

# **Facilitating the horticultural development of the Bowen and Gumlu region**

Dr Dale Williams  
Bowen District Growers Association

Project Number: MT07059

## MT07059

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**Project MT07059**

(30/11/08)

Facilitating the Development of the Bowen and Gumlu Region

**Final Report**

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**Bowen District Growers Association Inc.**

# Horticulture Australia Ltd

## Project MT07059

### Facilitating the development of the Bowen and Gumlu region

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#### **Purpose of the report:**

The purpose of the report is to highlight the outcomes of the Bowen & Gumlu Region Industry Development Officer project

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#### **Disclaimer:**

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# Table of Contents

<b>MEDIA SUMMARY</b>	<b><u>2</u></b>
<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b><u>3</u></b>
<b>TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER STRATEGY &amp; METHODOLOGY / ACTIVITIES</b>	<b><u>4</u></b>
Facilitation of Communication flow	<u>4</u>
Strategic Planning	<u>6</u>
Workshops & Field days	<u>7</u>
Needs analysis and R&D issues/projects	<u>8</u>
Extension Activities	<u>8</u>
<b>EVALUATION &amp; MEASUREMENT OF OUTCOMES</b>	<b><u>10</u></b>
<b>DISCUSSION</b>	<b><u>17</u></b>
<b>RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	<b><u>18</u></b>
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</b>	<b><u>19</u></b>
<i>Appendix I</i>	<u>20</u>
<i>Appendix II</i>	<u>31</u>
<i>Appendix II</i>	<u>33</u>



## Media Summary

This MT07059 project funded an Industry Development Officer (IDO) full-time to continue to build a stronger and more cohesive horticulture industry in the Bowen and Gumlu region. This MT07059 project is a follow on from the HG04016 project. This supported growers by providing information on new technology and access to a more coordinated approach to communication through information flow, training and R & D outcomes.

A strategic action plan was developed and implemented during the previous project, HG04016, by the IDO and has been updated to include changes within the industry; included were activities such as workshops, field days, information evenings, grower meetings and initiating the importance of building the local grower association groups and facilitating these groups through meetings.

The strategic action plan also includes the IDO acting as a first point of contact for the Bowen and Gumlu horticulture industry. This is a two way role, effectively improving growers' access to industry information and building relationships with other organisations wishing to pass information on to growers.

The IDO also acted as a conduit for communication and information flow between organisations related to the industry such as Horticulture Australia, AusVeg, Growcom, government departments and regional natural resource management groups, associations, businesses and growers.

Responding to feedback from growers and the management committee, the IDO concentrated on participation in industry development initiatives, regional input and support with regard to industry issues, improved grower access to R & D outcomes and a co-ordinated. The strategic approach for addressing research, development and training needs; the IDO worked with growers on issues they saw as important, which has built good working relationships between growers and the IDO. The ability to respond with flexibility is a key responsibility of the IDO and this highlights the importance of regular management committee meetings to adjust work plans/activities accordingly.

The Bowen and Gumlu Industry Development Officer has continued to maintain communication with key stakeholders throughout the industry and worked towards building a strong and cohesive industry in the Bowen and Gumlu region.

Feedback indicates that there is a continuing need for the services provided by the Bowen and Gumlu IDO.



## Introduction

The fruit and vegetable industries of Bowen and Gumlu conservatively contribute over \$250 million gross per annum to the region's economy. This represents about 15% of the total value of the Queensland fruit and vegetable industry. Crops produced include tomato, capsicum, melons, pumpkins, beans, sweet corn, small cucurbits, mangoes and other tropical fruit crops. The Bowen and Gumlu region is a major supplier of vegetables during the winter months and is important on a national scale for this reason. Horticulture is the largest industry in the Bowen and Gumlu region.

Due to the relative geographic isolation of the Bowen and Gumlu region, growers had often found it difficult to actively participate in state and federal industry development initiatives. Combined with the highly competitive, diverse, labour-intensive and fragmented nature of the industry, it was difficult to develop a united and strategic approach to issues that threaten the long-term sustainability of the industry. The MT07059 proposal aimed to continue to support grower efforts by maintaining the employment of an Industry Development Officer (IDO).

This project proposed to address the following issues through the IDO:

- Facilitate growers' access to information, training opportunities and R&D outcomes that are of relevance and benefit to them due to the region's relative isolation; and
- Promote the benefits of a strategic industry development approach in an effort to build a strong and united industry in the region

By assisting growers to achieve better business outcomes, the project continued to demonstrate the benefits of taking a more strategic approach to resolving industry issues.

Through effective two-way communication between industry, government and research agencies, the project has:

- Facilitated access to R&D outcomes, information flow and coordination of training opportunities for growers
- Facilitated industry development activities and provided tailored information on specific needs and issues relating to the industry both regionally and nationally
- Facilitated access to information and training as needed on an individual business enterprise basis
- Collaboratively working in with other projects that have outcomes that directly affect or support growers in the Bowen and Gumlu region

As a result of more effective communication and information flow, there is an increased grower willingness and commitment to work towards common industry goals and to actively support industry organisations regionally, state-wide and nationally.



## **Technology transfer strategy and methodology/activities**

The project involved the continued employment of an Industry Development Officer (IDO) full-time to facilitate the development of the horticulture industry in the Bowen and Gumlu region.

The direction and priorities of the project were set by a management committee. This committee comprised of the Bowen District Growers Association Inc (BDGA) executives (Dale Williams, Carl Walker, Jamie Jurgens & Leanne Born) and a representative from the Gumlu region (Laurie Land).

Under the supervision of the management committee, the IDO used a variety of strategies to address a wide range of issues. Some of these included information delivery by means of workshops, field days, meetings, one on one consultation, mail outs and fax outs. Some of the activities undertaken did not necessarily contribute directly towards achieving milestones. However they were necessary to continue to build and sustain relationships and to keep a good rapport with growers. Without a good relationship with growers, any progress toward milestones would have been difficult.

The strategies used by the IDO are based on milestone work plans and can be broadly grouped as follows:

### **Facilitation of Communication Flow**

Building strong linkages between growers and industry through communication has been a vital part of a sustainable industry in the Bowen and Gumlu region. This could not be achieved without IDO facilitation of vital stakeholder relationships. Prior to the commencement of the HG04016 project and the continuation into the MT07059 project, information flow or transfer was almost nonexistent.

The following is a list of stakeholders that the IDO has facilitated communication with:

- Horticulture Australia Ltd (HAL)
  - Plant Health
  - Supply Chain
  - IDO programs
- AUSVEG
- Bowen District Growers Association
- Growcom
  - Labour
  - Land & Water
  - Farm Management Systems
  - Pest Management
  - Industrial Relations
- Queensland IDO network
- Other IDOs nationally
- Queensland Department of Primary Industries & Fisheries
  - R&D project collaborations
  - Plant Health & Biosecurity



- Rural Industry Skilling
  - Plant Protection
  - Sustainable Coastal Agricultural Systems
  - Extension Officers – eg Project Biodegradable Mulch Trials
- Queensland Department of Natural Resources and Water
- Bowen Shire Council (Now Whitsunday Shire Council)
  - Mayor
  - Economic Development
  - Health and Environmental Services
- Brismark & Brisbane Produce Markets
- Burdekin Dry Tropics
- Farmsafe Queensland
- FarmBis
- Sunwater
- Chem Clear (*drumMUSTER*)
- Rural Skills Australia
- Relationships Australia
- Federal Member for Dawson
- Australian Government Departments
  - Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs (now Immigration & Citizenship)
    - Industry Outreach Officer (IOO) – Glenda Hutch
  - Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry
    - Minister – Chief of staff
    - Dimethoate Fenthion Review Program
    - Corporate Public Relations
  - Employment and Workplace Relations
  - Industry Tourism and Resources
- APVMA (Australian Pesticides & Veterinary Medicines Authority)
- Centrelink
  - Rural Services Advisor
- Australian Mango Industry Association
- Australian Melon Association
- Member for Whitsunday
- Australian Tax Office
- Bundaberg Fruit & Vegetable Growers Association

The IDO program has provided a continual flow of information between growers and industry stakeholder groups. Information is provided to growers via a number of different media such as:

- Newsletters
- Faxes
- Emails
- Mail-outs
- One-on-one contact with growers on farm
- Facilitating grower meetings
- Facilitating grower meetings with stakeholders



The IDO is the first point of contact on many levels for growers and industry stakeholders in the Bowen and Gumlu region requesting information on industry issues and information on the region. Growers have indicated that without the information flow they would not be involved in collaborative projects such as the “Alternative Fruit Fly Management and Market Access Project for Capsicum and Tomato, Bowen Production Region” which may mean a systems approach for the growers in the Bowen and Gumlu region when the APVMA review may potentially take Dimethoate and Fenthion off the market for post harvest use.

The IDO also provides information for articles for publication to Growcom’s ‘Fruit & Vegetable News’, Good Fruit & Vegetables, Bowen Independent and the North Queensland Register.

## **Strategic Planning**

Bowen District Growers Association Inc (BDGA) has a strategic plan in place. Because this project is a continuation of the HG04016, project it has provided an opportunity for the IDO to facilitate the further development of this existing strategic plan for the region by coordinating a strategic planning workshop to further develop the existing plan. This involved further development of strategies to address changing priority issues within the industry through BDGA and the IDO.

A workshop with a grower working group was held to gather information and ensure the involvement of growers in the process. The strategic plan was based on BDGA’s growth and ability to drive change within the region. The components of the strategic plan were set out as follows:

- Vision
- Mission
- SWOT Analysis
- Goals
- Strategies
- Action Plan

The key strategies are:

- Collecting and summarising relevant industry information
- Increase Membership
- Be the first point of contact for all growers and stakeholder on relevant issues within the industry
- Providing one-on-one consultation service to growers
- To be a strong and cohesive organisation representing growers and the industry
- Being a voice for all growers on major issues that effect this industry
- Providing input into industry initiatives and programs, strategic development and other industry organisations and associations strategy



direction that is applicable to commodities based in the Bowen & Gumlu region

The IDO supports BDGA in delivering outcomes from these strategies. The strategies listed above have been achieved over the period of this project and with continuation of an IDO program in the Bowen and Gumlu region will continue to deliver greater outcomes as an organisation within this industry.

## **Workshops and field days**

The IDO organised a number of workshops and other activities for growers over the course of the project as well as supported the initiatives of other organisations, government departments and agencies. These included:

- 1 x Industrial Relations Workshop
- 4 x Dimethoate & Fenthion Workshops
- 4 x Fruit Fly Workshops
- 3 x Fork Lift Driver Legislation Change Workshops
- 1 x Skilled Migration Workshop
- 2 x Labour Shortages Workshops
- 2 x Water Allocations Meetings
- 1 x Workplace Health & Safety Workshop
- 1 x Chemical Gap Analysis Meeting
- 2 x Soil Health Workshops
- 1 x On Farm Security Workshop
- 1 x Mango Nutrition Workshop
- 1 x R&D Needs Analysis Workshop
- 5 x Natural Resources (Water Meters) Workshops
- 2 x Climate Change Workshops
- 1 x Powdery Mildew Workshop
- 2 x Horticulture Code Workshops
- 6 x Biodegradable Mulch Film Workshops and or Field Days

The IDO also attends monthly meetings with BDGA to give details to the management committee on monthly activities and report against agreed workplans. Growers' issues and concerns regarding the industry are also conveyed at these meetings for the IDO to investigate and provide feedback.



## **Needs Analysis and R & D issues/projects**

Over the duration of the project many one-on-one consultations and grower meetings were held in the Bowen and Gumlu region to identify industry needs for the area.

The following is a list of needs and concerns that growers identified during that time:

- Growers continue to have concerns about the flexibility of the Horticulture Code of Conduct and the need for change to support more flexibility
- Growers continue to believe there is a need to work together more collaboratively to initiate change within the industry (supply chain)
- More information on market access
- A whole of industry approach is needed to support the industry being more collaborative and united
- Continual updates on new legislation with regards to workplace health & safety on farm
- More information on grants that may be available for growers to access
- Continual updates on Industrial Relations laws and legislation
- Need for more support for proposed R&D projects
- Growers felt that there were not enough extension officers out of the DPI&F to support growers in such a large horticultural region

### **R&D projects**

- More support from government for Bio-degradable projects such as the plastic mulch film project is needed
- Continuation of the Fruit Fly project needed and organised through QDPI&F Bowen regarding the loss of Dimethoate & Fenthion
- Continual research into Pest Management projects is needed

### **Extension activities**

The IDO position is an extension role in collaboration with industry stakeholders and program managers implemented and supported many industry based programs through the QDPI&F and Growcom. Those projects/programs were:

- The IDO and BDGA continue to be listed as a collaborator for the “Alternative Fruit Fly Management and Market Access Project for Capsicum and Tomato, Bowen Production Region”.



- The IDO and BDGA have been listed as collaborators on a proposed HAL project for sensitive waterways/nutrient management with DPI&F & DNR&W
- The IDO is collaboratively working with the Burdekin Dry Tropics and Growcom on the Federal Government Reef Rescue Plan to minimise runoff into the Great Barrier Reef catchment area and encourage growers to be using on-farm best practice systems.
- The IDO also collaboratively administered major project areas of Growcom in Bowen & Gumlu that are of an extension/communication nature:

### **Land & Water projects**

- SCAS & BDT grants for growers on irrigation, salinity, Farm Management Systems (FMS) and other programs for growers in Bowen, Gumlu and Burdekin
- Growcom's *Water for Profit* programs – supporting Egberto Soto in promoting the *Water for Profit* program to growers in Bowen and Gumlu
- Providing Fact Sheets, CDs and reports to growers on request

### **Pest Management projects**

- Providing up to date information to growers on the potential loss of chemicals projects
- Providing growers with updates on Permits and information on Pest Management as requested
- Providing growers with Fact sheets, CDs and Industry contacts as requested

### **Vegetable IDO projects**

- Information provided to growers on vegetable levy funded R&D projects to support growers as requested and gathering information on R&D needs in this region
- Seasonal labour shortages – regional rural area
- Providing growers with information on upcoming conferences, summits, workshops and tours
- Providing growers with information on the working holiday visa for backpackers project
- Working with growers to gain the support of growers for the Tomato levy and provide the Vegetable IDO with updates on grower views
- Providing Growcom with local information for the vegetable industry

### **Farm Management Systems projects**

- providing growers with information on request regarding FMS including CDs, Fact sheets and reports



## **Industrial Relations Projects**

- Providing growers with information as requested on Industrial Relations issues
- Providing growers with workshops on new Legislation and Workplace Health and Safety updates

## **Evaluation and measurement of outcomes**

### **Outcomes and delivery**

1. To continue to build a greater sense of grower unity within the region and a good working relationship between BDGA and Gumlu Local Producers Assoc.
  - During the course of the project the IDO has provided a flow of information to growers in the Bowen and Gumlu region on a number of industry issues. The IDO has organised meetings, workshops and forums to initiate communication on these industry issues, bringing growers together to collaboratively develop strategies to deal with these issues. The Gumlu LPA is no longer a working group. However growers from the Gumlu region are involved with the Bowen District Growers Assoc (BDGA). BDGA and Gumlu growers have worked together on projects such as the “Alternative Fruit Fly Management and Market Access Project for Capsicums and Tomatoes” project and will continue to work together on upcoming collaborative projects with the QDPI&F in Bowen. Gumlu growers have also been invited to and attended workshops, field days, seminars and meetings.
2. Two well-functioning local producer organisations or one all inclusive organisation capable of effectively supporting the regions fruit and vegetable industry through a range of avenues.
  - Since the introduction of the IDO through the HG04016 project and the continuation through the MT07059, project there has been a shift towards one all inclusive producer organisation/association in the Bowen & Gumlu region. The Bowen District Growers Association now includes members from the Gumlu region with the Gumlu Local Producers Assoc being phased out. Workshops, forums, meetings and seminars are still delivered in both Bowen and Gumlu to support growers that cannot attend in one of the areas due to the amount of distance needed to travel to a workshop. Information flow also continues to be delivered through mail outs, fax outs and newsletters to both Bowen and Gumlu.
3. Clear collaboration with industry bodies Growcom and AUSVEG by developing a sound working relationship within this project.



- The IDO collaboratively administered major project areas of Growcom in Bowen & Gumlu that are of an extension/communication nature as mentioned in the extension activities above:

### **Land & Water projects**

- Burdekin Dry Tropics grants for growers on irrigation, salinity, Farm Management Systems (FMS) and other programs for growers in Bowen, Gumlu and Burdekin
- Growcom's *Water for Profit* programs – supporting Egberto Soto in promoting the *Water for Profit* program to growers in Bowen and Gumlu
- Providing Fact Sheets, CDs and reports to growers on request

### **Pest Management projects**

- Providing up to date information to growers on the potential loss of chemicals projects
- Providing growers with updates on Permits and information on Pest Management as requested
- Providing growers with Fact sheets, CDs and Industry contacts as requested

### **Vegetable IDO projects (AUSVEG)**

- Information provided to growers on vegetable levy funded R&D projects to support growers as requested and gathering information on R&D needs in this region
- Seasonal labour shortages – regional rural area
- Providing growers with information on upcoming conferences, summits, workshops and tours
- Providing growers with information on the working holiday visa for backpackers project
- Working with growers to gain the support of growers for the Tomato levy and provide the Vegetable IDO with updates on grower views
- Providing Growcom with local information for the vegetable industry

### **Farm Management Systems projects**

- providing growers with information on request regarding FMS including CDs, Fact sheets and reports

### **Industrial Relations Projects**

- Providing growers with information as requested on Industrial Relations issues
- Providing growers with workshops on new Legislation and Workplace Health and Safety updates

4. Continue a strategic approach to research, development, training and information delivery for the fruit and vegetable industry of the region resulting in:



- a. Improved collaboration and coordination between industry, government and research agencies, and the community;

The following is a list of industry, government and research agencies and community that the IDO continues to either collaboratively working with or meet with to discuss issues and needs of the industry.

- Horticulture Australia Ltd (HAL)
- AUSVEG
- Growcom
- Queensland Department of Primary Industries & Fisheries
- Queensland Department of Natural Resources and Water
- Bowen Shire Council (Now Whitsunday Shire Council)
- Brismark & Brisbane Produce Markets
- Burdekin Dry Tropics
- Farmsafe Queensland
- FarmBis
- Sunwater
- Chem Clear (*drumMUSTER*)
- Rural Skills Australia
- Relationships Australia
- Federal Member for Dawson
- Australian Government Departments
  - Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs (now Immigration & Citizenship)
  - Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry
  - Employment and Workplace Relations
  - Industry Tourism and Resources
- APVMA (Australian Pesticides & Veterinary Medicines Authority)
- Centrelink
- Australian Mango Industry Association
- Australian Melon Association
- Member for Whitsunday
- Bundaberg Fruit & Vegetable Growers Association

- b. Improved capacity of growers to address issues concerning profitability, farm staff management, environmental impacts, the supply chain and existing and new pest, disease and weed problems.

Through a number of different workshops, seminars, meetings, field days growers have the ability to access information on profitability, farm staff management, environmental impacts, the supply chain and existing and new pest, disease and weed problems. Through the IDO there is continued improvement on the information that can be delivered to growers. If a grower has a need in an area and makes contact with the IDO regarding this need then



it is possible for the IDO to access the information for the grower or work through the need.

The IDO has access to and can source information through the facilitation and extension of Growcom activities. These are as follows:

- Land & Water projects
- Pest Management projects
- Vegetable IDO projects (AUSVEG)
- Farm Management Systems projects
- Industrial Relations Projects

5. Active grower participation in the contribution to state and national industry development strategies to strengthen the national networks eg. by developing strong links with and support melon and mango industry development, proactive support for emerging tomato industry development strategies, close working relationships with state and national based IDO team

- The IDO program has provided a link between growers at a local, state and national industry level with industry bodies and organisations. Growers in the Bowen and Gumlu contribute local industry information to industry strategies through two way communication due to the development of relationships with areas of industry that were not in place prior to the IDO program. Relationships with key industry bodies and government are vital in sustaining a collaborative approach on a local and national level.
- Growers in the Bowen and Gumlu region provide information to the IDO and directly to the industry on development strategies as needed. BDGA will work in with the national Vegvision 2020 strategy.

6. Increased industry cohesiveness and an appreciation of the value of strategic industry measured through:- positive responses to an industry survey during the project and continued support for the IDO position, active collaboration in the project by Gumlu LPA and increased support for BDGA for the continuation of the project

- A survey was conducted by a contract person independent to the IDO program to gauge the support for the IDO program within the Bowen and Gumlu region. The survey was put together by the Management Committee for the IDO program. There were around 60 growers contacted in the Bowen and Gumlu region with 16 responses to the survey. A copy of the type of survey is attached in Appendix III. Some of the questions included and responses are as follows:



- Do you know that there is an Industry Development Officer in your region?
 

Yes	100%	No	0%
-----	------	----	----
  
- Do you believe that the Industry Development Officer provides information that is of value to your business? Eg Through newsletter, workshops, general enquiries?
 

Yes	100%	No	0%
-----	------	----	----
  
- Have you been invited to or attended workshops/field days/seminars/meetings etc through the Industry Development Officer? Eg Chemcert refresher courses, Industrial Relations, Water Meters, Soil Health, Horticulture Code
 

Yes	93.75%	No	6.25%
-----	--------	----	-------
  
- Do you think that the Industry Development Officer supports a more unified industry on issues that affect horticulture in this region? Eg: Collaborating on projects that support growers such as water issues, pest management etc
 

Yes	100%	No	0%
-----	------	----	----
  
- Do you think that the Newsletter is a good source of information for your business?
 

Yes	100%	No	0%
-----	------	----	----
  
- Do you have a good awareness of industry issues within the region?
 

Yes	71.8 %	No	28.2%
-----	--------	----	-------
  
- How effective have meetings/workshops/seminars been?
 

N/A	12.5 %	Effective	84.3%	Not Effective	3.2 %
-----	--------	-----------	-------	---------------	-------
  
- Do you feel that there has been or will be a change of practices in your business due to the Industry Development Officer's support? Eg Reef Rescue Funding Initiative?
 

Yes	68.75%	No	31.25%
-----	--------	----	--------
  
- Do you support the need for an Industry Development Officer in this region?
 

Yes	100%	No	0%
-----	------	----	----
  
- The survey shows a positive response to the IDO activities and a cohesive industry approach. The survey also shows that there is continued support for the position of an IDO in the Bowen and Gumlu region.
  
- 7. Close working relationships between BDGA, Gumlu LPA, Growcom and the state-based IDO team resulting in:- achievement of work plans including milestone reports to Horticulture Australia, effective reporting and management structure for the IDO
  
- Milestones reports and work plans show a good working relationship between BDGA, Gumlu growers, Growcom and other IDOs. Milestone reports and Work plans have been completed and are delivered to HAL at the appropriate milestone stage of the project. A report on IDO activities is also given to the Management Committee members and BDGA members each month which shows activities delivered in accordance with work plans.



8. Good progress made towards a successful research, development and training program for the region. At a minimum this would include:- a coordinated approach to training and information delivery and several projects underway to address key issues identified in the strategic action plan
  - The IDO program ensures that there is a coordinated approach to training and information delivery through workshops, meetings, newsletters, mail outs and fax outs in the region. The types of activities appear earlier in the report and are listed below:
    - 1 x Industrial Relations Workshop
    - 4 x Dimethoate & Fenthion Workshops
    - 4 x Fruit Fly Workshops
    - 3 x Fork Lift Driver Legislation Change Workshops
    - 1 x Skilled Migration Workshop
    - 2 x Labour Shortages Workshops
    - 2 x Water Allocations Meetings
    - 1 x Workplace Health & Safety Workshop
    - 1 x Chemical Gap Analysis Meeting
    - 2 x Soil Health Workshops
    - 1 x On Farm Security Workshop
    - 1 x Mango Nutrition Workshop
    - 1 x R&D Needs Analysis Workshop
    - 5 x Natural Resources (Water Meters) Workshops
    - 2 x Climate Change Workshops
    - 1 x Powdery Mildew Workshop
    - 2 x Horticulture Code Workshops
    - 6 x Biodegradable Mulch Film Workshops and or Field Days
  - BDGA and the IDO collaboratively work on projects with other industry organisations then try to come up with a solution to the issue.
9. Industry Surveys to measure the impact of the project. Key questions are: is the newsletter a useful source of information, contacts and new ideas? How effective were visits, meetings, workshops and training events initiated, coordinated or facilitated by the IDO in achieving improved grower skills, knowledge and confidence? Have any practice changes occurred as a result of this project?



As listed earlier in the outcomes a survey was conducted and these were the results of some of the key questions:

- Do you know that there is an Industry Development Officer in your region?  
Yes 100%                      No 0%
- Do you believe that the Industry Development Officer provides information that is of value to your business? Eg Through newsletter, workshops, general enquiries?  
Yes 100%                      No 0%
- Have you been invited to or attended workshops/field days/seminars/meetings etc through the Industry Development Officer? Eg Chemcert refresher courses, Industrial Relations, Water Meters, Soil Health, Horticulture Code  
Yes 93.75%                      No 6.25%
- Do you think that the Industry Development Officer supports a more unified industry on issues that affect horticulture in this region? Eg: Collaborating on projects that support growers such as water issues, pest management etc  
Yes 100%                      No 0%
- Do you think that the Newsletter is a good source of information for your business?  
Yes 100%                      No 0%
- Do you have a good awareness of industry issues within the region?  
Yes 71.8 %                      No 28.2%
- How effective have meetings/workshops/seminars been?  
N/A 12.5 %                      Effective 84.3%                      Not Effective 3.2 %
- Do you feel that there has been or will be a change of practices in your business due to the Industry Development Officer's support? Eg Reef Rescue Funding Initiative?  
Yes 68.75%                      No 31.25%
- Do you support the need for an Industry Development Officer in this region?  
Yes 100%                      No 0%

10. Grower input and involvement in the strategic directions of the melon, tomato, vegetable (AUSVEG) and mango industries at the national level, both directly and through BDGA, Gumlu LPA, Growcom and the IDO team activities

The IDO program has provided a link between growers and industry associations both directly and indirectly in order to provide input towards industry strategies through two-way communication due to the development of relationships with areas of industry that were not in place prior to the IDO program.



## Discussion

There are a number of local and national industry benefits that have been achieved as a result of the Bowen IDO. Substantial improvements have been made to how information is exchanged and will continue within the industry in the Bowen and Gumlu area.

- The IDO has been responsible for facilitation and delivery of workshops, field days and grower meetings that would not occur without the IDO program.
- The IDO has been responsible for the building of new and stronger relationships with growers and industry stakeholders providing two-way communication between growers, organisations and government agencies linked with the industry. Building key relationships and linkages within the industry gives growers the ability to have input when needed on industry issues and strategies.
- The IDO has been responsible for developing a strong profile in key areas of industry where growers' issues need to be heard and questions need to be answered. This also provides industry with an important link to growers' needs in Bowen and Gumlu and access to regionally based information. Continuing to build the profile of the Bowen region has made government and industry aware of growers' position on issues and making it a priority to act on these issues.

Prior to the IDO program in the Bowen and Gumlu region information flow, coordination of meetings and delivery of a cohesive industry in this region was extremely difficult to achieve. The benefit of the IDO program in the Bowen region is quantifiably difficult to measure, but because growers have greater access to knowledge and industry information, the flow on is growers are working more collaboratively. Growers want to continue the IDO program in the Bowen region.

Please find attached in Appendix II a letter from the MT07059 Management Committee to HAL with their comments on the project.



## Recommendations

The Management Committee and stakeholders in the Bowen and Gumlu region value the contribution that an IDO makes to the industry in this region. They support the continuation of the IDO project for an additional term and have developed and submitted another project proposal to HAL which has been approved.

The purpose of continuing to support an IDO in the Bowen and Gumlu region is to:

1. Continue to build on the relationships already in place and develop new relationships to provide growers with additional avenues of communication and better information flow
2. Continue to deliver workshops, field days and seminars that assist growers with industry issues and provide valuable information on their needs
3. Develop, in collaboration with industry and government, R&D projects that support not only the local growers but the whole industry
4. Continue to build a cohesive group of growers that work collaboratively with other grower associations in Queensland and interstate
5. Continue building the profile of the BDGA within the industry
6. Continue any work that the IDO has created that is ongoing and will deliver tangible benefit that supports growers



## **Acknowledgements**

The Industry Development Officer, Ms Denise Kreymborg, would like to acknowledge the input and support given by the following people to the IDO project:

Growcom staff and extension officers, in particular, Margie Milgate, Kate Dunn, Simon Powell, Egberto Soto, Gary Artlett, Anne Larard, George Macdonald and Jim Collings

Members of the IDO management committee Dale Williams, Leanne Born, Jamie Jurgens, Carl Walker and Laurie Land

Staff at the Queensland Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries, Bowen Research Station

Members of Bowen District Growers Association

Horticulture Australia Limited project representative, Richard Stephens



# Bowen District Growers Association Inc Strategic Plan



# Vision

A strong and cohesive organisation that provides a voice for our members.

# Mission

BDGA efficiently and effectively represents and promotes the members interests by providing beneficial services that will help support their business.

# S.W.O.T Analysis

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- A strong core group of members</li><li>- A structure (incorporated)</li><li>- A historical relationship with DPI &amp; Growcom</li><li>- The employment of an IDO to help promote the association</li><li>- Members attending meetings</li><li>- Strong financial base</li><li>- Active involvement in the Industry and Related Issues</li><li>- Attendance at social events good (Growers Dinner), brings industry and the community together</li><li>- The employment of a contracted secretary</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Small grower base</li><li>-Reliant on funding to support employment of IDO</li><li>-Reliant on funding to provide services</li></ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Provide beneficial services to members</li> <li>- Set meeting times and dates</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Opportunities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Gain more members</li> <li>- Provide more services</li> <li>- Be 'heard' within our industry regarding important issues</li> <li>- Raise profile of farming within the Bowen Community &amp; also on a state and federal level</li> <li>- Lobby government departments to have influence on decision making/policy that affects/impacts on our businesses/industry</li> <li>- Attract other sources of funding to support BDGA activities and provide more services</li> <li>- be more social in the community</li> <li>- participate in local events</li> <li>- work with other organisations to promote BDGA</li> <li>- Gumlu growers becoming members of BDGA</li> </ul>	<p><b>Threats</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A decrease in member base</li> <li>- Lack of funding</li> <li>- Government policies and legislation</li> <li>- A decrease in the amount of local growers</li> <li>- Similar service moves into area taking members etc</li> <li>- Lose of IDO program</li> </ul>

# Goals

1. Collecting and summarising relevant industry information and passing it on to BDGA members.
2. Increase Membership
3. Be the first point of contact for all growers and stakeholder on relevant issues within the industry.
4. Providing one-on-one consultation service to growers.
5. To be a strong and cohesive organisation representing growers and the industry
6. Being a voice for all growers on major issues that effect this industry
7. Providing input into industry initiatives and programs, strategic development and other industry organisations and associations strategy direction that is applicable to commodities based in the Bowen & Gumlu region

# Strategies

## **Goal 1      Collecting and summarising relevant industry information and passing it on to BDGA members.**

- Collecting Information on
  - New Technology
  - Government Legislation and Policies
  - Other industry bodies activities
  - Workshops
  - Business and marketing
  - Sources of funding
  - Media releases
  - Environmental Issues

- Industry Issues in general
- Building relationships with industry bodies to be up to date on all the major issues happening within the industry and that may affect local growers
- Creating a system to relay information easily to growers

**Goal 2      Increase Membership**

- Provide clear information flow and services
- Promote BDGA to all growers and associations in the region
- More personal contact with growers and associates
- Have a more professional approach as an association
- Providing more opportunities for BDGA to be involved in the community

**Goal 3      Be the first point of contact for all growers and stakeholders on relevant issues within the industry**

- Build relationships with key stakeholders and industry bodies such as NRMW, Growcom, AUSVEG, HAL
- Environmental groups
- Government Bodies
- Other growing regions
- Know as many issues that impact on growers in this region
- Any other groups or bodies

**Goal 4      Providing one-on-one consultation service to growers**

- Regular meetings with growers
- Gathering information on grower opinions, issues and needs in the Bowen and Gumlu region
- Providing an ongoing flow of information to growers and industry

**Goal 5 To be a strong and cohesive organisation representing growers and the industry**

- Better communication
- Structured Meetings
- Promoting the benefits
- More interaction with the community and the benefit of working together
- Making people feel like they belong

**Goal 6 Being a voice for all growers on major issues that affect this industry**

- Achieve all other goals
- Build relationships and good networks within the industry
- National Industry Recognition
- Support all growers and industry strategy directions
- Build a good relationship with all growers
- Work on bringing growers together to be a voice within the industry

**Goal 7 Providing input into industry initiatives and programs, strategic development and other industry organisations and associations strategy direction that is applicable to commodities based in the Bowen & Gumlu region**

- Develop good interaction between with industry organisations, associations, government and community ensuring the relationships are strong
- Collect information on the needs and issues of the industry in Bowen and Gumlu
- Provide information flow between industry in the Bowen and Gumlu region and industry groups and government

# ACTION PLAN

<b>Goals</b>	<b>Strategies</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>By Whom</b>	<b>Time Measure</b>
<b>Collecting and summarising relevant industry information and passing it on to members</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Collecting Information on               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- New Technology</li> <li>- Government Legislation and Policies</li> <li>- Other industry bodies activities</li> <li>- Workshops</li> <li>- Business and marketing</li> <li>- Sources of funding</li> <li>- Media releases</li> <li>- Environmental Issues</li> <li>- Industry Issues in general</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Building relationships with industry bodies to be up to date on all the major issues happening within the industry and that may affect local growers</li> <li>- Creating a system to relay information easily to growers</li> </ul>	<p>Keeping up to date with industry developments through communication via phone, internet, newsletters, media releases, studies, forums, workshops, conferences, and seminars.</p> <p>Making continuous contact with industry bodies seeking new developments and technology.</p> <p>Making one-on-one contact with growers.</p> <p>Providing a monthly newsletter with up to date information on industry developments.</p>	IDO and BDGA members	Ongoing

<b>Increase Membership</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Provide clear information flow and services</li> <li>- Promote BDGA to all growers and associations in the region</li> <li>- More personal contact with growers and associates</li> <li>- Have a more professional approach as an association</li> <li>- Providing more opportunities for BDGA to be involved in the community</li> </ul>	<p>Being a point of contact for growers to have access to information on any issue they may have.  Always promote BDGA as good to be a member of.  Visiting growers on an ongoing basis.  Make sure letterhead goes with all letters to growers, faxes to growers and on newsletters making everything BDGA does more professional.  Be able to provide information to growers as they need, providing a good quality customer service when being approached by growers.  Be involved in local activities by using a BDGA banner or sponsorship of teams or events in the region showing BDGA logo.  Work with Bowen Healthier Partnership on some events they are running.</p>	IDO and BDGA members	Review 6 monthly
<b>Be the first point of contact for all growers and associates on relevant issues within the industry</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Build relationships with key stakeholders and industry bodies such as NRMW, Growcom, AUSVEG, HAL</li> <li>- Environmental groups</li> <li>- Government Bodies</li> <li>- Other growing regions</li> <li>- Know as many issues that impact on growers in this region</li> </ul>	Meet with as many industry bodies and key stakeholders as possible and continue to make contact with them on an ongoing basis to maintain a good flow of information through a good working relationship.	IDO and BDGA members	Ongoing

	- Any other groups or bodies			
<b>Providing one-on-one consultation service to growers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Regular meetings with growers</li> <li>- Gathering information on grower opinions, issues and needs in the Bowen and Gumlu region</li> <li>- Providing an ongoing flow of information to growers and industry</li> </ul>	<p>Meeting with growers on an ongoing basis building a flow of communication between BDGA and growers.</p> <p>Asking growers what their needs/issues are within the industry.</p> <p>Doing a needs analysis with growers gather vital information on trends within this region.</p> <p>Provide growers with solutions to their issues.</p> <p>Work towards getting growers to work closer together on some of these major issues.</p>	IDO and BDGA members	Ongoing
<b>To be a strong and cohesive organisation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Better communication</li> <li>- Structured Meetings</li> <li>- Promoting the benefits</li> <li>- More interaction with the community and the benefit of working together</li> <li>- Making people feel like they belong</li> </ul>	<p>Provide a good service through better customer service, and knowing what is going on within the industry at all times so that when growers need to know information on anything within the industry, BDGA can provide that information quickly and efficiently.</p> <p>Working towards more membership to build a stronger association and being a voice on major issues will bring more cohesion to the association.</p> <p>Making sure meetings are set regularly.</p> <p>Build better relationships with members</p>	IDO and BDGA members	Review 12 monthly

		through social events such as cricket day and other activities encourage a sense of belonging.		
<b>Being a voice for all growers on major issues that affect this industry</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Achieve all other goals</li> <li>- Build relationships and good networks within the industry</li> <li>- National Industry Recognition</li> <li>- Support all growers and industry strategy directions</li> <li>- Build a good relationship with all growers</li> <li>- Work on bringing growers together to be a voice within the industry</li> </ul>	<p>Working with growers, developing good relationships, promoting stability within the BDGA, encouraging working together on major issues, gaining recognition within the industry as an association.</p> <p>Having workshops on major issues with industry bodies giving growers the opportunity to put their point of view forward</p>	IDO and BDGA members	Review 12 monthly
<b>Providing input into industry initiatives and programs, strategic development and other industry organisations and associations strategy direction that</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Develop good interaction between with industry organisations, associations, government and community ensuring the relationships are strong</li> <li>- Collect information on the needs and issues of the industry in Bowen and Gumlu</li> <li>- Provide information flow between industry in the Bowen and Gumlu region and industry groups and government</li> </ul>	<p>Make contact with industry on all levels as much as possible to continue to build on the relationships already built</p> <p>Collect information form growers at one-on-one consultations, workshops, meetings, seminars etc</p> <p>Provide information to support the industry at all levels as required</p>	IDO & BDGA members	6 monthly

**is applicable to  
commodities  
based in the  
Bowen &  
Gumlu region**

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## Bowen District Growers Association Inc.

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28 November 2008

Richard Stephens  
Horticulture Australia  
Level 1, 50 Carrington Street  
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Dear Richard

We, the Management Committee, believe the following outcomes have been achieved directly linked with outcomes from project MT07059:

- Increased membership of Bowen District Growers Assoc (BDGA) through the liaison of the Industry Development Officer (IDO) with growers in the Bowen and Gumlu areas. There is no longer a functioning group of Growers in the Gumlu area, however Gumlu growers attend workshops organised by the IDO. We have one Gumlu grower as a member who represents Gumlu growers, and ongoing discussions with other growers in that area to become members. The BDGA represents growers in Bowen and Gumlu.
- There has been collaboration in research activities facilitated by the IDO, BDGA and the local DPI&F. These include the biodegradable plastic mulch trials, and participation in the "Alternative Fruit Fly Management and Market Access Project for Capsicums and Tomatoes" and more recently the project for sensitive waterways/nutrient management with DPI&F & DNR&W.
- Improved information flow and linkages between government departments, industry groups and associations and members has been possible with the IDO having organised workshops which include DNR&W, Immigration Dept, Growcom, Farmsafe and more. The IDO also attends meetings, workshops, seminars and conferences to remain up to date with industry issues, legislation changes and new developments within the industry.
- A regular newsletter is circulated to members and non members of BDGA highlighting developments within the Horticultural region and important information for growers in the Bowen and Gumlu region. This includes keeping updated with the current permits available for spraying etc.

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- Regular farm visits to members and non-members of BDGA has enabled the IDO to gather information re concerns, issues, and the needs facing the industry in this area, and from that implement appropriate workshops or research and provide information in relation to the issues faced.

We consider that the project is extremely worthwhile in continuing to meet the needs of the industry in this region through information flow and industry involvement. We will be continuing to work towards a more sustainable and cohesive region within the horticultural industry.

Regards,

Leanne Born  
On behalf of  
MT07059 Management Committee

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**Project: MT07059**

**Industry Development Officer Program Survey**

Hello my name is Dianne Day.

I am conducting a survey on the Industry Development Program on behalf of Bowen District Growers Assoc, the Industry Development Officer and Horticulture Australia.

This survey will be given to Horticulture Australia Limited, the Industry Development Officer and Management Committee to be a part of a project report to continue to gain funding for the future of the Industry Development Project.

Would you like to be involved by answering a few short questions?

If Yes – Okay first question

If No – thank you for your time.

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control and market access project, or Biodegradable Mulch Film trials  
or Grants and Funding initiatives?    Effective                      Not Effective

10.    Do you feel that there has been or will be a change of practices in your  
business due to the Industry Development Officer's support? Eg Reef  
Rescue Funding Initiative?            Yes                      No
11.    Do you support the need for an Industry Development Officer in this  
region?                                      Yes                      No

Thank you for your time – it has been much appreciated.