Other VIDP sub-programs received communications support where linkages into the KM sub-program were required.

Given its involvement with the program since August 2009, AUSVEG recommends that future consideration should be given to: streamlining access to the KM search engine; skills and training needs within the industry in support of consumers and markets and KM activities; more flexible market research to respond to the emerging requirements of industry; additional briefings with the services sector to increase adoption of the KM system amongst key advisors to levy payers; easier access to economic data to ensure industry is rapidly using findings and outputs from research to effectively formulate policy and manage the image of the industry; and, a multi-tiered communications/extension approach that makes use of different media formats and channels.

2.0 Introduction

This final report focuses on the role and activities of an individual subprogram of the Vegetable Industry Development Program (VIDP). However, it is important to understand that each individual subprogram and activities occurring collaboratively between subprograms made a significant contribution to achieving the broader VIDP goal and objectives.

Program goals and objectives

The Vegetable Industry Development Program goal was “to provide knowledge, tools and insights to decision makers to improve the competitiveness of Australian vegetable growers in domestic and international markets”.

This was achieved by addressing a number of program objectives, as follows:

- Program Objective 1: “A new generation of leaders are active in the industry”
- Program Objective 2: “Decision making in the industry is increasingly market driven”
- Program Objective 3: “Industry is more informed and understands the benefits and the qualities of Australian vegetable products, so as to optimise their path to market”
- Program Objective 4: “More growers are actively seeking to evolve their business models to meet new challenges posed by the market”
- Program Objective 5: “Findings and outputs from research are increasingly being applied by industry stakeholders in decision making”
- Program Objective 6: “Industry is effectively using findings and outputs from research to formulate policy and manage the image of the industry”
- Program Objective 7: “Levy payers are better able to provide feedback into the National R&D system”

Program structure

To achieve the goal and objectives, a structure involving a number of subprograms, along with a National Coordination role was utilised. Participating subprograms are detailed in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Vegetable Industry Development Program Subprograms

| Project number | Project title | Organisation | Subprogram leader |
|-----------------------|---|---|--------------------------|
| VG08040 | Economic Research Services for the Vegetable Industry | Industry Data Economic Analysis | Ian James |
| VG09144 | Vegetable Industry Development program – National Program Coordination | Rural Directions Pty Ltd | David Heinjus |
| VG 09145 | Vegetable Industry Development Program People Development Subprogram | Dianne Fullelove and Associates Pty Ltd | Dianne Fullelove |
| VG09146 | Vegetable Industry Development Program Consumers and Markets Subprogram | Freshlogic Pty Ltd | Martin Kneebone |
| VG09147 | Vegetable Industry Development | Freshlogic Pty Ltd | Steve Spencer |

| | | | |
|---------|--|---|----------------------|
| | Program Knowledge Management Subprogram | | |
| VG09149 | InnoVeg Local Partnership Program- Coordinating Collaborative and Innovative Industry Development Products | RMCG | Dr Anne-Maree Boland |
| VG10117 | InnoVeg – Tier 2 development products for delivery to the Vegetable Industry | RMCG | Dr Anne-Maree Boland |
| VG09161 | AUSVEG Support to Vegetable Industry development Knowledge Management Subprogram | AUSVEG Ltd | Richard Mulcahy |
| VG09191 | National Vegetable IPM Coordinator | Schofield Robinson Horticultural Services | Lauren Thompson |

In addition to the above subprograms, there was a project titled “Collaborative Industry Organisations Support to VIDP” established. This was managed by Vegetables Program Manager Horticulture Australia Limited, Kathryn Lee and delivered by the organisations detailed in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Organisations delivering the Collaborative Industry Organisations Support to VIDP

| Project number | Project title | Organisation | Subprogram leader |
|-----------------------|---|---|---------------------------------------|
| VG10096 | Collaborative Industry Organisations | Horticulture Australia Limited | Kathryn Lee |
| VG10097 | Collaborative Industry Organisations – Queensland - Support to VIDP | Growcom | Margie Milgate |
| VG 10098 | Collaborative Industry Organisations – New South Wales - Support to VIDP | NSW Farmers Association | Dr Alison Anderson Alicia Harrison |
| VG10099 | Collaborative Industry Organisations – Victoria - Support to VIDP | Vegetable Growers Association of Victoria | Tony Imeson |
| VG10100 | Collaborative Industry Organisations – Tasmania - Support to VIDP | Tasmanian Farmers and Graziers Association. | Nick Steel |
| VG10101 | Collaborative Industry Organisations – South Australia - Support to VIDP | Virginia Horticulture Centre Inc | Mike Redmond |
| VG10102 | Collaborative Industry Organisations – Western Australia -Support to VIDP | Vegetable Growers Association of WA Inc | John Shannon |

The role of the Collaborative Industry Organisations Support project was to provide a conduit for outputs from each of the VIDP subprograms. Working with the InnoVeg subprogram the Collaborative Industry Organisations provided a delivery mechanism to industry for VIDP.

The remainder of this final report focuses specifically on the project VG09161, delivered by AUSVEG.

The national peak industry body AUSVEG was contracted in August 2009 to assist in communicating the main outputs of the VIDP to levy payers at a national level. A critical feature of the VIDP was the creation of a national R&D database which indexed all R&D projects. These projects would be easily accessible to levy payers and the industry from a single online location. The database was built into the AUSVEG website and launched together with a search engine in May 2010 and now includes over 600 R&D reports and/or tools.

AUSVEG’s role in the VIDP was to provide communications support, primarily to the KM sub program, in order to ensure the communication of the key program outputs to levy payers and the broader industry, and to raise awareness about the activities and outcomes of the program.

The aims of the AUSVEG project as set out in the contract were:

- The communication of VIDP program outputs into the AUSVEG Communications sub-program.
- Providing communications support to other sub-programs that will require links into the KM and Communications sub-programs.
- Monitoring of vegetable stakeholder participation, use and understanding of outputs channelled through the Communications sub program.
- Providing structured feedback to the various sub program managers on gaps, comprehension challenges and opportunities to improve the communication of their sub-program outputs.

The different components of the AUSVEG project are listed in Table 3 below.

Table 3. Vegetable Industry Development Program (VIDP) Industry Communications

| Item | Purpose | Who is responsible | Source of funding |
|--|--|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| Photo library | Access to a library of images for use in industry articles | AUSVEG | VG09161 |
| Media – press releases and general interest media stories | General media articles for regional newspapers and radio to raise awareness of VIDP and industry partners <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Target 2 stories per month | AUSVEG | VG09161 |
| Industry Communication through industry magazines and journals | Articles for vegetable industry magazines <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building awareness of VIDP • Reporting findings of R&D • Promoting industry development activities and events and KM website • Industry case studies and testimonials | AUSVEG | VG09161 |

| | | | |
|-------------------------------|--|--------|---------|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An article in each edition of Vegetables Australia • Target regular publications of articles in other industry magazines | | |
| E-communication with industry | <p>Electronic alerts and communication with stakeholders using segmented industry database</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building awareness of VIDP • Reporting findings of R&D • Promoting industry development activities and events, and KM portal • Industry case studies | AUSVEG | VG09161 |
| Website presence | <p>HAL and AUSVEG websites to provide introductory information on the VIDP and provide links to KM portal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include industry and VIDP events calendar. | AUSVEG | VG09161 |
| Communication Product Library | Built from the above activities as VIDP progresses | AUSVEG | VG09161 |

3.0 Method and activities

This section outlines the method used to disseminate outputs of the Vegetable Industry Development Program to the industry and reports on the activities that were completed by AUSVEG in achieving its objectives as part of the VIDP.

A list of key activities/outputs is provided below in order to illustrate the work undertaken on the project, however, further detail explaining the methodology and some of activities completed is provided in Sections 3.1 to 3.7.

Key activities/outputs:

- Veginsights weekly market variables were published to the AUSVEG website and Veginsights weekly reports were distributed via email before these were changed to a monthly format.
- 19 Veginsights monthly and 10 Veginsights quarterly reports were distributed to the levy payers and the industry via the AUSVEG electronic database reaching around 3000 subscribers and uploaded online to the KM system.
- Six briefings were held with several leading service providers and supply chain businesses on the benefits of the KM system, in order to promote adoption by key advisors to levy payers.
- Feedback on technical and formatting aspects of the KM system was provided to Freshlogic in the development of the new AUSVEG website.
- AUSVEG attended several meetings with Freshlogic and the website developers throughout 2009 and 2010 prior to the launch of the KM system, to provide feedback on aspects of the development of the system.
- Two surveys were conducted to obtain feedback on the Consumers and Markets sub program's Veginsights reports and their value to the industry, including the areas of most value and least value according to subscribers.
- Articles were written, researched and published in every edition of *Vegetables Australia* magazine (articles in a total of 17 editions of the magazine). Interviews with sub program leaders were conducted as required.
- Over 800 media mentions were achieved in relation to the VIDP over the life of the project.
- A large range of media releases were written and issued on topics including the KM system, people development, Veginsights findings and economics data.
- A variety of articles were published in the Weekly Update newsletter in relation to new events or outputs of the VIDP.
- Webpages on the KM system and public areas of the AUSVEG website were updated on a regular basis by AUSVEG to add/edit content as required by various sub programs (examples include the addition of economic data on financial performance, production and trade, the uploading of fact sheets and general information about the program etc).
- AUSVEG participated in regular team meetings and monthly teleconferences as organised by the National Coordinators.
- AUSVEG edited articles by Ian James of the Economics sub program as required to appear in the Weekly Update newsletter.
- AUSVEG edited articles by Ian James of the Economics sub program as required to appear in *Vegetables Australia* magazine on a bi-monthly basis.
- Feedback was provided on content for the Consumers and Markets Veginsights reports, including feedback on the likely impediments to adoption and the value of certain elements of those reports to the industry.
- Proofreading was completed on occasions for various sub-programs, including of the Veginsights market reports and people development materials to identify spelling/grammar issues.

- Meetings were held with Freshlogic and HAL to determine requirements for the development of an automated submission process for summarising final reports. The process will be integrated within the KM system enabling service providers to upload information for approval by HAL. Several meetings were held between HAL, AUSVEG and Freshlogic throughout 2012 and feedback was provided both in-person and electronically on likely impediments, opportunities and process related concerns.

AUSVEG's primary role was to increase awareness of the VIDP amongst the industry by providing communications support to the KM sub program. The majority of activities listed above were focused on increasing awareness of the KM system and conveying the benefits of the system to the industry.

In order to ensure the messages were reaching the appropriate audience, communications were targeted through a range of media, including trade/industry media, rural media, in-house publications such as *Vegetables Australia* and the Weekly Update newsletter, as well as metropolitan media channels.

- 3.1 Media Coverage and Monitoring

In order to ensure wide media coverage for the VIDP across a variety of media channels, AUSVEG issued media releases on a regular basis. This enabled AUSVEG to achieve positive media coverage for the VIDP across print, radio and online, over the life of the project.

AAP Medianet was utilised in order to issue media releases to a wide audience. Depending on the topic, media releases could be issued to metropolitan media, regional media, or farm/rural media. Media releases were also issued to AUSVEG's custom media distribution list.

In relation to media monitoring, the task of reporting on media coverage was added to AUSVEG's operating plan towards the latter half of the program. AUSVEG was, however, constantly monitoring media hits for mentions of the program since its commencement. The Media Monitors service was utilised to record and evaluate the level of media interest in the program. AUSVEG was able to achieve significant coverage for the program by utilising these strategies, with over 800 media mentions recorded over the life of the project.

In order to ensure coverage in different publications, messages sometimes needed to be adapted to suit the audience. The rural publications like Good Fruit and Vegetables magazine were interested in stories about rural trends and the 'state of the industry' whilst more mainstream metropolitan print publications like the Herald Sun and the Sunday Times were interested in stories that had a consumer angle. AUSVEG used these media channels to promote the KM system, with a particular focus on the more salient aspects of the program that had linkages with the KM system, such as the Veginsights market reports.

By increasing awareness of the Veginsights brand, AUSVEG became recognised as a source of reliable information on industry trends and insights. AUSVEG was able to leverage these opportunities to report on the findings of the VIDP and increase overall awareness of the activities of the program.

In regards to radio coverage, a similar strategy was employed. The AUSVEG spokesperson would use these opportunities to promote the benefits of centralised access to R&D through the KM system,

whilst reporting on key findings and program outputs, such as new economic data or consumer/market insights. Live radio interviews in particular, presented a particularly valuable opportunity to promote the program, as they could not be censored like pre-recorded radio grabs. The spokesperson could refer back to the KM system wherever possible, thus increasing awareness of the program by listeners, which in the case of regional radio stations like ABC rural etc, is likely to have included many vegetable levy payers.

Details of the publications and broadcasters that carried stories on the VIDP are included in the Evaluation section of this report.

- 3.2 Knowledge Management system

As the KM system was integrated within the AUSVEG website, AUSVEG was heavily involved in providing feedback on the development and implementation of the KM system, as well promoting it to a wide audience through a range of communications activities.

- **Development**

During the development phase in 2009/10 AUSVEG provided feedback on the importance of making the KM system as accessible as possible for levy payers. For instance, AUSVEG stressed the need to minimise load times and avoid Macromedia flash objects where possible, in order to make the website widely accessible to levy payers, many of which are based in regional areas where internet speeds can be slow. The average age of the vegetable grower is approximately 55 and anecdotally, technological skill is known to be quite low, although gradually increasing. In order to minimise the risk of low adoption and maximise opportunities for use of the KM system, AUSVEG stressed the need for a user-friendly navigation system and interface.

In order to convey its feedback, AUSVEG attended several meetings with the website developers LCubed, together with the project managers of the KM system, Freshlogic, in order to provide feedback throughout the development process. Feedback included providing input on menu names and structure, as well on aesthetics such as the look and feel of the website and colour schemes and branding.

AUSVEG did not, however, contribute significantly to discussions concerning the structure and layout of the KM system itself, with these elements managed by Freshlogic. AUSVEG did however have input into the menu structure and layout of the public areas of the AUSVEG website. It was determined that the KM system should be password protected (secure) in order to protect the investment of levy payers in the R&D that was to be indexed there. AUSVEG was involved in the process of determining the level of access required by different users of the website.

- **Implementation**

AUSVEG was involved in updating webpages and reports found within the KM system on an ongoing basis and providing feedback on improvements to the KM system post its launch in May 2010. Specifically, AUSVEG provided ongoing feedback in relation to the search engine function. Among the improvements AUSVEG suggested were the use of icons, segmentation of individual search results to make it easier for the user to understand, a back button, itemisation of search results and a listing of the number of search results, and a link to the search engine on the first page of the Technical Insights section. A number of these recommended improvements were adopted, though feedback was provided that it was not technically feasible to adopt some of

them, such as displaying the number of search results, and itemising search results by date or type.

In regards to the updating of the KM system, AUSVEG would periodically review the publication of new final reports by Horticulture Australia Limited (HAL) and provide these to Freshlogic so they could be summarised for inclusion in the KM system. Once this process was completed, AUSVEG would receive an 'upload file' from Freshlogic to be loaded into the backend database. AUSVEG has since suggested an automated process requiring project service providers to complete this summary online, to be directly uploaded into the KM system along with the final report upon approval by HAL. This process is currently being finalised by Freshlogic.

- 3.3 Supply Chain Briefings

Throughout the course of the project, AUSVEG was able to identify that the majority of access to the R&D database online had been by intermediaries that growers deal with on a regular basis, such as agronomists, consultants and researchers. While the website platform was limited in its ability to provide data on segmentation of growers versus researchers etc, a review of recent logins on a periodic basis suggested that it was the research and agribusiness community that were accessing the KM system the most.

Accordingly, AUSVEG decided that it was important to stimulate greater involvement from these key groups. As we knew that agronomists and other specialists were likely to be best placed to understand the requirements of growers in terms of accessing R&D through the KM system, AUSVEG reviewed its communications activities and decided to conduct select face-to-face briefings with leading service providers in the agribusiness sector. The purpose of these briefings or presentations was to explain where and how to access the R&D database and the benefits it could offer to the growers these businesses work with on a regular basis.

Strong interest was shown by agronomists and the supply-chain at these briefings in accessing the R&D resources now available through the AUSVEG website, in particular the national R&D database and Veginsights reports. AUSVEG subsequently created logins and approved registered access to the website for many personnel within these organisations. Overall, the briefings were well-received and AUSVEG expects they will result in an end benefit to the growers these providers work with.

Over the course of the project, AUSVEG conducted supply chain briefings with the following agribusiness organisations:

- Elders
- Peracto
- Landmark
- Bayer CropScience
- Incitec Pivot Fertilisers
- Syngenta

The following slides were used to guide attendees through the KM system, explain how it works and outline the range of resources and search options available to users of the system.

How to use the R&D database

National peak industry body for vegetable & potato growers

YOU ARE LOGGED IN TECHNICAL INSIGHTS VEGETABLE MARKET PUBLICATIONS PEOPLE STATISTICS MANAGE ACCOUNT LOGOUT

TECHNICAL INSIGHTS

- IPM
- Chemicals & Pesticides
- Environment
- Varietal Improvement
- Productivity
- Business Improvement
- Search Engine

How to use the database

The R&D insights database is provided as a business tool for vegetable growers and other industry participants. It can be used to:

- Obtain results of levy-funded research into a wide range of technical issues and challenges facing vegetable production in Australia
- Access tools that assist apply research outcomes to their own situations
- Obtain communication aids that assist explain the findings of research
- Obtain access to other technical inputs

All the insights and information contained in the database is classified and categorised to enable faster access, enhanced searchability and higher accuracy.

Users can access information in the database using the following methods:

- Search the database
- Browse by focus area
- Browse by research area
- Browse by vegetable type

A slide explaining how to use the national R&D database

Searching the Database

YOU ARE LOGGED IN TECHNICAL INSIGHTS VEGETABLE MARKET PUBLICATIONS PEOPLE STATISTICS MANAGE ACCOUNT LOGOUT

TECHNICAL INSIGHTS

- IPM
- Chemicals & Pesticides
- Environment
- Varietal Improvement
- Productivity
- Business Improvement
- Search Engine

Insights Database Search

All the material contained in the database is classified and categorised to enable faster access, enhanced searchability and higher accuracy of the results returned to a user.

Refining your search

The search table below allows use of a number of filters to refine your search. These filters have been chosen as the most common and likely to be used by requesters of information within each the relevant classification.

Please note that only one category can be selected in each of the four filters per search. To capture all information relevant to a filter, retain the default selection of 'All'.

Keywords:

HAL project number:

Report Type:

SEARCH

FOCUS AREA

Environment Pests & diseases Supply chain Productivity

Added Value Chemicals & pesticides Regional development People

Market development Varieties & breeding

On-farm food safety Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Handling and storage

Environmental management Climate Change Supply chain

Communication Land use Nutrition

Business regulation Production Cleaning practices

Pest management Chemical residues Insecticides

Minor use Permits Irrigation Herbicides

Plant diseases Soil health Biodiversity

Plant diseases Biosecurity

FOCUS AREA

Environment Pests & diseases Supply chain Productivity

Added Value Chemicals & pesticides Regional development People

Market development Varieties & breeding

On-farm food safety Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Handling and storage

Environmental management Climate Change Supply chain

Communication Land use Nutrition

Business regulation Production Cleaning practices

Pest management Chemical residues Insecticides

Minor use Permits Irrigation Herbicides

Plant diseases Soil health Biodiversity

Plant diseases Biosecurity

FOCUS AREA

Environment Pests & diseases Supply chain Productivity

Added Value Chemicals & pesticides Regional development People

Market development Varieties & breeding

On-farm food safety Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Handling and storage

Environmental management Climate Change Supply chain

Communication Land use Nutrition

Business regulation Production Cleaning practices

Pest management Chemical residues Insecticides

Minor use Permits Irrigation Herbicides

Plant diseases Soil health Biodiversity

Plant diseases Biosecurity

The process of searching was explained

Range of search options

Refining your search

The search table below allows use of a number of filters to refine your search. These filters have been chosen as the most common and likely to be used by requesters of information within each the relevant classification.

Please note that only one category can be selected in each of the four filters per search. To capture all information relevant to a filter, retain the default selection of 'All'.

Keywords:

HAL project number:

Report Type:

SEARCH

FOCUS AREA

Environment Pests & diseases Supply chain Productivity

Added Value Chemicals & pesticides Regional development People

Market development Varieties & breeding

RESEARCH AREA

Research area Packaging Crop Management

Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Varietal development Handling and storage

Program evaluation Climate Change Supply chain

On-farm food safety Land use Nutrition

Business development Production Cleaning practices

Environmental management Chemical residues Insecticides

Communication Processed vegetables Herbicides

Business regulation Irrigation Biodiversity

Pest management Soil health Biosecurity

Minor use Permits Plant diseases

VEGETABLE SELECTION AREA

Search by

Vegetable Group Vegetable

Registration process

Registration

* Required

CONTACT DETAILS

Title (MR)

First Name *

Surname *

Primary Email Address *

Alternate Email

Username *

Password *

Confirm Password *

Mobile Phone *

BUSINESS DETAILS

Company

Position

Business Phone *

Alternate Phone

Fax Number

Address *

City/Suburb *

State *

Postcode *

Country * AUSTRALIA

Website

The large range of search options was outlined, as was the registration process.

Search Results

YOU ARE LOGGED IN TECHNICAL INSIGHTS VEGETABLE MARKET PUBLICATIONS PEOPLE STATISTICS MANAGE ACCOUNT LOGOUT

TECHNICAL INSIGHTS

- IPM
- Chemicals & Pesticides
- Environment
- Varietal Improvement
- Productivity
- Business Improvement
- Search Engine

Search results

PT023 - An Investigation Of Black Dot Disease Of Potatoes And Its Control **VIEW PRECIS**

Research report - Plant diseases, 1997

This study conducted two field trials to have more control over purity of pathogen isolates and soil and tuber hygiene. Two pot trials in a semi-controlled environment with sterilised soil mix and sterile mini tubers have been used.

PT01001 - Control Of Black Dot In Potatoes **VIEW PRECIS**

Research report - Plant diseases, Pest management, 2005

Creation of management strategies to control black dot disease using a range of control methods

PT06014 - Reducing The Impact Of Black Dot On Fresh Market Potatoes **VIEW PRECIS**

Research report - Plant diseases, Pest management, 2009

Quantification and control of black dot

PT221 - Survey Of The Incidence Of Black Dot Of Potatoes **VIEW PRECIS**

How to navigate search results was explained

View Précis

YOU ARE LOGGED IN TECHNICAL INSIGHTS VEGETABLE MARKET PUBLICATIONS PEOPLE STATISTICS MANAGE ACCOUNT LOGOUT

TECHNICAL INSIGHTS

- IPM
- Chemicals & Pesticides
- Environment
- Varietal Improvement
- Productivity
- Business Improvement
- Search Engine
- The Levy System

Title PT023 - An Investigation Of Black Dot Disease Of Potatoes And Its Control **DOWNLOAD DOCUMENT**

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Year 1997

Document type Research report **GO BACK**

SUMMARY

Colletotrichum coccodes has been observed in many potato growing areas in Tasmania. In many instances, the disease was suspected to cause premature senescence of potato crops. Previous attempts to demonstrate the premature senescence of potato plants due to C. Coccodes infection in field trials have not been successful. This study conducted two field trials to have more control over purity of pathogen isolates and soil and tuber hygiene. Two pot trials in a semi-controlled environment with sterilised soil mix and sterile mini tubers have been used.

Research area

Plant diseases

Vegetables relevant

REGISTER FOR THE AUSVEG

It was explained that each report has been summarised

- 3.4 Vegetables Australia coverage

Articles were written, researched and published in every edition of *Vegetables Australia* over the life of the project in order to promote and raise awareness of VIDP products and activities. *Vegetables Australia* is the most widely distributed magazine in horticulture and reaches around 6,000 subscribers. The VIDP was featured in a total of 17 editions of the bi-monthly magazine.

The topics for VIDP *articles* were determined between AUSVEG and the National Coordinators in order to profile the most topical or relevant aspects of the program. AUSVEG sourced content for

articles through interviews with sub program leaders, existing information on file and through information obtained directly from VIDP products.

In order to get these articles to print, time was spent on activities including researching, editing, proofing, interviewing and writing. The articles also had to be designed and appropriate images were sourced from the photo library maintained by AUSVEG.

The following articles appeared from August 2009 to June 2012:

- 'Development update - Nearly all components of the revised Vegetable Industry Development Program have been contracted' (**September 2009**)
- 'Get with the program - The innovative new industry development program is underway, with growers set to reap the benefits.' (**November 2009**)
- 'A word to the web-wise - Technology is helping growers access outputs and information from the new Vegetable Industry Development program' (**January 2010**)
- 'Investment in people = investment in industry' (**March 2010**)
- 'Veginsights: The Market Q4 2009' (**May 2010**)
- 'Young leader in the pack' (**July 2010**)
- 'The Vegetable Industry Development Program: One year on' (**September 2010**)
- 'Collaborative approach key to industry development' (**November 2010**)
- 'New AUSVEG website launched - The Vegetable Industry Development Program's KM program is attempting to develop a better way for useful information to reach growers and other industry participants' (**January 2011**)
- 'The Vegetable Industry Development Program: Grower resources revealed' (**March 2011**)
- 'The Vegetable Industry Development Program: Getting the message out' (**May 2011**)
- 'The Vegetable Industry Development Program: Shining the spotlight on carrots' (**July 2011**)
- 'The Collaborative Industry Organisations: Channels of communication' (**September 2011**)
- 'The chain of communication' (**November 2011**)
- 'Planting seeds of thought' (**January 2012**)
- 'Translating better practices' (**January 2012**)
- 'Discussing better business - The InnoVeg Talking Business program continues with its aim of assisting and informing the decision-making process for growers' (**March 2012**)
- 'Investigating IPM - The costs and considerations of adopting an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) approach in lettuce growing are the focus of a newly published business case' (**March 2012**)
- 'VIDP: Industry development program yields national R&D database' (**May 2012**)

Illustrative examples of some of the articles that were published appear below.



The very notion of developing a Vegetable Industry Development Program (VIDP) Manager was a foreign concept to even the most forward-thinking of growers when it was conceived in 2009.

Andrew White admits that even he needed time to digest the significance of the project, after he was contracted by AUSVEG back in September 2009 to begin working on the program.

More than two years later, as part of a young and enthusiastic team at AUSVEG where the average age is in the mid-20s, Mr White continues to promote the advantages of the national R&D database the project has built.

The VIDP was developed to help growers build their

to easily access. Mr White said this Knowledge Management System – an archive of all levy-funded research and development – provided growers with access

areas such as economics, consumers and marketing, knowledge management, people development, and so on," Mr White said. "Our part in the program is

in horticulture before starting at AUSVEG. Mr White said it was a "huge culture shock" going into the industry after previously running his own website development business.

"Now more than two years into the job, he shares the role of Deputy to the CEO and is as committed as ever to helping growers improve and develop their industry, with AUSVEG representing the growers of 136 different varieties of vegetables.

"The thing that amazed me the most was the range of different interests and ways of doing things across the industry," Mr White said.

"Also, just the number of different crops that AUSVEG represents was a real eye-opener."

"That was very nice to learn

“One of our main tasks is to promote the national database to growers. It is important that they are aware of the thousand or so R&D reports that are available to them.”

22

Planting seeds of thought

A new business case model has sought to provide assistance to growers when purchasing large-scale farming machinery.

Designed by the RIM Consulting Group, the case study uses the fictitious acquisition of a lettuce planter as a basis for discussion.

RIMCO's Nigel McCuckian hopes it will help to stimulate thought and dialogue among growers.

"It's to get people talking about how they make decisions, and to think about what they include and don't include when they make decisions," said Mr McCuckian. "It's really for people to chew over and

discuss amongst themselves, whether they're in a group of farmers or a farming family, to have a look at that as an example of a decision."

The case forms part of the InnoVeg Talking Business program as part of the Vegetable Industry Development Program and aims to provide an overview of the potential costs, risks and benefits involved when purchasing new machinery.

The figures and considerations used in the case were informed, in part, through



a series of interviews with growers and field officers. In addition to the cost of new machinery, reductions in labour outlay and increases in productivity, the business case stresses the importance of considering depreciation and the cost of capital. Even in cases where capital used to buy machinery isn't borrowed and therefore doesn't attract interest, it is necessary to nonetheless consider its broader value as it can no longer be expended on other farming operations.

Rather than being specific to the purchase of lettuce planters, Mr McCuckian says the intention was for growers to apply their own circumstance and figures within the model.

"We are developing tools to help growers think about

their own numbers, even if they just read the business case and do their own calculations within that framework," said Mr McCuckian.

"It's called Talking Business—that's the whole idea, so let's talk about business and make sure that we're talking about the right things."

The lettuce planter business case will be available through the AUSVEG website.

For more information, Nigel McCuckian Telephone: 08 9888 0070 Email: nigel@rimco.com.au The InnoVeg sub-program has been funded by the National Vegetables Levy with matching funds from the Australian Government.

Vegetables Australia coverage of the communications program

An article on the lettuce harvester business case produced by InnoVeg.



Translating better practices

Growers from non-English speaking backgrounds are at risk of failing to comply with Australian industry standards.

That is the concern of a new Government initiative designed to inform and improve the practices of Language Other Than English (LOTE) growers. Senior Northern Territory-based Research Officer for Sustainable Production, Stuart Smith, says he has witnessed

similar initiative was undertaken in rural NSW. An audit was conducted of the growers' water and spray use, as well as a monitoring of their cool-chain procedures. It was found that inconsistencies in post-harvest cooling procedures were leading to dramatic

growers were taken to Sydney markets to open up boxes of their produce at end of their transit. This exercise, says Mr Smith, helped them to become acutely aware of the impact of some of their practices.

While it is the responsibility of the LOTE growers to improve their own procedures and meet industry standards, Mr Smith admits that communication remains a significant impediment.

"There have been some difficulties between the market and the growers, and they get [disappointed] that their stuff's been rejected or downgraded at

easier and give them some money, even if they have to chuck it out. So there's a few cultural differences with managing quality."

While there was resistance to the recommendations from some older growers, Mr Smith says that the next generation of younger LOTE growers were conducive to modernising their methods. By adopting several relatively simple practices, he hopes the growers can succeed in meeting stringent Australian standards.

"We've presented a few different technologies so they can make changes to their own

An article on InnoVeg funded LOTE activities in the NT



Supply chain volumes and share

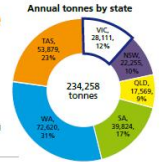
In 2009/10, Australian carrot production was 234,258 tonnes, with WA the leading producing state with 31% of the total, followed by SA at 27% and TAS at 23%. A further 3,549 tonnes was imported, and this imported product is all sold in a frozen processed form.

Over half of the fresh carrots

are sold through retail channels, while 14% are sold through foodservice and a substantial 31% (67,610 tonnes) are exported.

The retail channel buys a total of 132,028 tonnes and the annual retail market value of fresh carrots purchased by consumers is \$215m.

Supermarkets hold a 74% share of this retail fresh market and the specialists, which include greengrocers, fruiters and fresh markets, hold the remaining 26%. The food service channel buys 34,621 tonnes of fresh and processed carrots.



An article profiling the Consumers and Markets program

- 3.5 Survey and evaluation work

One of AUSVEG's activities was the monitoring of vegetable stakeholder participation, use and understanding of outputs. There were a number of barriers in evaluating the adoption of the KM system by growers. The website development platform did not offer the capability to differentiate between different user types in regards to providing comprehensive statistical data; historical data on user types was poor and newly registered growers were reluctant to provide sufficient information (such as crops grown etc) that would make segmentation viable.

Essentially, this segmentation process was to be undertaken as part of the KM sub program, while the act of communicating with industry stakeholders was to be undertaken as part of the core communications project, managed by AUSVEG. However, the lack of sufficient data from growers on crops grown etc, made e-communication activities by segment impractical. AUSVEG monitored the situation throughout the project and it became clear through observing logins to the KM system, that the research and agribusiness communities were using the system more readily than growers. As such, AUSVEG decided to approach promotion of the KM system differently and commenced the supply chain briefings that have been outlined above.

In addition, two evaluation surveys were completed by AUSVEG to enable a greater understanding of the response to the Veginsights market information being produced by Freshlogic and communicated to the industry by AUSVEG. Questions for the surveys were created in cooperation between Freshlogic and AUSVEG.

In September 2010, a telephone survey of 56 growers and a concurrent online survey of 38 people on the AUSVEG electronic mailing list was conducted to assess the use and application of the Veginsights weekly newsletter and quarterly reports, including the sections people found most interesting, preferred distribution methods, existing sources of general market information and any gaps in the market information currently being received.

Questions in September 2010 survey included:

- What type(s) of vegetables do you produce?
- How many tonnes of vegetables will you produce in the current financial year?

- Are you currently receiving and using the weekly Veginsights newsletter?
- What section(s) of the newsletter do you find most interesting?
- How would you rate it out of 10?
- What do you like/dislike about the current format of the newsletter and how can it be improved?
- Do you currently receive the Veginsights quarterly reports?
- Do you find the reports useful in your business? If Y, how so?
- What sections of the quarterly report do you find most useful?
- How would you rate the quarterly reports out of 10?
- Are there gaps in the market information you receive overall?
- What other information would you like to receive?
- How often do you want the information? (weekly, monthly, annually)
- How would you prefer to receive the information?
- In your business, if you use market information, what do you currently use market information for?

A second survey was conducted in early 2012 and the results published in March 2012. The second survey was created using Survey Monkey, an online survey evaluation tool and the survey went to approximately 3000 subscribers on the AUSVEG mailing list that receive Veginsights. For the second survey, to encourage a higher response rate, an iPad was offered by Freshlogic as a prize. The winner was randomly drawn from the respondents. The survey was sent directly to registrants on the AUSVEG database and promoted heavily in the Weekly Update newsletter. There were 169 responses.

Questions in the 2012 survey included:

- How are you involved in the Australian vegetable industry?
- Which Australian state or territory are you primarily based in?
- Which vegetable crops do you grow or work with? (Please list below, or type 'all')
- Do you source and use vegetable market information?
- What sort of market information do you seek/gather?
- Do you rely on sources for market information other than through AUSVEG?
- How do you use vegetable market information?
- Have you ever read any Veginsights material?
- How useful do you find this material?
- How useful do you find the following sections of Veginsights...
- Have you changed how you use market information in the last two years?
- What sort of changes have you made?
- Are you satisfied with how you access the market information you need?
- How do you prefer to access vegetable market information?

The two surveys were used to gauge awareness of the Veginsights reports and obtain feedback on the most useful aspects of the reports, as well as those elements that should be changed or were considered of little relevance. The completion of the surveys demonstrates the work that was undertaken by AUSVEG to monitor stakeholder participation, use and understanding of outputs. More detail on the findings from the two surveys is provided in the Evaluation section of this report.

- 3.6 Distribution of VIDP outputs

One of AUSVEG's main tasks was the distribution of the Veginsights reports on a weekly, monthly and quarterly basis to its database of around 3000 subscribers. While the weekly report was uploaded to the AUSVEG website, the monthly and quarterly reports were distributed via email using Constant Contact – a mass email distribution service.

Constant Contact was utilised as it enabled cost-effective dissemination of email messages in a format that offered the path of least resistance regarding junk mail and spam filters. That is, it was a system designed to ensure messages didn't accidentally get filtered into junk mail and spam filters on the recipients' computers. The service also allowed the administrator to measure the percentage of 'opens' by recipients.

Distribution of the reports, involved formatting the emails appropriately, using graphic design elements and images as needed. All communications were proofed prior to distribution. To enable easy editing by the project managers of the Consumers and Markets sub program, the reports were published in pdf format, so that they could easily be linked to the email. The disadvantage of this format is that users would have to click a link to view the reports, but the benefit was easy editing by the project manager. Portable digital format (pdf) is a universally accessible publishing format and was chosen for this reason.

Once they had been distributed, the monthly and quarterly Veginsights reports were also published within the KM system on the AUSVEG website.

- 3.7 Communications support for sub-programs / feedback

As well as providing specific communications support to the KM sub program, AUSVEG also provided ad hoc support to other sub programs where linkages into the KM sub program were required. Over the life of the project, examples included: writing articles for publication in AUSVEG's weekly newsletter, the Weekly Update; including fact sheets and other collateral as onserts with *Vegetables Australia* magazine that reaches around 6000 recipients; proofreading material for the people development program newsletter; updating various webpages on the AUSVEG website to incorporate information on industry development, fact sheets and business cases; and linking to the InnoVeg newsletter in the Weekly Update.

A trial of SMS communication with the AUSVEG database was undertaken towards the end of the project. A compilation of the Veginsights Category Profiles was sent by SMS to around 443 growers' mobile telephone numbers. 45 people opened the Category Profiles pdf document using the link provided in the SMS. This represents a 10 % response rate and at the time of writing, different media types are planned for a further trial before the project concludes.

4.0 Evaluation

In evaluating the performance of this project, it is evident that significant coverage for the VIDP was achieved in excess of targets outlined in the project requirements. Whilst uptake of the KM system still presents its challenges and there are associated measurement and adoption difficulties that will need to be overcome, AUSVEG proactively sought to adapt its communications approach mid-project to meet these challenges. By leveraging from the supply chain and service providers that provide trusted advice to growers on a regular basis, AUSVEG targeted those who are in the best position to influence use of the national R&D database and the KM system long-term.

Over the course of this project AUSVEG was able to successfully raise awareness of the VIDP and its outputs within the industry, achieve wide ranging media coverage utilising findings from the VIDP, particularly those relating to consumer behaviour, market trends and economic business impacts, and contribute to the improvement and ongoing maintenance of the KM system that was managed by Freshlogic. Evidence of the performance of this project is provided below.

Veginsights monthly and quarterly reports

The Veginsights monthly and quarterly reports were distributed to AUSVEG's national database of around 3000 subscribers.

The open rate for the reports averaged 26.5 per cent. While this may seem low, it is consistent with standard results for email based communications and compares favourably with other industries using the same email distribution service (see below). AUSVEG put in place a system where it renamed the subject of each Veginsights email to reflect the most interesting finding from that edition. This process was in place about 1/3 of the way through the project and saw a spike in the open rate for the Veginsights reports.

| Business Type | Open Rate |
|------------------------------|------------------|
| Accountant | 14.7% |
| Art Gallery | 23.2% |
| Association | 20.6% |
| Communications | 16.5% |
| Consultant | 14.9% |
| Crafts | 25.5% |
| Education and Services | 19.0% |
| Entertainment | 15.6% |
| Event Planning | 17.0% |
| Franchise | 16.3% |
| Government Agency | 22.6% |
| Hotel, Inn, B&B | 19.2% |
| Legal Services | 18.9% |
| Manufacturing & Distribution | 18.6% |
| Marketing/PR | 14.5% |
| Medical Services | 18.0% |
| Non-profit | 21.7% |

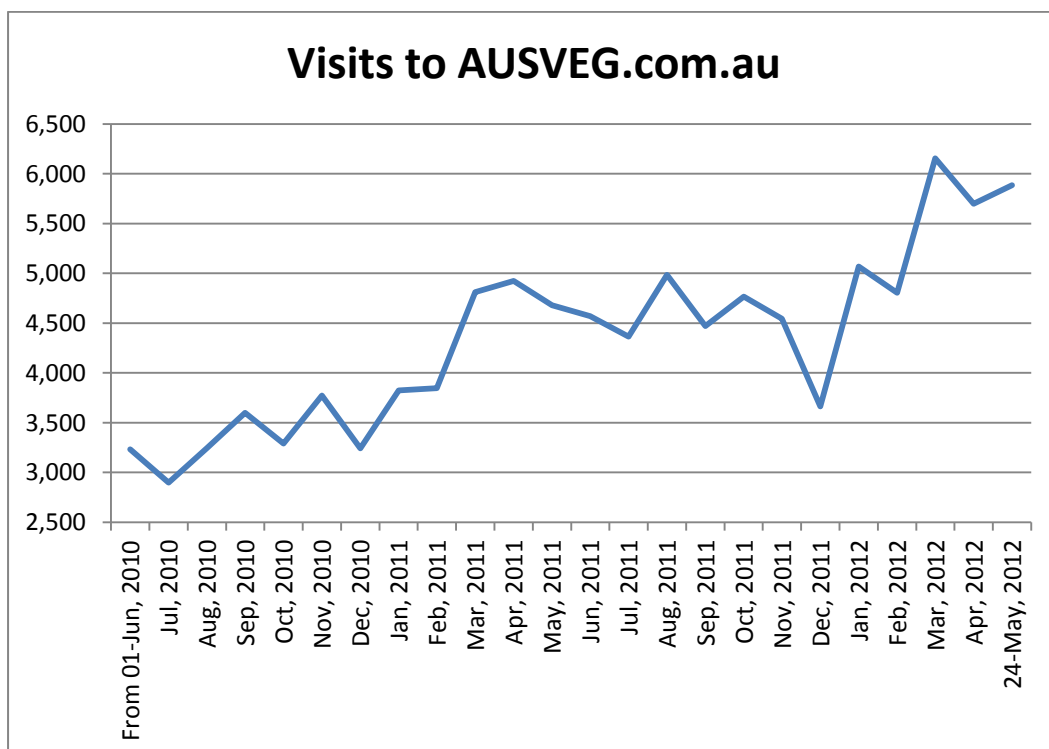
| | |
|-------------------------|-------|
| Office Supplies | 13.3% |
| Personal Services | 18.0% |
| Products & Services | 15.8% |
| Professional Services | 16.5% |
| Publishing | 18.6% |
| Real Estate | 16.4% |
| Religious Organization | 22.8% |
| Restaurant/Bar/Catering | 18.5% |
| Retail | 17.6% |
| Salon/Spa | 16.9% |
| Sports & Recreation | 18.7% |
| Technology | 14.8% |
| Transportation | 18.4% |
| Travel & Tourism | 17.4% |
| Web Developer | 18.5% |
| Other* | 17.5% |

Source: Constant Contact

Website Hits

As Figure 1 below shows, visits to the AUSVEG website have grown dramatically since the website was launched at the end of May 2010. AUSVEG has heavily promoted access to the KM system in *Vegetables Australia* and in its media coverage.

Figure 1. Visits to the AUSVEG website



Media Coverage

As evidence of the performance of the AUSVEG communications sub program, over 800 media mentions were recorded in relation to the VIDP over the life of the project. Media mentions were monitored using Media Monitors and a listing of some of the media providers that carried VIDP related stories is provided below, along with their circulation figures. The Herald Sun which carried VIDP articles has a circulation of up to 500,000.

Print coverage of the VIDP was achieved in the following publications, among others:

The Herald Sun, Australian Financial Review, Daily Telegraph, Courier Mail, Hobart Mercury, West Australian, the Coffs Coast Advocate, North West Star, North Queensland Register, Queensland Country Life, the Northern Star, Sunraysia Daily, Northern Territory News, Adelaide Advertiser, Toowoomba Chronicle, Queensland Times, Weekly Times, Ballarat Courier, the Northern Daily Leader, the Sunday Tasmanian; the Sunday Mail Adelaide; the Sunshine Coast Daily; the Sunday Times; and Good Fruit and Vegetables magazine.

Radio coverage of the VIDP was achieved on the following stations, among others:

3AW Melbourne, ABC 774 Melbourne, 2UE Sydney, Mix 94.5 Perth, ABC 612 Brisbane, 6PR Perth, ABC 666 Canberra and ABC 936 Hobart, 2NM Muswellbrook, ABC North Coast NSW, ABC Wagga Wagga, Heart FM, 2HD Newcastle, 2TM Tamworth, Hot FM 91.1 Sunshine Coast, ABC Ballarat, ABC Illawarra, ABC Gippsland, ABC South Western Victoria, ABC Central Victoria, 4WK Toowoomba, ABC South Western Victoria, 2WG Wagga Wagga, ABC South East NSW, ABC Central Australia, ABC 612 (Brisbane); ABC 891 (Adelaide); ABC NewsRadio (National Australia); 2GB (Sydney); Hot FM 91.1 (Sunshine Coast); Curtin FM (Perth); River FM; Hot Tomato (Gold Coast); 4BC (Brisbane); MIX 94.5 (Perth); Melbourne Talk Radio (Melbourne); and ABC 666 (Canberra).

Internet coverage of the VIDP was achieved on the following websites, among others:

www.news.com.au, www.weeklytimesnow.com.au, www.farmonline.com.au, www.northernstar.com.au, www.produceplus.com.au, www.thechronicle.com.au, www.farmbusiness.com.au, www.dailytelegraph.com.au, www.heraldsun.com.au, www.freshplaza.com.au, www.connectedchefs.com, www.couriermail.com.au, www.dailyexaminer.com.au, www.ipswitchadvertiser.com.au, www.freshplaza.com, www.ausfoodnews.com.au, www.foodweek.com.au, www.fruitnet.com, www.countrynews.com.au, www.brassicastoday.com, www.indaily.com.au, www.agribusinessgippsland.com.au and www.dpi.vic.gov.au.

Examples of Media Coverage



Samantha Williams

TELEVISION cooking shows such as MasterChef have been blamed for sending vegetable imports soaring. The year-on-year demand for produce drove up vegie imports by \$4 million – or 10 per cent – in 2010-11, new statistics show. Asparagus is being flown in from Peru at a cost of \$67 for a 2kg box about three times what Australian species cost when they are available. According to Ausveg, which represents the nation's vegetable growers, imports of fresh and frozen vegetables increased to \$670 million last financial year from \$550 million in 2009-10. The value of fresh produce imports jumped 12 per cent to \$76.18 million from \$67.82 million. Chinese garlic and onion imports have doubled in four years. Chinese garlic retails for \$2/kg to \$4.5/kg, while

fresh vegetable imports from China were worth \$25.06 million in 2010-11, up 36 per cent from the previous financial year, to edge out New Zealand as the top source of foreign fresh food. China, New Zealand, US and Italy remain the top four sources for imported vegetables, which collectively supply around 64 per cent of total imports. Fresh asparagus and garlic from Mexico are up 269 per cent in the same period while processed and frozen products from the US are up 184 per cent and 409 per cent respectively. Aussie Farmer's Direct CEO Rowden Leek, who runs a home delivery grocer's firm sourcing only 100 per cent Australian produce, said there were enough vegetables grown in Australia to feed the population three times over. "There is a genuine demand in

rather than wait for produce to be available seasonally, particularly asparagus," Mr Leek said. "This means that they miss out on great Australian grown produce." Ausveg spokesman Andrew White said imports were getting more market share because they were cheaply produced but it was at the expense of Australian growers. Mr White said labelling regulations needed to be changed to better inform consumers where their produce was coming from. "The label could say Made in Australia but in the fine print on the back it could say made from local and imported ingredients. That could mean up to 50 per cent of the ingredients are from overseas, but packaged in Australia," Mr White said. **Cooking with asparagus, cauliflower and broccoli. Taste It 2011**

Humble carrot snares coveted vege crown

By ASHLEY WALMSLEY

CARROTS are king with consumers. That's the summation from Ausveg's recent quarterly Veginsights report, which has listed the humble orange grocery staple as the most popular vegetable purchased by households on a weekly basis. The potato came in at second place, followed by the tomato in third and onions in fourth.

Broccoli secured the fifth spot, with the mushrooms (6), lettuce (7), capsicum (8), pumpkin (9) and zucchini (10) rounding out the list. While both potatoes and tomatoes weren't far off the top position, it was broccoli's movement up the list which surprised observers. Broccoli jumped from being purchased by under 40 per cent of households to now almost 50 per cent of households over the past two quarters.

Ausveg spokesperson Andrew White said the results of the report, which relate to consumer purchasing throughout the third

The top 10 most popular vegetables

1. Carrots
2. Potato
3. Tomato
4. Onions
5. Broccoli
6. Mushroom
7. Lettuce
8. Capsicum
9. Pumpkin
10. Zucchini



*Judged on the basis of the proportion of households purchasing them on a weekly basis.

everyday Australians." Data for the report was obtained through the Meapulse panel, which receives more than 14,000 responses a year, making it the largest single purpose continuous monitor in the food market in Australia.

It seems Queensland farmers have their finger on the pulse of consumer trends with the Australia Bureau of Statistics Queensland at a Glance report figures, released in January this year, indicating carrot production lifted by 5000 tonnes between 2007

08 and 2008-09. Tomato production also leapt in the same period from 132,000 to 138,000t. Pumpkins increase in production from 44,000t to 46,000t. However capsicums, chillie and peppers dropped from 41,000t to 39,000t, while lettuce also dropped from 58,000t to 56,000t. Potato production remained relatively the same at about 98,000t for the same period. **More horticulture news in this month's Good Fruit & Vegetables**

A 2011 article on new trade data on imports/exports published in the Courier Mail

Profiling findings from the Veginsights reports in Queensland Country Life



Herald Sun
 Thursday 8/12/2011
 Page: 19
 Section: General News
 Region: Melbourne Circulation: 481,573
 Type: Capital City Daily
 Size: 70.84 sq.cms.
 Frequency: MTWTFSS-

Brief: AUSVEG

Vegies hit the right spots

CHRISTMAS may be the time for turkey, prawns and pudding, but vegetables are in vogue, with research showing they're cheaper than last year.

Vegetable prices in the last week of November were 17.8 per cent lower than the same time last year, according to Veginsights.

The price drop is due to oversupply in wholesale markets, but AUSVEG, the peak body for vegetable

farmers, said the news was not positive for everyone.

"Australian vegetable growers suffer as they cannot sell the quantity which they are producing," said spokesman Andrew White.

But Australians have another reason to help farmers out: a Swedish study has found women who regularly eat vegetables may be less prone to having a stroke.

The study tracked 36,000

women over a decade, and found antioxidant-rich vegetables can reduce inflammation and stress, while lowering blood pressure and boosting energy levels.

This comes as a survey of consumers, nutritionists and chefs predicted that Australians will pay more attention to how their food is manufactured, becoming culinary crusaders who care about what food producers are doing in the community.

An article (above) in the Herald Sun published in December 2011 covering findings from the Veginsights reports



Queensland Times
 Friday 6/5/2011
 Page: 15
 Section: General News
 Region: Ipswich QLD Circulation: 10,498
 Type: Regional
 Size: 71.19 sq.cms.
 Frequency: MTWTFS-

Brief: AUSVEG

Farmers urged to keep up with latest research online

SOUTH-EAST: The national peak industry body representing vegetable growers, AUSVEG, has put the call out to the vegetable growing community to get online, amid concerns that a dearth of tech savvy growers could be creating barriers to the adoption of the industry's latest research and development.

AUSVEG spokesman Andrew

White said it was important that growers took the opportunity to get online, with more than \$14 million invested in research and development every year to benefit the industry and the community.

"The vegetable industry has recently invested in a database system which centralises all the research and development since the early 2000s," Mr White said.

"It's critical that growers register online and use this resource, so we're putting out the call to any growers who don't have access to contact us and register.

"Much of the research addresses critical issues in food production systems, such as the best practices to deal with pests and diseases."

Vegie group reveals decade of research



Sandra Godwin

On the grapevine

THE vegetable industry's peak body has opened the doors on a treasure chest of research and trial results.

AusVeg spokesman Andrew White said all levy-funded research and development undertaken in the past decade was now available to growers and agronomists through a database on the AusVeg website.

To get access to the database, register at ausveg.com.au.

An article on the KM system published in The Weekly Times

Broadcast NewsAlert

2TM (Tamworth)

Rural News - 04/10/2011 - 12:15 PM

Newsreader

Station Ph: 02 6765 7055

A survey by the Australian Bureau of Statistics shows that on average Australians spend just \$13 a week on **vegetables**. **Andrew White** from **AusVeg** says the figures are concerning.

© Media Monitors 2011

Interviewees: **Andrew White**, Spokesman, **AusVeg**

Duration: 0:49

Summary ID: W00045735150

This program or part thereof is syndicated to 11 station/s.



Sunday Times
 Sunday 22/5/2011
 Page: 41
 Section: General News
 Region: Perth Circulation: 293,244
 Type: Capital City Daily
 Size: 143.92 sq.cms.
 Frequency: —S

Fresh food frenzy

Karen Collier

MORE and more shoppers say they love whipping up their own meals.

Three in four people say they have a passion for cooking, an AusVeg report reveals.

The interest in home-cooked meals is put down to the MasterChef effect and the strain on household budgets.

Those with an appetite for home-style meals are spending an average \$32 a week on fresh fruit and vegetables — \$6.50 more than consumers who can't stand the heat.

They are also more likely to buy produce from greengrocers or at markets.

The biggest growth in cooking appreciation is among established families, who are now neck-and-neck with

empty-nesters when it comes to enjoying baking, basting and barbecuing.

But less than half of those who live alone, but usually eat dinner with another, get a buzz from making the effort.

Those on higher incomes are also less likely to love cooking. Produce industry association AusVeg's spokesman Andrew White said reality-TV cooking shows had inspired people to try ingredients.

Sixty-three per cent of men surveyed in the December quarter love cooking, compared with 79 per cent of women.

The report is based on a quiz of 1200 consumers conducted every three months.

People aged over 50 were the keenest cooks (78 per cent) compared with 72 per cent of those aged under 25.

| WHO LOVES TO COOK? | | | | | |
|--------------------|------|--------|----------|-------|-----|
| | MALE | FEMALE | UNDER 25 | 25-49 | 50+ |
| Dec 2010 | 63% | 79% | 72% | 76% | 78% |
| Dec 2009 | 41% | 52% | 48% | 49% | 53% |

Cooking habits as revealed in Veginsights are covered in this article in the Sunday Times



North West Star
 Tuesday 4/10/2011
 Page: 5
 Section: General News
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ORS

Vegetable survey misses the mark

A RECENT survey conducted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics has revealed Australians aren't spending enough on vegetables at the supermarket.

The results from the survey showed on average Australian households are only spending \$13.70 on vegetables out of a total weekly shopping bill of \$204.20.

Lamberts Produce fruit and vegetable wholesale owner James Macleod said his average client would spend about \$35 on a Saturday market day.

"This total is based on the quantity of product and not more expensive prices compared to supermarket vegetable pricing," Mr Macleod said.

"Many residents purchased much of their packet and canned foods from supermarkets and tend to opt for the fresh and long lasting fruit and vegetables from farmers market quality wholesalers such as Lamberts Produce which could be the reason why the tally is so low for vegetables at supermarkets."

Mount Isa resident and mum of two Anne Pittis said she would average around \$30 a week on vegetables at the supermarket.

"I think that average is a little low,

and I would put it down to the fact that it must have been based on families with one child," Mrs Pittis said.

"My kids love specific vegetables like mashed pumpkin, lettuce and I love capsicums and carrots so to have enough for everyone you would have to spend more than \$30 a week to gain some variety and nutrition."

AUSVEG communications manager Andrew White said the survey conducted by the ABS looked at household expenditure from the period of 2010 and 2011 and collected data on the expenditure, income, net worth and other characteristics of Australian households.

"The majority of vegetables purchased per week are the fresh varieties which make up 80 per cent of the average weekly spend. Only \$1.28 per week is being spent on frozen varieties and \$1.53 on other types of vegetables," Mr White said.

"With all of the known health benefits that come from eating more fresh vegetables we would like to see this percentage of the weekly shopping bill increase and have more people choosing fresh produce over convenience and pre-packaged foods."

This article drew attention to new findings from the Economics sub program of the VIDP

More of us put stock in vegies

GRANDMA always said carrots were good for your eyesight. Now it seems we've seen the light. Carrots, potatoes and leeks have come out nation's favourite fresh vegetables. And while women rule the vegie-buying roost, men like it best and are the biggest buyers of chilies.

Karen Collier

AUSVEG chief Richard Mutchy said the MasterChef phenomenon had increased demand for high-quality vegies. The Veginsights report found price, appearance, seasonality, variety, portion size and health influenced vegetable selection. Eighty per cent of households bought fresh vegetables and just under half bought half bags. The report tracked 1200 people for a year, but spent one week of processed vegies as a comparison.

Favourite vegies report

A NEW Australian vegie report has found consumers prefer potatoes and tomatoes. According to the report, these twice as much.

Traps choose chilli with their carrots

Samantha Townsend Regional Reporter

Put Macquarie father of three Peter Murray nearby cooks six days a week. "A lot of dinner is always good with the chilli and it's easy to cook because if you do over to cook."

Vegie market

Fruit & Veg weekly spend per household

| Spending Range | Q4-10 | Q3-10 |
|----------------|-------|-------|
| > \$50 | 16.2% | 15.8% |
| \$20 - \$49 | 42.3% | 43.6% |
| \$5 - \$19 | 31.4% | 32.3% |
| 0.0% - 10.0% | 10.1% | 8.3% |

Green grocers enjoy more share of higher spending households

Various article published related to the VIDP

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Herald Sun
Wednesday 16/2/2011
Page: 6
Section: General News
Region: Melbourne Circulation: 500,800
Type: Capital City Daily
Size: 36.24 sq.cms.
Frequency: MTWTFSS-

Blockes prefer easy, spicy

FORGET meat and potatoes: Aussie blokes love a good carrot — and chilli.

Ausveg, which represents vegetable growers, said it has found men buy far more carrots and chilli than women. Ausveg spokesman Andrew White said men bought carrots because they were simple to prepare and could be served raw or cooked in a number of ways.

In terms of chilli, research has found men like spicier foods, Mr White said. Carrots are Australia's first choice of vegetable — more than 60 per cent of households eat them weekly.

On average, Australians eat 62.2kg of potatoes per person a year — 5.9kg more than 50 years ago.

An article in the Herald Sun covering findings from Veginsights

Broadcast NewsAlert

ABC 666 Canberra (Canberra)
Drive - 18/05/2011 - 03:06 PM
Louise Maher
Producer Ms Melanie Sim 02 6275 4544
Interview with **Andrew White**, spokesperson, **AUSVEG**, about the findings of a survey about **vegetables** suggesting people would eat more **vegetables** if they enjoyed cooking more. **White** also explains the national **vegetable** levy and how it was used to fund the research. Maher and **White** discuss the other trends the survey discovered such as what **vegetables** different genders tend to lean towards. [cont]
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Broadcast NewsAlert

ABC South East SA (Mt Gambier)
Limestone Coast Mornings - 05/05/2011 - 10:11 AM
Stan Thomson
Producer Ms Selina Green 08 8724 1041

Thomson talks to Andrew White, **AUSVEG** about getting the vegetable growing community online. White says the vegetable industry invests levy funds, and matches \$14m of government funding, for research and development every year. White explains that the **AUSVEG** website has been redeveloped, with a database system centralising industry R and D. White says governments need to invest in better technology access, such as broadband, for rural communities. © Media Monitors 2011

Interviewees: Andrew White, **AUSVEG**
Duration: 6:50
Summary ID: W00043591338

Consumers and Markets Surveys

Two surveys were conducted over the life of this project to evaluate the relative success of the main products of the Consumers and Markets sub program. These surveys also yielded some interesting results in relation to industry communications.

a) September 2010 Survey

A telephone survey of 56 growers and a concurrent online survey of 38 people on the AUSVEG electronic mailing list was conducted to assess the use and application of the Veginsights weekly newsletter and quarterly reports. Questions covered:

- What people found most interesting.
- Preferred distribution methods.
- Existing sources of general market information.
- Any gaps in the market information currently being received.

A combination of qualitative and quantitative data was gathered.

Most growers indicated that they found the weekly reports useful, but mostly just as general background information. The quarterly reports were less well-known than the weekly product and the majority said that they didn't receive or use either of them.

The majority of growers were more aware of the Veginsights weekly newsletter than the quarterly reports, most likely due to the more regular distribution of the weekly product and growers' sporadic reading of the emails, with many indicating that they were too busy to read the reports all the time in any level of depth, or that they obtained market information already from other sources such as markets and agents. Even though all the people surveyed were on the list to receive the quarterly reports, many did not use them or were not aware of them.

There was intermittent strong support for the products, with respondents indicating that they found the information and statistics on the domestic Australian market, data on market size and sales contributions and information on consumer buying patterns and trends the most interesting overall.

Respondents said that they wanted more information on things of relevance to them directly such as imports, input costs and commodity spotlights and comparisons, while responses were fairly split when it came to whether the information should be distributed on a weekly or a monthly basis.

Overall, the perspective was that there were some things in the publication that were very well-received, but that growers did not read the publications regularly, with their patchy knowledge of the publications indicative of their use as an add-on to other methods of obtaining market facts and information through other sources.

Of those surveyed by telephone 39 people offered a rating for Veginsights weekly, with the average rating 6.83 out of 10. Of the 32 online respondents who provided a rating, 6.16 was the average rating out of 10.

Of those who completed the survey online the average rating for the quarterly reports was 6.45 out of 10, however, there was a lower baseline for this question with only 20 out of the 38 people surveyed providing a rating. The telephone survey of growers revealed similar results for the quarterly reports, with the average rating 6.52 out of 10 provided, again from a low baseline of overall respondents to the question. A number of growers said they did not receive and use the quarterly reports, even though this survey only included those on the distribution list.

While many growers said that they found the Veginsights reports useful for general information, the majority struggled to find direct practical application for the information in their businesses, stating that they already used market information from other sources such as markets, agents and other industry contacts, and simply used any additional market information to complement this.

The overall ratings for the Veginsights weekly newsletter and the Veginsights quarterly reports were relatively low, both averaging less than 7 out of a possible rating of 10. While there were a number

of growers who praised the reports and said that they were really useful, overall there was a general malaise about their practical application.

Some growers were really happy with the Veginsights reports and noted that they sent them on to others within their businesses – indications were that these tended to be those growers who were already very ‘market aware’.

Respondents said that they liked to use the reports for general information and guidance to get an overall picture of the industry, but called for specific information that is more directly relevant to them in their particular situation (what crop they grow etc).

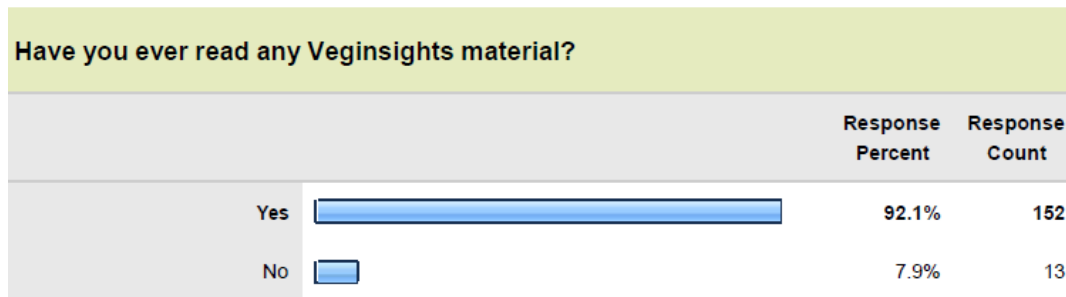
Growers indicated that they did not use this market information on a daily basis, with around 50 per cent suggesting that a monthly distribution of market information would be better.

b) March 2012 Survey

A second survey was undertaken in early 2012 using Survey Monkey. This time, the survey was only done electronically and only those on the recipient list for the Veginsights newsletter could respond.

169 responses to the survey were received, with 45% of responses from growers. The questions for the survey were devised by Freshlogic and AUSVEG and an iPad prize was offered by Freshlogic as an incentive to complete the survey. The winner was drawn randomly from the respondents.

Overall awareness of Veginsights was strong, though an inherent bias should be noted given all those who were surveyed are on the recipient list to receive the publication. 92.1 % of respondents had read Veginsights, though the result was slightly lower for growers.



Similar to the last survey, the most useful sections were category profiles, market size and sales trends and news and innovations from the world.

| How useful do you find the following sections of Veginsights... | | | | | | | | |
|---|--------------------------------|---------------|---------------|-----------------------------|---------------|-----------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| | < Not Very Useful (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | Very Useful (6) > | Rating Average | Response Count |
| Market size and sales trends | 1.3% (1) | 8.9% (7) | 13.9% (11) | 16.5% (13) | 26.6% (21) | 32.9% (26) | 4.57 | 79 |
| Wholesale price | 3.8% (3) | 11.4% (9) | 20.3% (16) | 26.6% (21) | 20.3% (16) | 17.7% (14) | 4.01 | 79 |
| Retail advertising activity | 13.0% (10) | 15.6% (12) | 18.2% (14) | 26.0% (20) | 15.6% (12) | 11.7% (9) | 3.51 | 77 |
| News and innovations from around the world | 0.0% (0) | 7.7% (6) | 6.4% (5) | 24.4% (19) | 25.6% (20) | 35.9% (28) | 4.76 | 78 |
| Vegetable category profiles | 2.5% (2) | 3.8% (3) | 8.9% (7) | 22.8% (18) | 30.4% (24) | 31.6% (25) | 4.70 | 79 |

66.9% had not changed the way they used market information in the last two years, meaning 33.1% *had* changed the way they used information. On balance, while this cannot be directly attributed to Veginsights, this would appear to be a positive endorsement of the program, at the very least with respect to stimulating thought amongst growers about how they use market information.

On a scale of 1-6 (6 being best), 33% of growers rated Veginsights a 3 for usefulness, 31% rated it a 4, and 20% rated it a 5.

In the first survey respondents had requested greater access to information specific to them. The category profiles reflected this sentiment and were widely praised, as were news and innovations from around the world.

Reflecting other anecdotal feedback, both surveys showed that retail advertising activity was of limited benefit, with an average rating of 3.51 out of 6, the lowest of the five areas surveyed. Wholesale pricing information is of benefit to the peak industry body in formulating policy and responding to media enquiries. Growers and industry members may be more attuned to this information from the marketplace, with an average rating of 4.01 provided for this section- still a reasonable result out of a total of 6 overall.

In the first survey, respondents indicated that they also received market information from wholesalers, market agents and others in the supply chain. This theme was also evident in the second survey, but the sentiment was not as strong, perhaps evidence of the fact that those who choose to be on the mailing list are also those that are more likely to step outside normal contacts in order to source market information widely from a range of sources.

Although the questions were different, the overall sentiment and recognition of Veginsights in the second survey was more positive than the first, perhaps indicating that the changes made to particular components of the reports over time and promotion and awareness raising efforts have had a positive impact on the audience.

5.0 Implications

The VIDP has enabled much of the vegetable R&D work that has been completed over the past decade to be summarised, categorised and uploaded to a searchable national R&D database, accessible by growers and the industry via a login on the AUSVEG website. However, access to the national database by levy payers appears to be minimal when compared to access by the research and agribusiness communities.

As a result of these anecdotal observations, in addition to its existing communications activities, AUSVEG decided to adapt its approach and commenced a series of briefings with prominent agribusinesses within Australia in order to convey to them the benefits of access to the national database. The strategy was that this information could then be communicated to the growers that these service providers work with on a regular basis. This work was quite effective, however, future resources to assist with a more comprehensive program of briefings would be beneficial.

It was recommended in the review of industry development conducted by Consulting and Implementation Services (CIS) that dedicated 'on the ground' resources be contracted to reinforce the awareness raising activities that have been conducted by AUSVEG at the national level. Industry development officers (IDOs) were recommended for the key vegetable growing regions around Australia. In the next stage of industry development activity a key challenge will be ensuring that these IDOs can work effectively with growers in the regions and that there is coordination with the activities being undertaken by the peak industry body. Use of the KM system as a central data source will be important in order to communicate the latest R&D findings to levy payers. Identification of the most appropriate R&D for each individual business or enterprise, as well as interpretation and dissemination of this information in an appropriate format, will be one of the key tasks of the IDO.

In order to support greater access to the KM system, improvements to the system's design can still be made to better streamline usability and make access to the search engine page on the website easier. By minimising the number of 'click throughs' to access the search engine, the uptake of the system may be increased and some of the barriers to adoption removed.

Challenges regarding technological knowledge within the industry are also apparent here. These may be addressed through a targeted program of education or training focused on improving understanding of and access to the KM system. In other words, training for growers on how to access the internet, use email and use the KM system to download R&D and access calculators and tools. Further challenges borne out due to insufficient internet access speeds may only be addressed though by the national broadband network, or other infrastructure improvements, when they are eventually rolled out to vegetable growing regions around Australia.

In the short term, there exist significant opportunities for vegetable growers to capitalise on the information provided to-date through the Consumers and Markets, InnoVeg and the KM sub programs of the VIDP. From a communications perspective, there are opportunities to leverage from innovative new media channels to communicate this information using audio streaming, for instance, to target growers via their smart phone whilst at work. While use of new media has been implemented to a limited extent in the past, if supported with training and education on how to use the internet to access the KM system, this process is likely to be more successful.

The InnoVeg Program has also seen the production of a considerable range of fact sheets, business cases and calculators relating to a wide array of topics, from pests and diseases through to business management. Due to the requirement to 'work through' these fact sheets or business cases, these may well be most effectively communicated face-to-face by the IDO network, once it is in place.

The level of information available on individual crops through the Veginsights category profiles may be extremely useful for growers, though a certain level of understanding and interpretation is necessary in order to apply the findings in a practical sense at the business level. Again, some consideration may be given to the training needs of the industry in this regard, if the historical sources of market information (namely wholesalers and market agents) are to be bypassed in favour of a more market-aware and autonomous vegetable growing community. AUSVEG understands that some of the existing consumer and market material will be made available in future through GoTAFE in Victoria, where those who enrol in a specific unit will be provided with training to assist in interpreting the information contained in these reports. The ultimate success of this type of course is yet to be seen.

While weaknesses have existed in the reliance on electronic dissemination methods, to some extent addressed by the CIO sub-program, these may be more comprehensively addressed through provision of additional hard copy resources via the dedicated IDO network, training on interpretation and application within ones business, and education to address a reliance upon historical practices and data sources (such as market agents) that, in some cases, prevent vegetable enterprises from becoming innovative or thinking outside the square.

From a communications perspective, continued resourcing to build upon the multi-tiered approach leveraging from audio, print and online media will be important in securing 'buy in' from growers. The need for a more flexible economic / policy capacity within the vegetable industry to provide timely access to data, analysis and address policy issues associated with R&D will also be vital, as will a more flexible consumer and market program that can address the changing needs of a dynamic market. In this regard, the ability to complete more flexible custom market research on topical issues will be vital. For instance, market research on the impacts of a recent price change or on the likelihood of consumers purchasing a particular new product or packaging type.

6.0 Recommendations

System Enhancements

- Click throughs to the national R&D search engine should be streamlined so that the search engine appears sooner once the user logs in, thus promoting increased access.
- The search engine for the national R&D database should be reviewed again and improvements considered, including the potential to count search results, sort search results and add icon-based representation for search results to improve user friendliness.

Communications and Training

- Skills and training to support understanding and interpretation of the Consumer and Market reports and explain how to use the KM system may be beneficial e.g. training sessions on how to access the internet and use the KM system.
- Flexibility within the Consumer and Market program to undertake custom research on emerging issues on behalf of the industry may provide increased benefit to levy payers.
- Additional briefings with the supply chain to ensure greater adoption of the KM system by agronomists and leading advisors to vegetable levy payers may strengthen adoption of the KM system in future.
- A dedicated face-to-face communications capacity may be useful in future, with on the ground resources available to disseminate information and products on a one-to-one basis in key regions around Australia.

Data Access

- Greater flexibility in accessing economic data on imports/exports and industry performance in a timely manner would assist with the goal of the VIDP to ensure industry is using findings and outputs from research to effectively formulate policy and manage the image of the industry.

7.0 Acknowledgements

AUSVEG would like to acknowledge Horticulture Australia Limited and Rural Directions for their support of this project.