

**Australian Vegetable
Industry Conference,
Sydney, May 2007**

Lisa Maguire
AUSVEG Ltd

Project Number: MT06040

MT06040

This report is published by Horticulture Australia Ltd to pass on information concerning horticultural research and development undertaken for the onion, potato and vegetables industry.

The research contained in this report was funded by Horticulture Australia Ltd with the financial support of the onion, potato and vegetable industries.

All expressions of opinion are not to be regarded as expressing the opinion of Horticulture Australia Ltd or any authority of the Australian Government.

The Company and the Australian Government accept no responsibility for any of the opinions or the accuracy of the information contained in this report and readers should rely upon their own enquiries in making decisions concerning their own interests.

ISBN 0 7341 1669 1

Published and distributed by:

Horticultural Australia Ltd

Level 7

179 Elizabeth Street

Sydney NSW 2000

Telephone: (02) 8295 2300

Fax: (02) 8295 2399

E-Mail: horticulture@horticulture.com.au

© Copyright 2008



Know-how for Horticulture™



vegetable industry
CONFERENCE 2007

MT06040

**Australian Vegetable Industry Conference
Sydney, 29 May – 1 June 2007**

Lisa Maguire
General Manager/Director Communications
AUSVEG

AUSVEG



Know-how for Horticulture™

PAA

Potato Processing Association Australia



MT06040

**Australian Vegetable Industry Conference,
Sydney, 29 May – 1 June 2007**



A national conference focused on delivery of Research and Development outcomes and the future direction for a profitable industry.

The purpose of this final report is to communicate the successful delivery of project MT06040, Australian Vegetable Industry Conference, Sydney, May 2007.

Compiled by Lisa Maguire, General Manager/Director Communications, AUSVEG

AUSVEG Ltd

Suite 7, 756 Blackburn Rd, Clayton North, VIC, 3168

PO Box 563, Mulgrave, VIC, 3170

Phone: 03 9544 8098

Fax: 03 9558 6199

Mobile: 0419 732 229

Email: lisa.maguire@ausveg.com.au

Web: www.ausveg.com.au

Funded by:

- National Vegetable Levy
- National Potato Levy
- HAL
- AUSVEG
- Onions Australia
- Potato Processing Association Australia
- Delegates
- Sponsors –
 - Platinum Sponsors: Bayer CropScience, Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry
 - Host State Sponsor: NSW Department of Primary Industries
 - Gold Sponsors: Terranova Seeds, Nufarm, Syngenta, Department of Industry Tourism and Resources – Office Small Business, Vin Rowe Farm Machinery, CHEP
 - Silver Sponsors: Plant Health Australia, Withcott Seedlings, Dow AgroSciences, Organic Crop Protectants
 - Bronze Sponsors: Spray Gro Liquid Fertilizers, Agrichem, Fibre King, Melbourne Markets, AustSafe Super, Australian Grown, South Pacific Seeds, Dobmac Ag Machinery, Department of Health and Ageing, Crop Care, Wesfarmers Federation Insurance, Wyma Engineering

Report date: 31 July 2007

Any recommendations contained in this publication do not necessarily represent current HAL policy. No person should act on the basis of the contents of this publication, whether as to matters of fact or opinion or other content, without first obtaining specific, independent professional advice in respect of the matters set out in the publication.

Contents

Media summary	4
Conference objectives.....	5
Conference program inclusions.....	5
Results	5
Evaluation of effectiveness	6
Quantitative feedback results.....	6
Qualitative feedback results.....	7
Conference Program	8
Day 1: Tuesday 29 May	8
Day 2: Wednesday 30 May	8
Day 3: Thursday 31 May	8
Day 4: Friday 1 June – Optional Tours.....	10
Delegate demographic	11
Key outcomes	12
Recommendations	12
Acknowledgements	13
Conference Organising Committee	13
Conference Sponsors	13
Appendices	14

Media summary

The 2005 audit of Communication of Research and Development (R&D) in the vegetable industry showed that there was a very low level of knowledge and recall of R&D project outcomes amongst vegetable levy payers. The audit and subsequent communication strategy showed that one of the most popular methods of communications with growers was direct face to face communication. This theory was also supported in the research into communication in the potato industry. The inaugural National Vegetable Industry Conference in 2006 demonstrated that effective communication could be achieved in this forum, prompting a follow up conference in 2007.

The vegetable industry spends approximately \$8.5 million per year on R&D. The National Vegetable Industry Conference 2007, Sydney, provided an excellent method for transfer of the results of this R&D to levy payers and those that service the vegetable industry. In addition, the conference provided a great opportunity for the industry to come together to look at the global trends and collectively work together to develop strategies for the industry to successfully compete in a globalised economy.

The attendance of 545 industry delegates at the conference validates the value that industry places on face to face communication as one of the best means for communicating R&D outcomes.

In a demonstration of the conference's ability to begin to unite the Australian vegetable industry, the onion, fresh and processed potato industries decided to amalgamate their conference with the general vegetable conference to form a much larger event. The conference was also supported by the hydroponics, greenhouse and organic industries.

All conference presentations and information can be found on www.vegieconf.com.au.

Conference objectives:

- Improve current low levels of knowledge amongst National Vegetable Levy, Onion Levy and Potato Levy payers of the outcomes of their investment in R&D
- Increased uptake of R&D outcomes by the more direct delivery of R&D outcomes direct to growers and service providers to the Australian vegetable industry
- To provide a nationally focused forum to discuss issues affecting the viability of the Australian vegetable industry and to discuss marketing opportunities for the industry
- To provide an opportunity for growers to network with all members of the industry supply-chain
- Provide a professional image of the Australian vegetable industry

The conference program included:

- Concurrent commodity specific vegetable levy R&D
- Onion specific R&D presentations
- Fresh potato R&D presentations
- Processed potato R&D presentations
- National issue focused sessions on supply chain, future trends, innovation, marketing and the future for the Australian vegetable industry
- Trade exhibition showcasing current knowledge, machinery, equipment and recent research

The results:

- Attendance of 545 delegates
- 36 trade displays

Evaluation of effectiveness

A feedback survey was handed out on the last day of the conference for the purposes of evaluation. The questionnaire based survey had both a quantitative and qualitative focus (see appendix 1).

Quantitative feedback results:

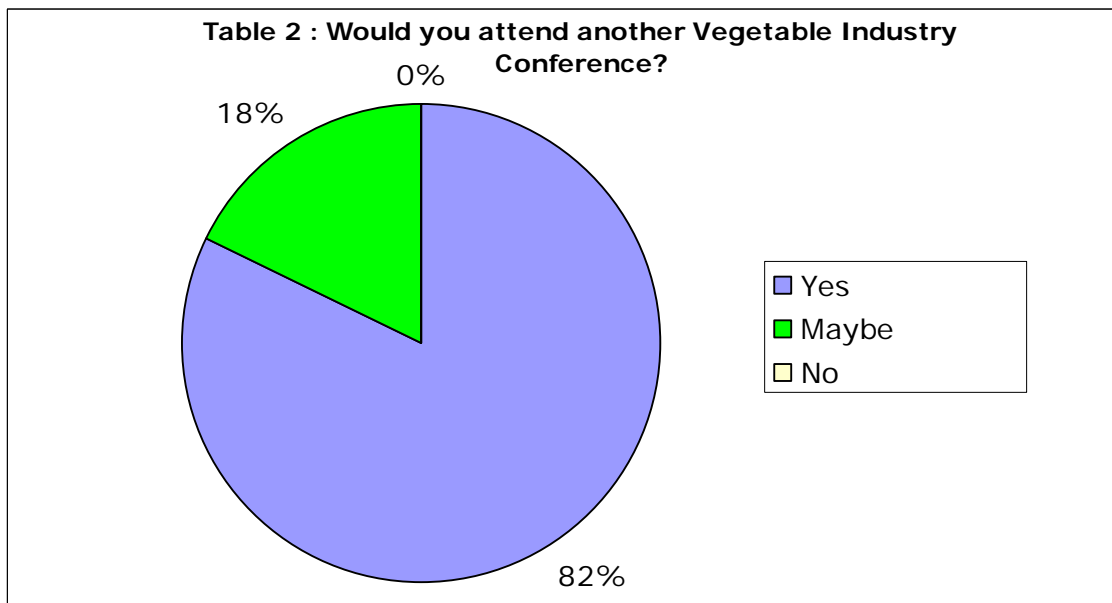
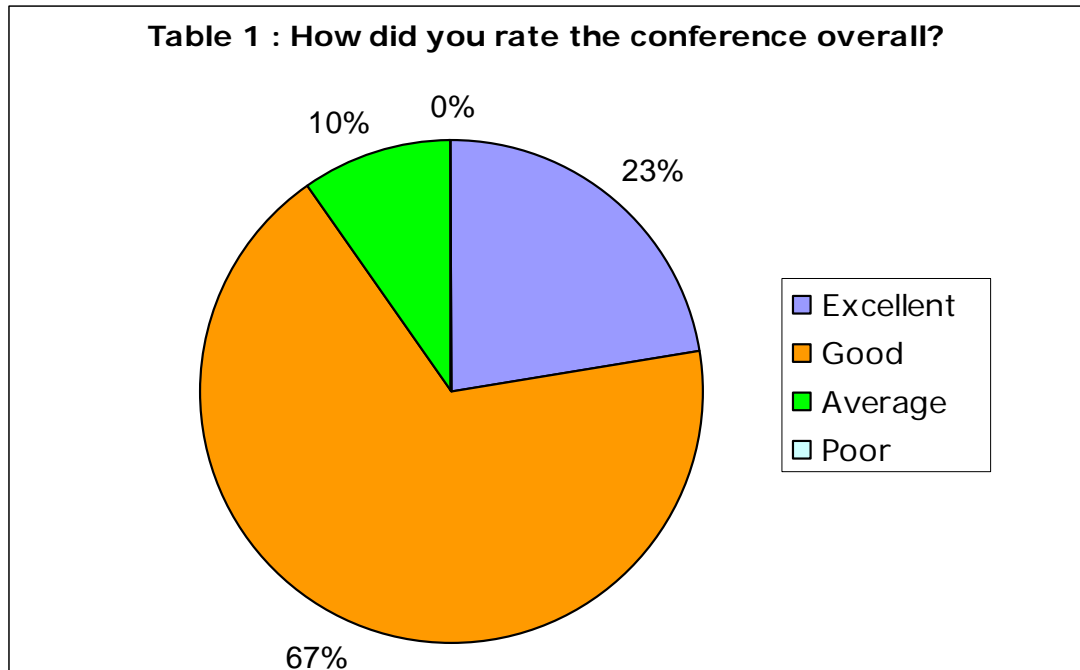


Table 3 : How did you rate the trade exhibition?

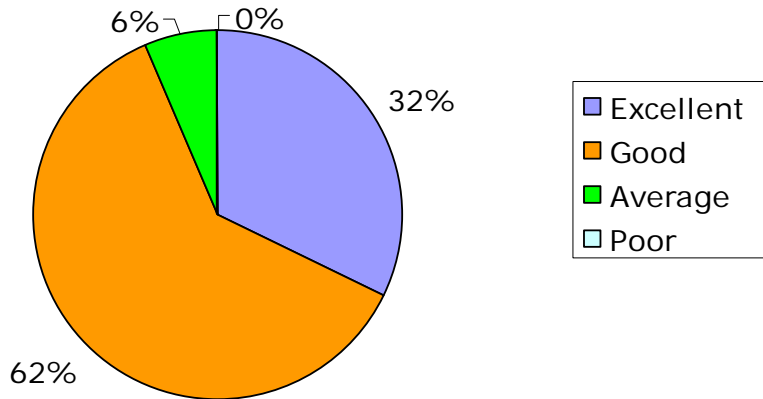
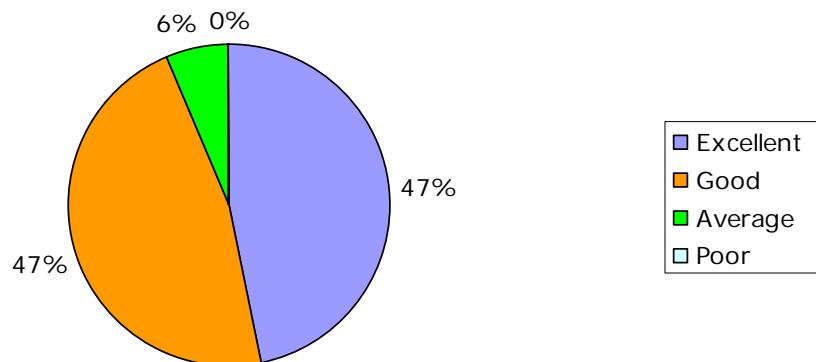


Table 4 : How did you rate the venue?



Selected qualitative feedback results:

"The conference was a great opportunity to connect with fellow growers from distant growing regions." – NSW grower

"Fantastic exposure. Looking forward to the next one." – sponsor/trade exhibitor

"Well organised, topical and challenging." – Vic grower

"Great networking opportunities. Had so much fun!" – Tas delegate

Conference Program

Day 1: Tuesday 29 May

4.00pm	Registration Desk opens
6.30pm	Welcome Reception Special Guest: Georgina Damm, Damm Fine Foods Launch of Vegetable, Potato and Onion Bio-security Plans by Conall O'Connell, Secretary Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Day 2: Wednesday 30 May

8.00am	Trade Exhibition opens
9.00am	Australian Vegetable Industry Conference opening
9.05am	Welcome - Michael Badcock, AUSVEG Chair
9.15am	'Strategy, vision, branding and community relations for successful business' Speaker: Michael Luscombe, CEO, Woolworths
10.05am	Host State Sponsor – The Hon Ian Macdonald, NSW Minister for Primary Industries, Energy, Mineral Resources and State Development
10.15am	Morning Tea
'Why Vegetables Claim Centre Plate' Session Sponsor: NSW Department of Primary Industries	
11.00am	'Everyone knows veges are healthy but it won't make them eat them' Speaker: Matt O'Neill, Nutritionist & Director, SmartShape
11.25am	'Healthy eating towards new business' Speaker: Nick Rodd, Director Menu Management, McDonald's Australia
11.50am	'Industry initiatives and marketing creates demand' Speaker: David Palmer, Managing Director, Meat & Livestock Australia
12.15pm	Panel session – Chair: John Roach
1.00pm	Lunch
'Vegetable Industry – Can we deliver?' Session Sponsor: Bayer CropScience	
2.30pm	'A supply chain perspective' Speaker: Martin Kneebone, Director, freshlogic
3.00pm	'A retailer perspective' Speaker: Michael Simonetta, CEO, Perfection Fresh
3.25pm	'Central Markets – Providores to the food service sector' Speaker: Matt Brown, Managing Director, Matt Brown's Greens
3.50pm	'A grower perspective' Speaker: Rob Robson, CEO, One Harvest
4.15pm	Panel session
4.45pm	Close
5.00pm	Trade Exhibition Drinks

Day 3: Thursday 31 May

7.15am	Breakfast and Horticulture Code of Conduct session Facilitated by Konrad Chmielewski, National Manager Industry Code and Commissioner John Martin, ACCC
8.00am	Trade Exhibition opens
'The Big Issues' Session Sponsor: Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry	
8.50am	'The Water Debate - Threats and Opportunities in Water Reform' Speaker: Professor Peter Cullen, Commissioner, National Water Commission
9.35am	'Corporate Farming – the way of the future?' Speaker: Robert Belcher, Chair, Sustainable Agricultural Communities Aust
9.55am	Vegvision 2020 – A Progress Report Speaker: AVIDG panel presentation
10.20am	Morning Tea

'Innovation Showcase' – 25 minute sessions including Q&A						
Time	Vegetables	Vegetables	Other	Fresh Potatoes	Processed Potatoes	Onions
11.00am	<i>Features of the revamped National Vegetable Levy R&D process</i> Speaker: Ross Ord, AUSVEG	<i>Asian Vegetables</i> Speaker: John Oakeshott, RIRDC	<i>Climate change</i> Rodger Stone, University of Southern Queensland	<i>Practical applications of precision viticulture – opportunities for the potato industry</i> Speaker: Dr Rob Bramley, CSIRO		<i>Botrytis</i> Speaker: James Hills
11.30am	<i>Vital Vegetables</i> Speaker: Rod Jones, DPI Victoria	<i>Asian Vegetables</i> Speaker: Angela Sparrow, DPIWE Tasmania	<i>'Water Wise'</i> Speaker: Bill Yiasoumi NSW DPI	<i>Effects of agribusiness on the potato/vegetable industry</i> Speaker: Peter Jacobs, ANZ Rural Banking		<i>Thrip Control</i> Speakers: Jianhua Mo/Greg Baker, SARDI
12.00noon	<i>IPM Extension</i> Speaker: tbc	<i>Asian Vegetables</i> Speaker: Len Tesoriero	<i>Soil Biology</i> Lisa Gulino QPI&F	<i>Potato breeding to meet increasingly demanding industry objectives</i> Speaker: Finley Dale, Scottish Crop and Research Institute		<i>Onion Waste</i> Speaker: tbc
12.30pm	<i>IPM gap analysis</i> Speakers: Ian Porter, DPI Victoria, and Sandra McDougall, DPI NSW	<i>Asian Vegetables</i> Speaker: Andrew Drummond	<i>Environmental assurance</i> Speakers: Claire Hamilton, Freshcare and Helena Whitman, EnviroVeg	<i>Opportunities and challenges for the Australian potato industry in a changing global market</i> Speaker: Eric Allan, Cambridge University Potato Growers Research Association		<i>Horticulture Water Initiatives</i> Speaker: Anne-Maree Boland
1.00pm	Lunch					
2.30pm	<i>Biodiversity</i> Speaker: Nancy Schellhorn, CSIRO	<i>Pre-harvest effects on post harvest quality</i> Speakers: Gordon Rodgers and Mike Titely, University of	<i>Chemicals</i> Speakers: Peter Dal Santo and Alan Norden, AgAware	<i>The future of the National Potato Breeding Program</i> Speaker: Tony Slater, DPIV	<i>An overview of the Processed Potatoes Research and Development Program (PPR&D)</i> Speaker: Iain Kirkwood, TIAR/Project Leader PPR&D	<i>Mallee Stunt Disease</i> Speaker: Trevor Wicks, SARDI

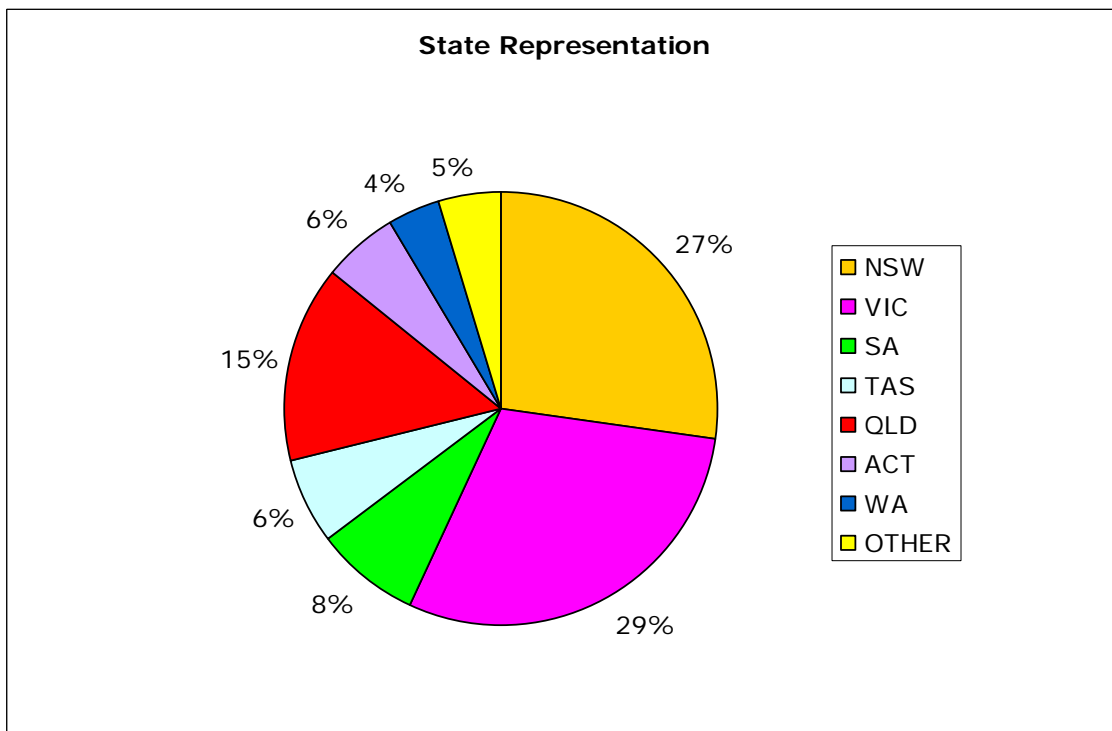
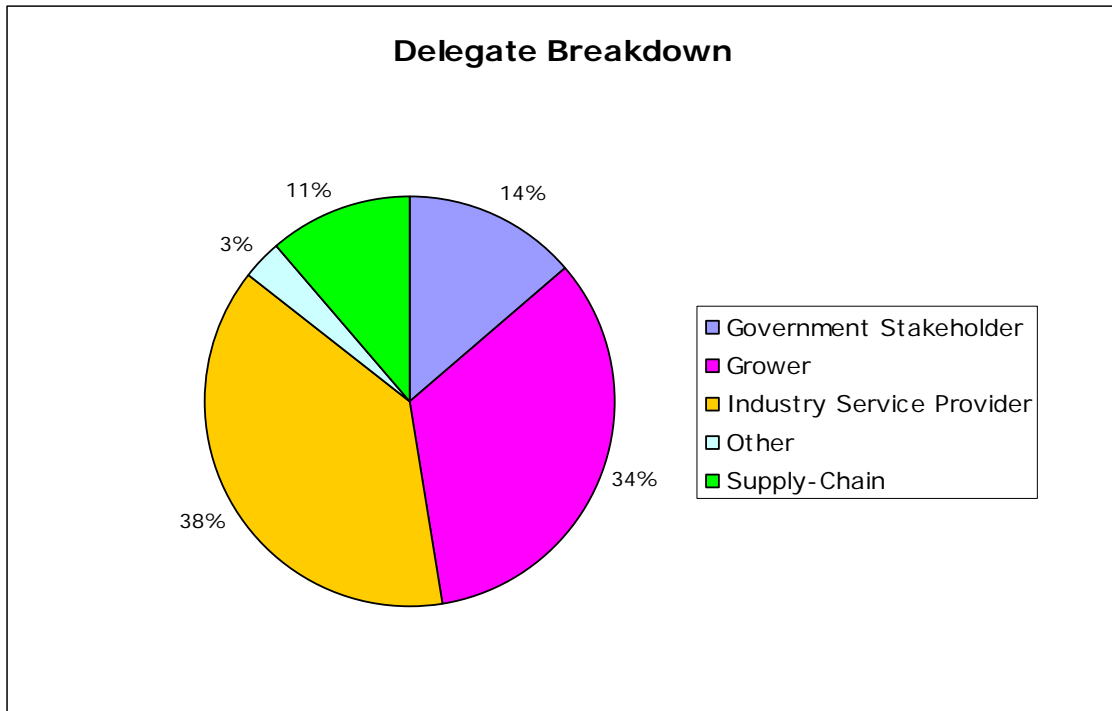
		Sydney	Consulting			
3.00pm	<i>White Blister</i> Speaker: Elizabeth Minchinton, DPI Victoria	<i>Water extension</i> Speaker: Rohan Prince, Dept. of Agriculture WA	<i>Precision Agriculture</i> Speaker: James Taylor, University of Sydney	<i>Fresh potato research and market development opportunities</i> Speaker: Matt Wickham, AUSVEG	<i>Tackling diseases of potatoes in Australia – R&D in the field scoring goals for industry</i> Speaker: Nigel Crump, DPIV	<i>Varietal Development</i> Speaker: Lewis Lydon
3.30pm	<i>Lettuce Aphid</i> Speaker: Sandra McDougall, DPI NSW	<i>Web/mobile based irrigation system</i> Speaker: Chris Denby, Dept. of Agriculture WA	<i>Organics</i> Speaker: Andre Leu, Organic Federation of Australia	<i>Successful marketing strategies for fresh potatoes</i> Speaker: Glenda Gourley, Hort NZ	<i>Latest molecular techniques to quantify potato pathogens in the soil</i> Speaker: Robin Harding, SARDI	<i>Nutrition</i> Speaker: Sam Sterling
4.00pm	<i>Economic outlook</i> Speaker: Ian James, AUSVEG	<i>Nitrate and nitrites in vegetables</i> Speaker: Sophie Parks, DPI NSW	<i>Benchmarking</i> Speaker: Jeremy Badgerey-Parker, DPI NSW	<i>Combating Potato Cyst Nematode (PCN) for the fresh potato industry</i> Speaker: Laura Bowles, Potato Growers Council of Victoria	<i>Enhancing resistance to common scab within commercial cultivars</i> Speaker: Calum Wilson TIAR	
6.30pm	National Vegetable Industry Awards and Gala Dinner, <i>Dockside</i> , Cockle Bay Wharf					

Day 4: Friday 1 June – Optional Tours

Tour 1.
Sydney Markets, Harris Farm Markets

Tour 2.
Sydney Markets, Gosford Horticultural Institute

Delegate demographic



Key outcomes

- Networks established between growers, supply-chain, researchers and service providers
- Face-to-face communication of research and development outcomes
- Successful communication of industry key messages including the importance of engaging consumers and integrated business practice
- Knowledge sharing between potato, onion, greenhouse, organic and general vegetable growers
- Conference proceedings including audio and powerpoint presentations available to delegates and other members of industry.
- Dedicated conference website to act as a permanent reference and archive for all National conferences. www.vegieconf.com.au. Also used as conference proceedings.
- Good media coverage of conference and topics covered for wider distribution through the vegetable industry
- An established and well-recognised industry event to communicate key messages, continue to unite the Australian vegetable industry and build a professional image of the industry

Recommendations

- Change conference to biennial event – next one in 2009
- Continue to build the level of industry participation by involving other industry organisations and regional grower associations
- Rotate conference from state-to-state
- Continue to enhance the caliber of speakers, dependent on relevant industry issues at the time of the conference
- Continue to focus the conference on communicating the outcomes of National Vegetable Levy funded research and development projects
- Continue to raise controversial and thought-provoking issues at conference to challenge and engage delegates
- Provide further informal networking opportunities for delegates
- Ensure continued access to conference proceedings through www.vegieconf.com.au.

Acknowledgements

Conference Organising Committee:

- Jeff McSpedden, AUSVEG Board, Chair of Organising Committee
- John Mundy, AUSVEG Board, vegetables representative
- Des Jennings, AUSVEG Board, fresh potatoes representative
- Iain Kirkwood, Program Leader PPR&D, processed potatoes representative
- Joanne Thomas-Ward, Executive Officer, Onions Australia
- Alison Anderson, Industry Development Officer, NSW
- Luke Jewell, Executive Officer, NSW Farmers Association
- Graeme Smith, President, Australian Hydroponics & Greenhouse Association
- Andre Leu, Chair, Organic Federation of Australia
- Lisa Maguire, Director Communications, AUSVEG
- John Roach, CEO, AUSVEG

Conference Sponsors:

- Platinum Sponsors: Bayer CropScience, Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry
- Host State Sponsor: NSW Department of Primary Industries
- Gold Sponsors: Terranova Seeds, Nufarm, Syngenta, Department of Industry Tourism and Resources – Office Small Business, Vin Rowe Farm Machinery, CHEP
- Silver Sponsors: Plant Health Australia, Withcott Seedlings, Dow AgroSciences, Organic Crop Protectants
- Bronze Sponsors: Spray Gro Liquid Fertilizers, Agrichem, Fibre King, Melbourne Markets, AustSafe Super, Australian Grown, South Pacific Seeds, Dobmac Ag Machinery, Department of Health and Ageing, Crop Care, Wesfarmers Federation Insurance, Wyma Engineering

Appendices

- Conference Feedback Survey
- Conference Sponsorship Prospectus
- Conference Program Booklet
- Conference Mini Program Booklet