

Collaborative Industry Organisation - South Australia - Support to VIDP

Mike Redmond
Virginia Horticulture Centre Inc

Project Number: VG10101

VG10101

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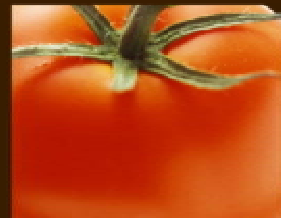
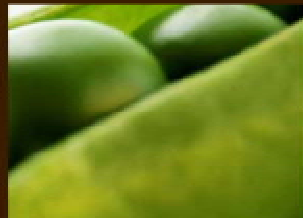
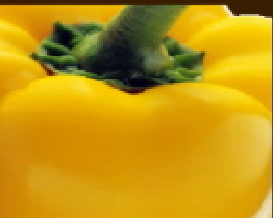
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HAL Project Number Project: VG10101 –

Collaborative Industry Organisation - South Australia
- Support to VIDP

Project completed: 14th September 2012

Project Leader Mike Redmond et al

VG10101

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Purpose:

Grow SA's part of the Collaborative Industry Organisations was to give support, serve as a delivery agent for the product and services developed by the other sub programs and the VIDP.

Funding recognition: This project has been funded by HAL using the Vegetable Industry Levy and matched funds from the Australian Government

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Media Summary

Grow SA was engaged by Horticulture Australia Ltd (HAL) in September 2010 as one of six sub-programs within the Vegetable Industry Development Program (VIDP). The VIDP is a new and different approach to industry development within the vegetable industry. VIDP aims to help growers build their businesses and remain competitive in an increasingly market driven and globalised industry.

VIDP is an overarching program that aims to create benefits to the vegetable industry by providing resources that inform the business decision making growers.

Grow SA's part of the Collaborative Industry Organisations was to give support, and serve as a delivery agent for the product and services developed by the other sub programs and the VIDP

Introduction

The Vegetable Industry Development Program (VIDP) is a new and different approach to industry development replacing the earlier project-based approach. A Collaborative Industry Organisation project which commenced in September 2010, designed to gather outcomes and information from research projects and other sources and disseminate this information to the farming community so that they are better informed and can make better business judgements in a format that they can use.

Key focus elements of VIDP

- Consumers and Markets
- People Development
- Integrated Pest Management
- Economics
- Research Outcomes

Grow SA's key element of this role was to increase awareness of the research outcomes and the development opportunities that are available to our farmers, to circulate the literature for adoption and put into practice.

To effectively deliver the requirements of sub program of the Industry Development Program, Grow SA Ltd utilized its presence within the 4 major horticulture zones in the State to ensure effective direct one on one contact with growers and structured information sessions have been held to distribute the information and resources developed by the Industry Development Program.

Method and Activities

The philosophy employed by Grow SA is that all staff are actively involved in the promotion of the outcomes of the VIDP to growers across the state. Staff have been issued with a “VIDP Staff Kit” which includes both hard copy and CD based electronic copy of Veginsights, Newsletters and Fact Sheets produced by the VIDP and a list of the previous editions available to growers.

Grow SA Ltd utilized its regional offices in the horticultural zones and their Regional Coordinators to ensure effective delivery across the State. Each regional office was responsible for a minimum of 5 grower contacts per week including specific reference to the outcomes and resources developed by the IDP. Grow SA Regional Coordinators carried updated lists of resources and information available and discussed broad outcomes as well as “orders” for resources and participation in specific sectors of the program.

Grow SA regional offices also conducted a minimum of 2 grower group session per quarter to update growers on the progress of the VIDP. In addition to this VIDP information was included as agenda items on regional council meetings in the four main regions and annexed to all roadshows conducted throughout the regions by Grow SA Ltd and/or its network partners.

The outcomes of the VIDP along with opportunities presented and resources available from the program were published in two dedicated pages in the industry publication “Ripe” (and Ripe Electronic) on a bi monthly basis. This included editorial attention to specific opportunities and outcomes of the project along with updated information on the resources available to growers through the program.

Grow SA presence at the major field days in South Australian Horticultural zones featured the Vegetable Industry Development Program and, along with extensive resources on hand at the field days provided other VIDP stakeholders with the opportunity to present and/or address growers attending these venues

The key objectives of the program are

- Support VIDP through communication with members of industry organisations and additional networks
- Support the objectives of the VIDP through the delivery of services, information and products from the various VIDP sub programs (Economics, Knowledge Management; Consumers & Markets; People Development; InnoVeg; IPM)
- Use the information generated from the Innoveg sub program to use new and innovative methods as well as cooperative arrangements involving multiple industry networks in the delivery of VIDP products and services
- Work collaboratively with InnoVeg sub-program and the other VIDP sub-programs as the state delivery agents for the dissemination of VIDP information and resources direct to growers
- Communicate feedback into the VIDP sub-programs through the HAL program coordinator
- Record industry feedback from growers and input into levy funded R&D priorities for the vegetable industry
- Inform and encourage state and regional based growers to register on the new Ausveg website for access to new R&D information and tools

Results and Outcomes

GROW SA LTD

• Final Consolidated Report - SOUTH AUSTRALIA

September 2010 to September 2012 Adelaide Plains / Adelaide Hills

Action / KPI / Outcome	Time Frame	Method / Activities	Achieved
Communication and delivery in the Adelaide Plains and Adelaide Hills region through: One on one grower contact Structured information sessions Minimum of 8 grower group sessions (minimum of 2 per quarter) 0.2 FTE Grow SA contributing \$4,650 towards regional offices via Project Travel x Grow SA regional offices (Total for all 4 offices is budgeted at \$18,600) Grow SA contributing \$2,437.50 per year to Event Management / Venue Costs (Total for all 4 offices is budgeted at \$9,750)	Sept 10 to Sept 12	Face to face contact with growers in the office and field	932 regional contacts include VIDP information
		Grower breakfasts - minimum of 2 per year	4 Grower Breakfast and 7 training groups held in Virginia with VIDP segment
		Training Group addressed with Veginsights information	Veginsight display established Constant stock monitoring. New display area made July 2012
		Veginsights and resource display in Virginia Office	71 copies of Veginsights) supplied on request to growers
		Stand at Ausveg conference	Annually

September 2010 to September 2012 Riverland

Communication and delivery in the Riverland region through: One on one grower contact; Structured information sessions; Minimum of 8 grower group sessions (minimum of 2 per quarter); 0.1 FTE Grow SA contributing \$4,650 towards regional offices via Project Travel x Grow SA regional offices Grow SA contributing \$2,437.50 per year to Event Management / Venue Costs (Total for all 4 offices is budgeted at \$9,750)	Sept 10 to Sept 12	Face to face contact with growers in the office and field	293 regional contacts include VIDP information
		Grower breakfasts - minimum of 2 per year	4 Grower Commodity groups meetings held in Waikerie with VIDP segment Beer and BBQ Arvo's
		Training Group addressed with Veginsights information	Veginsight display established in Waikerie Office
		Veginsights and resource display in Waikerie Office	34 copies of Veginsights supplied on request to growers

September 2010 to September 2012 Murrayland / Fleurieu / Willunga Basin			
Action / KPI / Outcome	Time Frame	Method / Activities	Achieved
Communication and delivery in the Murrayland / Fleurieu / Willunga Basin region through: One on one grower contact; Structured information sessions; Minimum of 8 grower group sessions (minimum of 2 per quarter); 0.2 FTE Grow SA contributing \$4,650 towards regional offices via Project Travel x Grow SA regional offices (Total for all 4 offices is budgeted at \$18,600) Grow SA contributing \$2,437.50 per year to Event Management / Venue Costs (Total for all 4 offices is budgeted at \$9,750)	Sept 10 to Sept 12	Face to face contact with growers in the office and field	487 regional contacts include VIDP information
		Grower breakfasts - minimum of 2	3 Grower Commodity groups meetings held in Mannum with VIDP segment Beer and BBQ Arvo's
		Training Group addressed with Veginsights information	Veginsight display established in Mannum Office
		Veginsights and resource display in Mannum Office	41 copies of Veginsights supplied to growers on request
September 2010 to September 2012 South East (South Australia)			
Action / KPI / Outcome	Time Frame	Method / Activities	Achieved
Communication and delivery in the South East (South Australia) region through: One on one grower contact; Structured information sessions; Minimum of 8 grower group sessions (minimum of 2 per quarter); 0.15 FTE Grow SA contributing \$4,650 towards regional offices via Project Travel x Grow SA regional offices (Total for all 4 offices is budgeted at \$18,600) Grow SA contributing \$2,437.50 per year to Event Management / Venue Costs (Total for all 4 offices is budgeted at \$9,750)	Sept 10 to Sept 12	Face to face contact with growers in the office and field	273 regional contacts include VIDP information
		Grower breakfasts - minimum of 2 per year	3 Grower Commodity groups meetings held in Mt Gambier with VIDP segment "Shout ya mate a Beer" South East Field Days
		Training Group addressed with Veginsights information	Veginsight display established in Mt Gambier Office
		Veginsights and resource display in Mt Gambier Office	61 copies of Veginsights supplied to growers on request

September 2010 to September 2012 Riverland & South East Field Days			
Action / KPI / Outcome	Time Frame	Method / Activities	Achieved
Field Day costs Grow SA contributing \$7,400 to the field days Grow SA contributing \$5635 to Regional Council meetings	Annual	VIDP information presented through:- Attendance at Riverland Field Days in September	Program start missed the 2010 Riverland Field Days however the field days was attended in 2012
		Attendance at South East Field Days in March	2011 and 2012
September 2010 to September 2012 Ripe Supplement			
Action / KPI / Outcome	Time Frame	Method / Activities	Achieved
Dedicated section in the bi-monthly publication RIPE (2 pages per edition) including Ripe Electronic publication	bimonthly	IDP pages in each edition of Ripe (and Ripe Electronic) Nov / Dec 2010 Jan / Feb/ 2011 March / April 2011 May/ June 2011 July/ August 2011 Sept/ Oct 2011 Nov /Dec 2012 Jan/ Feb 2012 March /April 2012 May / June 2012 July / August 2012	Ongoing
September 2010 to September 2012 Administration Costs			

Action / KPI / Outcome	Time Frame	Method / Activities	Achieved
Costs of Administration, Management, Reporting 0.05 FTE	On-going	Production and distribution of Veginsights and Vegetable Economic case studies or resources during regular interaction with growers Production and maintenance of staff resource kits Reporting	Ongoing

Implications and Discussion

Grow SA Ltd had considerable success in presenting VDIP and related information from the sub groups to the more regional of the state with positive feedback and gratitude, as those areas are often missed. Grow SA has continued to maintain regional coordinators and a presence in the more remote areas even with the necessity of closing the office spaces in the Riverland and Murrayland.

Outlying regions have shown more interest in receiving the information via, regional field days and BBQ arvos. The BBQ arvos were a particular hit, giving the farming communities an excuse to get together and 'have a yarn'. In the more relaxed atmosphere more 'one on one' discussions were held and more resources were taken home. In contrast, when formal events (roadshows) were held to present information there was less turn out and noticeably less questions. The feedback was that it was difficult to make specific time to attend events like that and open sharing in a forum is not comfortable for most farmers.

Regional field days are always a good medium to disseminate information, it's a casual atmosphere and people are specifically there to gather information.

In the Adelaide Plains and Adelaide Hills regions, success was intermittent often depending on the weather.

If a function had been organised and even though RSVP's had been received if the weather was conducive to harvesting that is where the farmers would be. The farming community in this region grow a more hands on crop. However they do also travel to the regional field days and take advantage of the information there. The larger of the farms in this region often have management staff and they were very happy to attend an information breakfast although the feedback on these was that it could be more successful at a Friday lunch time.

The display at the reception counter in the Virginia Horticulture Centre has proven popular with many new farmers taking advantage of the information and case studies. A new specialized section has now been set up with a table and chairs. All available information is now presented in magazine racks. This is showing to be very popular. Those that have used the new area and given feedback have said it is nice to be able to sit a look rather than grabbing and leaving.

By far the most effective and popular method of delivery was the one to one, meeting at the farm, coffee shop etc. This enabled the farmer or recipient to receive the hardcopy of the information available and also to be able to ask questions without the fear of others knowing and sharing their information.

Successful methods of Delivery

	One To One Handouts	Informal Functions	Formal Function	Field Days
Adelaide Plains/Hills	YES	50%	50%	YES
Riverland	YES	YES	<50%	YES
Murrayland	YES	YES	<50%	YES
South East	YES	YES	<50%	YES

Recommendations:

To improve the delivery of the VIDP we believe that all the sub-programs need to:-

- ✓ Produce and provide an extensive range of VIDP Fact Sheets under a single livery.
- ✓ Be more understanding of seasonal issues faced by growers and the busy times they create
- ✓ Dissect “bite sized” elements of interest from overarching reports
- ✓ Provide explicit descriptions of the aims and direction of their specific sub-program for inclusion in grower information packs and Staff Kits



May - June 2011



Vegetable Industry Development Project



This project has been funded by HAL using the National Vegetable Levy and matched funds from the Australian Government. It forms part of the VIDP & aims to inform vegetable producers & supply chain stakeholders on market influences & developments in the past quarter. We recommend that those seeking to act on the basis of this information first obtain independent professional advice.

Know-how for Horticulture™

Integrated Pest Management Coordinator

The IPM Coordinator Sub-Program (A 12 Month Program Within The VIDP) Has Now Concluded.

This sub-program produced a number of outputs including:

A strategic plan for guiding future investment in vegetable crop protection Research, Development & Extension. (RD&E)

The loading of a range of crop protection extension resources (such as fact sheets, newsletters, CDs/DVDs, training manuals and web pages) onto the "Technical Insights" area of the Ausveg website.

A benchmarking report on the adoption of IPM in Australia and development of an 'IPM Continuum' to help growers and other industry members understand the step-wise shift in pest management practices that often occurs when growers adopt an IPM approach.

A Thrips and Tospovirus Resource (which details the range of information resources available to assist in managing thrips and tospoviruses and where these can be found).

For further information on any of these outputs please contact Kristen Stirling on 03 9882 2670.

Future investment of the national vegetable levy and Australian government funds in crop production RD&E will be informed by the Vegetable Industry Strategic Plan due to be released at the end of 2011.

Consumers and Markets, The Veginsights Report for Quarter 1 of 2011 is now available.

Highlights from the report include:

Ongoing consumer interest in food and cooking presents an opportunity to capture value however producers and markets will need to remain innovative in the face of ongoing caution in spending and demand for convenience.

As price remains a key decision maker, producers and marketers should look to profile other product features such as quality, portion size and value to boost sales.

Over the year the proportion of households buying fresh vegetables weekly decreased, with the largest decline occurring among budget conscious households.

Research, Development and Extension Update

Vegetable Carbon Calculator

The Vegetable Carbon Calculator is a carbon footprinting tool specifically designed for the Australian vegetable industry.

The calculator helps growers estimate the carbon footprint of their farm by identifying emissions associated with fertiliser use, electricity, fuel, waste, refrigerants and land use change.

Growers can calculate a whole farm footprint, or a footprint for specific crops grown on the farm to see how each emission component contributes to the whole farm footprint.



People Development

Skills Audit And Learning Database A Skills Audit And Learning Database Has Been Developed To Assist Vegetable Growers.

Skills audit assists growers and staff within their business to identify opportunities for improving their business and leadership skills.

The Skills Audit calculates an individual's Learning Priorities and provides a personal Learning Profile (which is linked to the Learning Database).

The Learning Profile presents a range of resources to meet the identified learning needs (including workshops, online programs, self-paced learning and templates for business planning).

To identify your learning needs, using the Skills Audit, log onto the Ausveg website, go to the 'People' page and click on the Business Skills tab.



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Research, Development & Extension Calendar

Upcoming Dates and Places to Be

Irrigation 2011 - New Horizons, Fresh Ideas Conference

Irrigation Australia Limited (IAL) will be holding its regional conference in Launceston, Tasmania from the 22 - 25th of August. The conference will cover a diverse range of irrigation and water management topics from catchment and irrigation scheme level through to on-farm issues.

Over the two days of both seminar and workshop formats there will be presentations from leading practitioners, researchers, engineers, policy and catchment management presenters.

The conference will end with a Q&A session which proved popular in Sydney last year.

DEEDI Young Vegetable Growers Value Chain Awareness Workshop July/August (date tbc)

This one day workshop will help you to understand and manage your supply chain, and look at current industry trends. This workshop is supported by Horticulture Australia Limited (HAL).

For further information contact Clinton McGrath on 0428102319 or at clinton.mcgrath@deedi.qld.gov.au.

DEEDI Young Vegetable Growers Innovation Tour July/August (dates tbc)

Planned tour of some innovative businesses throughout southern Queensland. This tour is supported by Horticulture Australia Limited (HAL).

For further information contact Clinton McGrath on 0428102319 or at clinton.mcgrath@deedi.qld.gov.au.

Greenhouse Management Course

To coincide with the Protected Cropping Australia Conference 2011. GOTAFE have developed an advanced course for greenhouse managers to enable more efficient control of the greenhouse climate.

The course will be delivered by PTC+ (Netherlands) Senior Trainer, Ben van Onna - who will also feature at the conference.

The course will be held in Shepparton, Victoria from the 11 - 13th of July. For further details please contact Leigh Taig on 03 58332851 or email at ltaig@gotafe.vic.edu.au.



Economics

Agricultural Data Flow Assessed to find; Poor Data In Means Poor Data Out



Meetings have been conducted in Canberra with the Australian Bureau of Statistics in relation to improved data for State and regional areas that will flow from the Agriculture Census to be conducted in June.

The Census is conducted once every five years and the data collected invaluable for the vegetable industry and policy development.

All data is confidential and growers should not fear the form but see it as a golden opportunity to assist the development of their industry.

Growers may be interested in an article written by Ian James in the latest edition of Vegetables Australia titled "The economics of mechanisation".

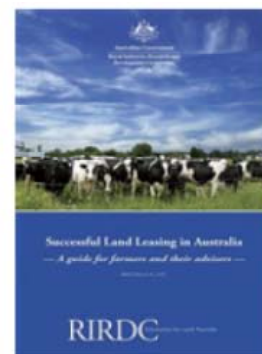
Attention to costs is an imperative to sustaining a viable business.

Land Leasing In Australia

RIRDC Publication on Land Leasing now out

RIRDC have recently published the second edition of Successful Land Leasing in Australia - A guide for farmers and their advisers.

This publication helps to identify the circumstances where leasing farm land is a suitable form of farm business expansion, considering both financial and environmental benefits. It examines how leased land can be managed in a profitable and sustainable way that is fair to both landowner and tenant, and contains a case study with practical examples.





January - February 2012



Vegetable Industry Development Project



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Know-how for Horticulture™

VIDP Update

Updates on InnoVeg, GAIN and Consumer Markets

InnoVeg is currently working with WA, NSW, TAS and QLD CIOs and grower groups to develop a range of Business Cases through the Talking Business project.

A Business Case is a formal process of planning to provide the decision-maker with useful information to help them make considered business decisions.

Using a formal process for making difficult business decisions gives you greater confidence, as it ensures that the right things are counted in the right way.

The topics of the Business Cases have been based on suggestions from CIOs and growers when asked 'What business decision keeps you up at night?'

Four Business Cases are now nearing completion and will be available on the AUSVEG website in the coming weeks.

The topics of these Business Cases include, Replacing a Tractor, Lettuce planter, IPM in Lettuce, and Capsicum Graders.

For more information on the Business Cases, please contact Anne-Maree Boland on 03 9882 2670 or at anne-mareeb@rmcg.com.au.

InnoVeg, in partnership with Rural Training Initiatives P/L are currently developing a vegetable industry leadership program alumni called GAIN.

GAIN will be inviting graduates of leadership activities that have been funded or generated within and beyond the industry to become members of the Alumni.

Specifically we will be connecting graduates of Growing Leaders, the Australian Rural Leadership Program and Nuffield.

We also anticipate that there will be other leadership programs yet to be identified who will have access to membership – Churchill fellows and Fairfax fellows for example.

Whilst initial planning has commenced we are interested in graduates' opinions and ideas to shape GAIN and plan on talking to potential members about the following questions:

- What do you need from a leadership alumni – how can GAIN best assist and support you in your leadership journey?
- What values should underpin GAIN?
- How could GAIN members connect via the www?
- What face-to-face activities would enhance the leadership skills and knowledge of GAIN members?
- What other alumni do you know that really work?
- How can we encourage people to become members?
- How might we best tailor a mentoring program to assist GAIN members?

GAIN will be launched with an exclusive alumni enhancement workshop followed by a networking event on the afternoon of Thursday 7th May 2012 in Hobart to coincide with the AUSVEG Convention.

All alumni will be invited to attend, with more details to follow, but mark it in your calendar.

If you would like to get involved, please contact Jill Briggs at jill@ruraltraininginitiatives.com.au or Cynthia Mahoney at cm_associates@live.com.au.

The November edition of Veginsights is now available providing an update on market key variables, consumer and retail market trends and innovations of relevance to vegetable producers.

Covering topics like, comparisons of wholesale prices between November 2010 and November 2011, green-grocers enjoy boost to get their offer online, consumers welcome help to manage home waste, McDonald's offers a healthy alternative, and US school promotion schemes lift consumption by 15%

This month's category focus is on Broccoli highlighting, the retail market for Broccoli is currently valued at \$203 million per year, and how on average 472 grams of Broccoli is purchased per shopping trip.

The January edition of Veginsights is now available providing an update on market key variables, consumer and retail market trends and innovations of relevance to vegetable producers.

The publication covers the comparison of wholesale prices between January 2011 and January 2012, consumer sentiment edges up in January but remains fragile and concerned about global finance markets, how simple and small rewards can change kids' diets, Jamie Oliver generation good for food retailers, how glasshouses are being located on parking building rooftops.

Along with working up an app-etite with the latest food apps

This month's category focus is on Capsicum highlighting the retail market for Capsicum is currently valued at \$236 million per year, and that on average 282 grams of Capsicum is purchased per shopping trip.

The Veginsights quarterly report and annual review for the period ending 31 Dec 2011 has also been completed.

It includes full coverage of a suite of market performance variables and identifies the four key issues, that have impacted the year and forecasts their likely impact for 2013.

- Supply dynamics
- Consumer confidence
- Retail competitive intensity
- Changes in shopper behaviour

Economic Updates

As 2012 Opens, Vegetable Growers Are Likely To See Their Business Model Under Strain From Economic Developments Outside The Industry.

There is a sense of fear that events in Europe may lead to economic Armageddon.

Every financial meeting and every domestic data release lets loose another chicken licken racing off to tell the king that the sky has fallen in.

Risk management is an important part of business and in the current economic climate attention to debt levels and input costs are important.

But there is a danger that the psychology of the moment can distort the economic fundamentals.

Europe aside there is a lot to like about the economic conditions facing vegetable growers.

The Chinese economy is holding up and the US economy is showing signs of recovery.

Economic growth is forecast to accelerate. Consumer incomes are increasing and while unemployment will rise it will still remain low.

Despite consumers taking 'considered' expenditure decisions they are showing a willingness to spend.

The Reserve Bank of Australia stands ready to cut interest rates.

In building some caution into the business model it is important that vegetable growers do not undermine the long term viability of their business.

World financial markets appear brighter this month with encouraging signs of economic recovery in the US.

It appears that Europe may be able to muddle through its debt crisis which has also helped confidence.

The media in Australia continues to highlight any bad news.

Employment is a classic example. The daily headlines scream of retrenchments in well known Australian companies.

The media virtually ignored the news that 46,300 additional jobs were created in January and the unemployment rate fell to 5.1%.

Businesses where demand is slack are laying off workers.

But other businesses are putting staff on as the mining boom forces a restructure of the Australian economy.

A research article on the financial performance of vegetable growers produced by the VIDP Economics Sub-program has appeared in the January/February edition of Vegetables Australia.

The article highlights the cost price squeeze faced by growers but also focuses on differences in financial returns across the industry. This information will also soon be available on the AUSVEG website



January - February 2012

Vegetable Industry Development Project

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RD&E Update

Information on HAL RD&E Final Reports and Vegtool 1.1

A number of HAL RD&E projects have recently been completed.

Final reports for the following projects are now available on the AUSVEG website.

- Neutralising pesticides in recirculating water systems within a protected cropping system (VG09121) Primary Investigator: Graeme Smith, Graeme Smith Consulting, 03 5427 2143, graeme@graemesmithconsulting.com

- Exploring a novel strategy to enhance efficacy of insect pathogens and disrupt cuticle hardening in insects (VG08053) Primary Investigator: Sassan Asgari, The University of Queensland, 07 3365 2043, s.asgari@uq.edu.au

- Improving Reliability of Flowering in Bolting Resistant Carrot Seed Crops (VG06155) Primary Investigator: Alistair Gracie, University of Tasmania, 03 6226 7468, alistair.gracie@utas.edu.au

- Developing demonstration sites for simple hydroponic systems in protected cropping (VG08064) Primary Investigator: Kaye Ferguson, South Australia Research & Development Institute SARDI, 08 8303 9627, ferguson.kaye@saugov.sa.gov.au

Work Safety - Slow Moving Field Machinery

A recent meeting organised by VGA-Victoria saw 20 vegetable growers and machinery engineers discuss issues of worker safety when planting or harvesting operations are carried out with slow moving machinery.

Issues identified included, unmanned slow moving (creeping) tractors with the driver getting off and on whilst the tractor is moving during planting or harvesting.

The responsibility for emergency stop controls, kill switches and remote controls within the working groups

The need to understand vegetable industry practices and requirements as a daily routine.

VGA-Victoria will remain proactive in the area of worker safety with a working committee formed to, draft safety guidelines for all vegetable growers covering best practices on the farm, document training procedures, and, promote employee induction and training.

For more information, please contact Helena Whitman on 0407 772 299 or idowest@vgavic.org.au or John Runting on 0422 583 784 or ideast@vgavic.org.au.

VegTool 1.1 - aids vegetable management decisions

A simple computer program has been developed to assist vegetable growers with making decisions about what to grow based on an analysis of potential income and likely operating costs.

Deciding which improvements will benefit vegetable growers' returns and farming practices can be challenging.

Now there is VegTool, a grower friendly gross margin computer program that provides a convenient way of doing this job.

Using VegTool, it is quick and easy to estimate growing costs, gross margins and compare crops and growing practices.

A gross margin is one method that helps farm budgeting and planning and enables growers to identify where the major variable costs are

Either current growing practices or those being considered for future crops can be costed and assessed.

Using VegTool helps improve the financial understanding of production costs and can assist decision making on management practices and cropping programs.

When starting out, VegTool is loaded onto a computer from a CD. It is not a web-based program so the information entered is confidential and remains in the control of the user.

Once installed, there are support functions including a manual, workbook and help tutorials.

Then there are four simple steps to using the program - Enter Crop Details, Enter Growing Costs, Print Financial Summary and Compare Crop Scenarios.

VegTool is available on CD from NSW Department of Primary Industries. Contact Gerard Kelly at Dareton - phone 03 5019 8406

Virus disease management

A series of four reference notes on integrated viral disease management has been produced as part of the HAL project VG07128 Integrated management of viral diseases in vegetable crops.

The reference notes include, Tobamovirus in capsicums and tomato, tomato yellow leaf curl virus, whitefly -transmitted viruses in vegetable crops, and Plant viruses transmitted by thrips

For copies contact Denis Persley on 07 3255 4388 or denis.persley@deedi.qld.gov.au.

Further notes will be produced in VG010104 - Management of virus diseases in vegetables which commenced in October 2011.

This project will focus on the management of viral diseases in capsicum, cucurbits and the increased adoption of integrated viral disease management systems in vegetable production.

RD&E Activities

VIC

Two grower meetings are scheduled to be held in mid-February at Werribee and Cranbourne (dates to be confirmed).

The meetings will cover a manual handling presentation for the Victorian vegetable production industry.

The same presentation is scheduled for mid-March in Lindenow. For more information on the meetings, please contact Tony Imeson on 03 9687 4707, 0414 458 561 or contact@vgavic.org.au.

QLD

Workshops for Vegetable Growers Managing Workplace Risk - Gatton, 7 February 2012
Managing Workplace Risk - Stanthorpe, 22 February 2012
Managing Staff - Gatton, 12 March 2012
Managing Staff - Stanthorpe, 20 March 2012

For more info please contact Dianne Fullelove on 07 3374 0453 or email diannefullelove@optusnet.com.au.

Building Better Soils for Horticulture Workshop x2

Gympie
Date: 14th february, 2012
Time: 1pm to 4pm
Where: 255 Amamoor Creek Road, Amamoor.

Mundubbera

Date: 15th february, 2012
Time: 1pm to 4pm
Where: 'blue rocks'
411 Gayndah-mundubbera rd, Mundubbera.

Succession Planning Workshops "Your Family, Your Farm, Your Future"

Miles - 13 March, 9am to 3pm
Gayndah - 14 March, 9am to 3pm
Nambour - 15 March, 9am to 3pm
For more info contact the Kondinin Group on 02 9279 2477 or email training@kondinigroup.com.au.

Vegetable Grower Seminar

Where: Applethorpe Research Station, New England Highway Applethorpe.
When: Tuesday January 31st 6:30 pm BBQ followed by 7:00 seminar.

The second of a series of vegetable grower seminars aiming to raise the awareness and highlight current and future research, business opportunities for the industry and other vegetable industry resources.

Topics include Fertilising your vegetable crops - How much, when where and why (Iain Gibson - Agspec), Understanding the art of negotiation (Dianne Fullelove), Viruses in vegetable crops (Denis Persley - DEEDI), Bacterial diseases of local vegetables (Dr Cherie Gambley - DEEDI).

New Field Officer for Vegetable Growers Victoria

VGA Victoria are pleased to announce the appointment of John Runting as Field Officer for Eastern Victoria.

John brings with him a very strong background in horticulture production and management having provided advice on vineyard management throughout Victoria and NSW for more than 20 years.

John will also bring valuable expertise in Occupational Health and Safety to Victorian vegetable growers.

John is based on the Mornington Peninsula and will support growers across Eastern Victoria.

To contact John, call 0417 356 364 or email ideast@vgavic.org.au



May - June 2012

Vegetable Industry Development Project



This project has been funded by HAL using the National Vegetable Levy and matched funds from the Australian Government. It forms part of the VIDP & aims to inform vegetable producers & supply chain stakeholders on market influences & developments in the past quarter. We recommend that those seeking to act on the basis of this information first obtain independent professional advice.



Know-how for Horticulture™

VIDP Update

Updates on InnoVeg and Consumer Markets

InnoVeg - Talking Business

A number of useful materials have been developed under the Talking Business program.

This program aims to assist growers by providing tools that work through the numbers associated with making major decisions.

An additional three business cases and three case studies are now available.

The case studies are fairly generic and provide a checklist to consider when making a big decision.

The business cases have actual numbers and a simple spreadsheet that growers can include their own numbers into to work out what the scenario would be for them.

The focus of the program is to stimulate thought and dialogue amongst growers and not necessarily determine what decisions they should make.

The InnoVeg sub-program has developed an array of resources for those working in the vegetable industry. These include:

- Fact sheets on areas such as production issues, industry statistics and business management.

- Copies of these can be ordered from RMCG on 03 9882 2670.

- Handy Hints for Vegetable Growers. This brochure summarises useful resources available for vegetable growers.

- A copy can be ordered from RMCG on 03 9882 2670.

- A range of business cases have been developed to assist vegetable growers to make informed business decisions on a range of topics including purchasing new machinery, adopting Integrated Pest Management, or land purchase vs lease.

The business cases can be tailored to help you with your own decisions by inserting your figures into the calculations.

The business cases and calculations can be accessed here or hard copies can be ordered from RMCG on 03 9882 2670.

Case studies on business management topics such as, building a sound vegetable growing business, using cost of production for decision making, and vegetable supply agreements.

These case studies, and others, can be accessed from here or hard copies can be ordered from RMCG on 03 9882 2670.

- Resources for those working with growers who speak English as a second language (LOTE).

These include guidelines for working with interpreters and translators and a brochure summarising available translated resources is available.

If you would like further information on the resources and products developed by the InnoVeg sub-program of the VIDP, please contact Anne-Maree Boland on 03 9882 2670 or anne-mareeb@rmcg.com.au

Consumers and Markets

In the April edition of Veginsights is an update was provided on key market variables, consumer and retail market trends and innovations of relevance to vegetable producers.

It included coverage of wholesale values that continue to challenge sales, retail customer loyalty schemes get a lift, recipe websites gaining popularity in Australia, Potato Pete goes back to UK schools, and Mighty mini sweet peppers focus on kids

April's category focus was on Pumpkin. Key highlights included that the retail market for Pumpkin is currently valued at \$206 million per year, and on average 1.104kg of Pumpkin is purchased per shopping trip at an average retail price of \$2.67 per kg.

The May edition of Veginsights is now available, providing an update on key market variables, consumer and retail market trends and innovations of relevance to vegetable producers.

It includes coverage of Wholesale values firm for high volume vegetables, Retailers to roll out varying store formats, Virtual gardening: grow vegetables a new way. Barely a fifth of Britons eat 5 A DAY, Shadow-activated 3D QR codes boost sales

Category focus for May is on Cauliflower, key highlights include that the domestic retail market for cauliflower is currently valued at \$101 million per year, and the average retail price for cauliflowers is \$2.51 per kg.

Economics

Vegetable Growers Remain Under Pressure From Poor Household Demand And Falling Vegetable Prices.

An article on trade developments in the first eight months of this financial year was written for the latest edition of Vegetables Australia released this month.

The data shows an alarming deterioration in the trade situation with the vegetable industry headed for its worse trade balance on record. Imports are flooding in at an unprecedented rate while exports are declining.

The value of imports is up 23% on the corresponding period of the previous financial year (\$476m compared to \$387m) while the value of exports is down 8.5% (\$148m compared to \$162m).

The processing sector is under great pressure with frozen vegetable imports up 60% on the corresponding eight months of the previous year.

A research paper has been written that looks at vegetable imports into Singapore and Japan.

The data shows that many vegetable imports enter these markets at high prices from developed countries raising the prospect that there may be opportunities for Australian vegetable growers to expand exports into these markets.

During the VIDP, the economics sub program has provided a range of economic related services to the vegetable industry.

This has included:

- Essential economic data covering domestic production and structural features, exports and imports and the financial performance of the industry.

- Vegetable commodity spotlights.
- Vegetables Australia articles and discussion papers.

Further work has included:

- Occasional articles and fact sheets for the state vegetable associations.

- A weekly economic brief to expand vegetable growers' horizons and understanding of economy wide developments and the impact on their businesses.

- Presentations to grower groups around Australia.

- Active participation in industry affairs through membership of IAC working.

If you would like further information on the resources and products developed by the Economics sub-program of the VIDP, please contact Ian James on 0439 440 023 or idea@jiskapark.com.au.

Nitrogen Stabilisers on Brassica Crops

A recent Field Day held at A & G Lamattina's farm at Boneo was organised by the Victorian Department of Primary Industries to demonstrate the results of a 4-year trial of the use of Nitrogen stabilisers on brassica crops.

Stabilisers applied to the soil keep nitrogen where the plants can use it and reduce leaching and emission losses in sandy soils.

The trials showed that plant nutrition needs can be better matched with fewer fertiliser applications, by using nitrogen stabilisers.

Another major benefit from these trials was the substantial reduction in potential greenhouse gases released to the atmosphere.

This project is a joint initiative of the Federal Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry and the Victorian Department of Primary Industries.

For more information contact Helena Whitman on 0407 772 299 or helena.w@vgavic.org.au



May - June 2012

Vegetable Industry Development Project

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Research Development & Extension Activities

Put These Dates In Your Calendar To Ensure You Don't Miss Industry Information

VegTool Webinar

VegTool, Gross Margin Comparison
Tool - Webinar
Tuesday 26th June 5.00pm
Register for the webinar with
Gerard Kelly gerard.kelly@dpi.nsw.gov.au or phone 0411 139 657.

This 30 minute webinar will demonstrate VegTool and how it can be customised for your vegetable farming business.

There are four simple steps to using VegTool - Enter Crop Details, Enter Growing Costs, Print Financial Summary and Compare Crop Scenarios.

Hydroponic Farmers Federation Victoria - 2012 Conference

The 2012 Hydroponic Farmers Federation Conference will be held in Ballarat at the Mercure Hotel from the 18th - 20th July.

The theme "The Future - Filling in the gaps" addresses many of the issues facing all farmers as they approach challenging times.

The Conference will include plenary sessions, delegate workshops and a trade exhibition.

To register or see the full program visit www.hffconference2012.org.

For further information contact John Eford on 03 5341 7691 or 0417 035 956.

International Women's Conference - 14 - 15 June, Cairns

The Second International Women's Conference will be held in Cairns this year.

The conference titled, Connecting for Action in the Asia-Pacific Region, aims to respond to the ongoing challenges experienced by women in the Asia Pacific region.

2012 Australian Institute of Packaging National Conference - 14 - 15 June, Gold Coast

The Australian Institute of Packaging (AIP) will hold their 2012 National Conference at Surfers Paradise Marriott Resort and Spa on 14 - 15 June. The biennial conference will be themed, Packaging...the road ahead, and will bring together leading experts to cater for all participants in food, beverage, manufacturing and packaging.

ABARES 2012 Regional Outlook Conference

ABARES is delivering commodity forecasts, research and analysis directly to rural and regional Australia.

Margaret River, WA - 5th July
Horsham, VIC - 25th July
Bega, NSW - 29th August
Burnie, TAS - 26th September
Toowoomba, QLD - 25th October

2012

Workplace Essentials Seminars - QLD

Stanthorpe 29th May - confirmed
Lockyer Valley 31st May - confirmed
Bundaberg 6th June - confirmed
Gayndah 7th June - confirmed
Register by contacting Growcom

Reception by email reception@growcom.com.au or by fax 07 3620 3880.

Adapting to New Markets in the Vegetable Growing Industry

This workshop will equip you to better understand your markets, develop your supply chains and capitalise on new products and new markets.

Date: July/August 2012
Location: Melbourne Wholesale Fruit, Vegetable and Flower Market
Duration: 5 days (2+2+1)
Cost: Free if eligible for a government subsidised place or \$500 if ineligible

To apply or to find out more please contact Brendan White on 1300 GOTAFE (1300 468 233) or email enquiry@gotafe.vic.gov.au.

2012 AUSVEG National Convention, Trade Show and National Awards for Excellence

A full list of award winners for the 2012 AUSVEG National Awards for Excellence is now available on the AUSVEG website, as well as a wrap up of the AUSVEG National Convention. To view the list of award winners please click here.

The Convention was very well supported and AUSVEG would like to thank its leading strategic partners Elders, Syngenta, DuPont and Bayer CropScience for their strong contributions and dedication to the industry.

The 2013 AUSVEG National Convention, Trade Show and Awards for Excellence will be held in Adelaide, South Australia, in May 2013.

Infopest

Infopest is a user-friendly database of all nationally registered agricultural and veterinary (Agvet) chemical products, approved Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) off-label permits and their uses. Infopest, originally developed and distributed by the Queensland Department of Agriculture Fisheries and Forestry (formerly DEEDI), is now owned, managed and distributed by Growcom.

Over many years Infopest has been recognised as the go-to tried and trusted resource for helping Australia's primary industries and other agencies achieve disease and pest free produce and animals.

Ring Growcom's Infopest line on 1300 367 911 or email admin@infopest.com.au to get your copy today

HAL RD&E Final Reports

A number of HAL RD&E projects have recently been completed and added to the R&D Knowledge Management System on the AUSVEG website. To access the Knowledge Management System, click here.

- IPM for Greenhouse Vegetables - research to industry (VG05093)
- Alternative fruit fly control and market access for capsicums and tomatoes (VG06028)
- Australian Vegetable Industry Soil and Land Management Knowledge Exchange (VG07146)
- Regional extension strategy for managing western flower thrips and tomato spotted wilt virus in the Sydney region (VG03098)