

**Publication and distribution
of 'Eyes on Potatoes' and
'Potatoes Australia'**

Richard Mulcahy
AUSVEG

Project Number: PT05034

PT05034

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Know-how for Horticulture™

**Publication of the bi-monthly potato grower
magazine *Potatoes Australia***

Jenan Taylor
AUSVEG Ltd

Project Number: PT05034

PT05034

Publication of the bi-monthly potato grower magazine

Potatoes Australia

Jenan Taylor, Editor, Potatoes Australia
AUSVEG Ltd

July 2009

The purpose of this final report is to communicate the successful delivery of project PT05034,
Publication of the bi-monthly potato grower magazine Potatoes Australia.

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Funded by:

- National Potato Levy
- HAL
- Advertising revenue

Report date: 1 July 2009

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Media Summary

Potatoes Australia is a 40-page, full-colour, bi-monthly magazine mailed directly to Australian potato growers, researchers, service providers, advertisers and other key members of the potato and vegetable industries.. This project is a continuation of the Eyes on Australia publication.

Launched in 2006, *Potatoes Australia* was initiated as the key vehicle for the dissemination of information on the Potatoes R&D program., Grower communication research showed that growers were low internet and email users and preferred to receive their information in printed format or face to face. Sixteen issues have now been published and mailed to growers.

Potatoes Australia magazine is the key print communication tool for the Australian potato industry. The magazine concept was developed in accordance with the National Potato Industry Communications strategy, which identified that a bi-monthly magazine, mailed direct to growers, was a fundamental tool for effective communication of outcomes for the Fresh and Processed Potato industry R&D programs. This was supported by a national telephone survey of potato growers, conducted as part of the Industry Communications Audit, which found huge support for a prospective potato magazine.

To manage the production of the magazine, a part-time editor was employed and advertising services were outsourced to the company Hyde Media.

To retain its position as the nation's leading potato-industry publication, *Potatoes Australia* underwent a series of elemental design changes in August 2008 to cement its branding and identity.

Potatoes Australia communicates updates and outcomes of levy-funded R&D projects. It also provides information about key industry figures and bodies, state organisations, researchers, grower profiles and achievements, import and export markets, the economy, and industry-related news.

Distributed in February, April, June, August, October and December, the magazine's full-colour presentation and high production values are well received by its readership, as demonstrated in reader surveys.

Objectives

The objectives of this project were to:

- Effectively communicate outcomes of the Potato R&D programs to National Potato Levy payers
- Provide growers with information about their R&D investment through the National Potato Levy
- Provide an effective, direct vehicle for communication of industry-specific information to growers
- Assist in improving recognition of the R&D program, as outlined in the National Potato Industry Communications Strategy, and raise the profile of the industry within non-growing audiences
- Assist in driving traffic to the National Potato Levy payer's website.

Results

- Feedback was sought through the mechanisms of a readership survey distributed with the magazine
- Readers indicated a high level of acceptance of the magazine, and a high level of interest in the R&D component of the publication

Methodology

Audience

The primary audience for *Potatoes Australia* magazine was Australian potato growers. Secondary audiences for the publication included industry bodies, supply chain partners, government representatives, research providers and prospective advertisers.

The design and style of the publication reflected the diversity of these audiences, and served to address the needs of each of these audiences.

Editorial/article collection

Potatoes Australia has been managed on a day-to-day basis by an in-house part-time editor.

Members of the editorial committee were:

Michael Hughes, Dept of Primary Industries (QLD)

Iain Kirkwood, Dept of Primary Industries and Water (TAS)

Rachel Lancaster, Dept of Agriculture and Food (WA)

Steven Page, Golden Sunrise Produce (SA)

David Antrobus, McCain Foods Australia (VIC)

The committee was used as a forum to develop initial key overarching themes of *Potatoes Australia*, as well as identify the key R&D priorities to be covered.

Editorial plans were developed by the magazine editor, and R&D stories were selected according to a range of criteria. These included:

- Relevance to target audience
- Timeliness of information and project outcomes
- Adherence to 85% R&D quota required from each issue of the magazine.

R&D projects selected for inclusion in *Potatoes Australia* were commissioned to freelance journalists. This was important to the success of the magazine, as it enabled the magazine to maintain a fresh voice. Aside from a few articles, pieces written directly by researchers are largely avoided, as it is feared that they stand being too technical for the target reader, and difficult to commission with consistency and reliability. Readability is an essential component of the magazine and fundamental to its success.

Journalists were instructed to work closely with researchers in developing the stories, and to

actively seek out examples of growers who had successfully implemented the research on-farm as case studies. To ensure technical accuracy, researchers were required to check all articles pertaining to their research before the magazine was printed.

All articles were edited for consistency of style and voice by the magazine editor.

R&D content

Across the 30-month duration of the project (16 issues), *Potatoes Australia* reported on more than 170 R&D related topics and projects funded through HAL.

R&D articles published in *Potatoes Australia* are made available to levy payers via the AUSVEG levy payers' website: www.ausveg.com.au/levy-payers/login.cfm

R&D articles published in *Potatoes Australia* promoted this website by listing the web address at the end of each article.

The website is available to all registered levy payers, but is password-protected from non-levy paying readers. This mechanism for archiving allows ongoing access to the articles. Readers can also download supporting material from the website, as provided by research providers. This may include downloadable final reports, research papers and images.

Back issues of *Potatoes Australia* are available for levy-payers to download from the grower portal of the AUSVEG website, ensuring that all issues of the magazine can be referenced. Fourteen per cent of survey respondents said they would read or download *Potatoes Australia* from the AUSVEG website.

Expansion of editorial coverage

In addition to R&D-specific articles, grower profiles were included and the magazine was used as a vehicle to communicate important industry news to levy payers, such as information about national and international conferences, Grower field trials, Vegetables Industry Awards 2007, 2008 and 2009, and professional development and leadership opportunities such as Nuffield Scholarships, Potato industry specific TAFE accredited training courses.

The April and June 2008 editions communicated the outcomes of the Potato advisory groups' annual meetings and profiled the advisory groups' members. In February 2009 the magazine also featured an in-depth piece on the new AUSVEG constitution detailing how the changes would affect levy payers and grower bodies. The aims of the above articles, was to help growers understand the internal processes of the IAC bodies and AUSVEG and also to appreciate how and why decisions and changes made impact on them.

The publication aims to include previews of newly-approved levy-funded projects to give growers a better indication of current projects and how these projects aim to benefit levy payers on- and off-farm.

Researchers, growers, and other industry representatives were regularly profiled and, in August 2008, the publication undertook a commitment to expand the participation of industry stake holders with the regular inclusion of their perspectives on issues that most affect the potato industry nationally and globally. This was to communicate ideas about the outcomes and information about the potato industry to growers nationally, regardless of whether their operation focused on processed, fresh or seed potatoes.

Expansion of news coverage commenced with the April 2008 edition with the aim of providing a wider view of matters directly impacting on the potato industry, and importantly, beyond the farm gate so that growers were aware of issues in the greater context of an increasingly globalised industry.

Revision of design elements

To retain its position as the nation's preeminent potato-industry publication, *Potatoes Australia* underwent a series of design updates to cement its branding and identity.

The following elements of the magazine were strengthened or introduced:

- **Typography**
 - Use of text as a design element
 - Use of images and visual elements
 - Improved readability
- **Layout**
 - Change to positioning of news stories in relation to introductory stories
 - Alteration to visual format of feature stories

Use of text as a design element

To encourage growers to read *Potatoes Australia* page spreads needed to be fresh, inviting and eye-catching. Headings, subheads, precedes, pull-quotes, pull-out panel have all been used to encourage greater readability as well as to create a point of difference for growers.

Images and other visual design elements

The cover images of *Potatoes Australia* aim to engage readers, and provide a human connection with the stories even where the focus feature is a data intensive R&D article. The June 2008, October 2008 and April 2009 editions were focused on subjects (Equipment Organisation, GM potatoes, Climate change, respectively) that do not lend themselves easily to human interest topics. While the covers did not feature the traditional grower image, the photographs thematically incorporated human effort in a bid to reinforce and promote deeper appreciation of the subject matter, while grabbing interest.

Why go to this effort? It's an area of production that readers may not consciously appreciate, but it promotes a professional and dependable style with exacting standards. It also promotes closer grower identification with the nature of the featured material.

This strategy is used throughout the publication regardless of whether the articles concern R&D, general news or feature profiles. To minimise the disturbance of this strategy, writers' and photographers by-lines occupy a space away from the story hook, or blend into the title design. Subheadings, pull-quotes and pull-out panels are used to further enhance the visual design.

Improved readability

The publication recognises that on one hand the labour force in the potato industry is ageing. These growers are seeing many changes at a rapid pace, and some might find the new globalised landscape daunting. After the initial read, these growers keep their copies of *Potatoes Australia* in the farm shed where it is within easy reach so they can return to articles time after time.

On the other hand, younger growers who choose to make their mark in the industry are better educated with a wider range of qualifications, skills and disciplines under their belts; they travel more; are more technology savvy and are not necessarily loyal to anyone communication medium or technique. They're as likely to go to farm online and other internet sources for a quick scan of what's happening from day to day, but for in-depth information and knowledge resources they are inclined to use colour magazines and journals

In order to provide a balance between the needs of the older and newer generation of growers, and retain their interests, the magazine must be fresh, dynamic, retain a number of easily recognisable elements, but also remain an effortless but engaging read.

Articles must remain simply worded and to the point, tables, picture captions and other meaning signifiers must be interesting and promote at a glance understanding of material that could be potentially difficult to absorb. Growers are time poor, so it's crucial that when they do commit to reading *Potatoes Australia*, they receive as much information, from as little effort, as possible.

There are a lot competing demands on potato growers including, the move towards demand based farming systems which calls for farmers to think about how they can create niche markets for fresh and processed produce, as well as enhance supply chain relationships. They are competing for a globalised market in a context of having to think about sustainability, the use of chemicals, pests and diseases, and how to plan for the future of the once traditional family farm.

The design, visual and colour elements used in *Potatoes Australia* reflects the dynamism and vibrancy of the local and global potato industries. However, it has a friendly, relaxed style in order to guide older generation growers through the latest information.

Advertising

As a means of securing the long-term future of the publication, it was decided that the project would need to solicit advertising as a means of additional funding. However, due to the nature of the publication as a non-commercial, industry publication it should only ever be anticipated that advertising would provide supplementary funds, and should not expect to become self-sufficient.

The project continued to use the services of Hyde Media to manage the sale of advertising in *Potatoes Australia*. Feedback from advertisers indicated that the publication is well liked, and a number of advertisers have committed to *Potatoes Australia* as part of their regular advertising campaigns.

Advertisers included:

- Nufarm
- Dupont
- Crop Care
- Bayer
- Dow Agrosiences
- Syngenta
- Hardi
- Nelson Australia
- Vin Rowe
- Incitec Pivot
- Chep

While it is anticipated that advertising revenue will demonstrate modest growth over time, it is important to recognise that agricultural advertising is seasonal, and fluctuations in advertising revenue are common. This would make it unrealistic to expect complete cost recovery for the production of the magazine in the longer term.

Distribution and Management of mailing data

Distribution of *Potatoes Australia* was achieved through two main avenues. The primary distribution method for the magazine was via direct mail to readers. The direct mailing database consisted of 2,100 recipients which is broken down state-by-state as follows:

	NSW/ACT	QLD/NT	SA	Tas	Vic	WA	Overseas	Total
Total recipients	461	298	260	357	491	209	34	2,110
Percentage	21.84 %	14.12%	12.32%	16.91%	23.27%	9.9%	1.61%	100%

Changes to the data base were collated by AUSVEG, and updated data was regularly sent to the mail-house based at AT&M Marketing for mailing. The second avenue for distribution of *Potatoes Australia* was via bulk delivery of the magazine to various key industry collection points such as industry events (including conferences and tradeshows) and advertising representatives.

Evaluation and measurement of outcomes

The success of this project was dependent on the continued acceptance of the publication by growers. Feedback was solicited from growers via a reply-paid readership survey that was returned to the editor. This survey was distributed with the magazine in October 2007 and October 2008. (See Reader Survey attached)

The purpose of the survey was to collect both qualitative and quantitative data from readers. The readership survey solicited feedback from grower and non-grower readers, providing a rounded industry perspective on the role of the publication within the Australian potato industry.

Key Survey Results for 2008

Response rate:

- 99 responses
- 71% growers
- 29% other (including researchers, advertisers, industry representatives)
- Overall response rate approximately 4.95% of total distribution list.

Age of readers

18-24: -0

25-34: - 13

35-44: - 29

45-54: - 17

55+: - 40

How many people reader each copy of *Potatoes Australia*?

Average number of survey readers per issue = 2.3 people

Extrapolated across entire mailout = 2.3 x 2,100

= 4,830 people per issue

Identify segments you most enjoy reading

Grower profiles: 70

R&D articles: 55

Economic forecast: 33

News: 55

Processed Potatoes R&D: 43

Fresh potatoes articles: 48

CHIPS: 33

Spotlight on viruses/pests: 64

State reports: 42

Requested topics

The survey gave readers the opportunity to nominate which topics they wanted to receive more information about. Ways to improve profitability and efficiency; Sustainability and Environmental; Biosecurity; Equipment and Technology issues were nominated as being the topics that they were most concerned about.

Thirty-seven per cent of respondents wanted more information about a national potato marketing levy and how it would affect them.

Website usage

Fourteen per cent of respondents said they would read or download *Potatoes Australia* from the AUSVEG website.

Grower comments

“Very good reading and learning.”

“Keep up the quality.”

“Very important to keep this magazine as a resource for the potato industry.”

“Great magazine.”

“Good read, good photos.”

“Keep up the good work.”

“Great magazine, very interesting.”

“Doing a great job; now hopefully growers appreciate it and read it.”

“Keep up the good work.”

“Enjoy the magazine, like the grower profiles.”

“Easy to read, a good balance of articles and advertisements.”

“Would like to know how to access more information; I don’t use a computer.”

Discussion

While the results of the reader survey and the willingness of growers to be involved with the magazine through R&D case studies and growers profiles indicate that there continues to be strong support and acceptance of *Potatoes Australia* as the primary communication tool for the industry, there are limitations as to what can be achieved as a result of the magazine's distribution.

- **Uptake of R&D**

While *Potatoes Australia* can actively report on R&D outcomes and direct readers to suitable resources relating to R&D projects, the publication cannot be held responsible for the acceptance or uptake of R&D by growers. Where possible, the magazine showcases examples of growers who have worked cooperatively with researchers on R&D projects, and have them provide a grower's perspective for how levy-funded projects benefit growers on-farm. However, it is unrealistic to expect *Potatoes Australia* to become a vehicle for measuring R&D uptake and implementation. Furthermore, the publication has limited access to the projects investment list.

- **Selection of editorial material**

It is important to feature R&D projects and editorial that encourages growers to think beyond the farm-gate. Australian growers operate in a global marketplace and *Potatoes Australia* magazine has reflected this by including articles that encourage growers to think beyond the issues of production and look at other important areas, such as leadership and people development, and market development. To maintain relevancy and interest, especially for the newer generation of potato growers, the magazine will need to look at expanding the topics list. In order to do this, it would be helpful to have more grower representation on the Editorial Committee, which since the magazine's inception has consisted largely of researchers and other industry representatives, some of whom have grower experience, but who might be coloured by their involvement in other areas.

- **Distribution issues**

The magazine has a strong mail data base, but increasingly receives distribution enquiries from non-levy paying growers and industry stake holders at a local, national and international level. While it is acknowledged that the magazine is published for the benefit of levy-payers, the sheer numbers of queries received indicates there might come a time when the question of a potential subscription format might need to be considered without compromising the integrity of the publication.

Recommendations

Based on the project feedback, it is evident that there continues to be strong support for ongoing investment in *Potatoes Australia* magazine. It is on this basis that the following recommendations are made:

- That *Potatoes Australia* continue to be used as the primary vehicle for communicating with Australian vegetable growers about outcomes of the vegetable R&D program
- That *Potatoes Australia* continue to be supported through the National Potato Levy as an industry publication, supported by supplementary income derived from advertising
- That *Potatoes Australia* looks at IAC and or grower representation on the Editorial Committee to ensure that relevant information makes its way to growers.

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Reader Survey

WIN a Garrison industrial small-framed generator from Vin Rowe, valued at \$829!

Just return this survey to AUSVEG before Friday 14 November, 2008, to go into the draw. To be eligible for the prize, you must complete the survey below and return it by the due date in the enclosed postage paid envelope to AUSVEG.

Name:

Company:

Address:

Suburb:

State: Postcode:

Contact phone number:

Email:

Please tick here if you do not wish to be added to our database.

Are you a:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Grower | <input type="checkbox"/> Researcher |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Researcher | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry representative |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other | |

Your age group:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 18-24 | <input type="checkbox"/> 45-54 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 25-34 | <input type="checkbox"/> 55 + |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 35-44 | |

Are you a member of a state-based grower association?

- | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Association Name | |

Please list your crops other than potatoes

.....
.....
.....

If you grow other crops, would you like to receive *Vegetables Australia*?

- | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|

On average how many people read your copy of *Potatoes Australia*?

.....

Continued over page



Reader Survey Continued



Which stories do you most enjoy reading?

- Grower profiles
- R&D articles
- News
- Economic outlook
- Processed Potatoes R&D stories
- Fresh Potato issues
- 'Chips'
- Spotlight on viruses/diseases
- State reports
- Other.....

What topics would you like to receive more information about?

- Ways to improve profitability & efficiency
- Equipment/technology
- Marketing/promotion
- Business & finance strategies
- Tax/finance
- International news & trends
- Sustainable & environmental agriculture
- Bio-security issues
- Other.....

Have you been involved in improved farm practices that other growers would be interested in reading about? Please provide details.

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Do you use content/ideas sourced from *Potatoes Australia* in your work practices?

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.....

Would you like more information about a marketing levy for the potato industry?

- Yes No

Would you read or download *Potatoes Australia* from the AUSVEG website?

- Yes No

Are you a registered user of the grower portal on the AUSVEG website?

- Yes No

If not, would you like to be registered? (Registration is free)

- Yes No

Are you aware that *Potatoes Australia* magazine is partially funded through the National Potato Levy?

- Yes No

Do you have any other comments about *Potatoes Australia*?

.....

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.....

.....

Thank you for your time.



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advertising rate card 2008

the magazine for potato growers

Potatoes Australia informs and connects Australia's potato industry with the latest news, technical information, trends, industry issues and grower stories presented in an easy to read style.

Produced by peak industry body AUSVEG, *Potatoes Australia* reaches potato growers bi-monthly, in addition to the *Potatoes Australia Review* which is circulated annually in November.

distribution

- Approximately 3000 copies distributed nationally.
- Direct mailed to all potato levy payers.
- Direct mailed to associated industry bodies such as consultants, state agriculture departments, agronomists, research institutes, private advisers, decision makers and media.

booking and material deadlines

Issue	Booking Deadline	Material Deadline	Publication Date
February 2008	11 January	25 January	15 February
April 2008	12 March	25 March	15 April
June 2008	12 May	23 May	15 June
August 2008	11 July	25 July	15 August
October 2008	12 September	26 September	15 October
December 2008	14 November	28 November	15 December

advertising rates

Advert	Casual (\$)	3x rate (\$)	6x rate (\$)
Full page colour	1590	1470	1399
Half page colour	930	860	818
Third page colour	730	675	642
Quarter page colour	530	490	466

Inserts available. Details supplied on request. Please note GST is not included in above rates. Agency commission 10%.

preferred positions

Inside front cover	30%	Outside back cover	30%
Inside back cover	20%	Other specified	10%

potatoesaustralia

advertising rate card 2008

mechanical specifications

Advert	Trim size (mm)	Bleed size (mm)	Type area (mm)
Full page	297 depth x 210 width	303 depth x 216 width	287 depth x 200 width
Half page horizontal	147 depth x 210 width	150 depth x 216 width	137 depth x 200 width
Half page vertical	297 depth x 105 width	303 depth x 108 width	287 depth x 92 width
Third page horizontal	97 depth x 210 width	100 depth x 216 width	87 depth x 200 width
Quarter page horizontal	70 depth x 210 width	73 depth x 216 width	60 depth x 200 width

The above rates are for space only and do not include any alterations to supplied advertisements. They assume print-ready artwork is supplied to the specifications listed below. Please note type area is constrained to the margins of the magazine content layout. If you require ads to be designed, contact at+m integrated marketing on 03 6334 3577 for quotes on artwork. For diagrams on advertisement placement and sizing, phone at+m integrated marketing on 03 6334 3577 or email info@atmmarketing.com.au.

file specifications



- Digital files are acceptable if produced in or saved back to Quark XPress 6.5, Adobe InDesign CS2, Adobe Illustrator CS2 and Adobe Photoshop CS2. Software not listed is not acceptable.
- Include all TIFF and EPS files as well as all fonts used in your artwork.
- at+m integrated marketing is a Macintosh based publisher so PC fonts are not compatible with their system, please outline fonts in this instance.
- All images must be a minimum of 300dpi and colour images must be CMYK.
- Allow a 3mm bleed on full page ads where necessary.
- Finished artwork is preferably to be supplied in PDF format. To supply material as PDF use the 'Press Optimised' job setting when distilling. Ensure all fonts and images are embedded.
- Digital files can be supplied on DVD or CD to at+m integrated marketing, 150 Cimitiere St, Launceston (PO Box 1489) TAS 7250, or emailed to info@atmmarketing.com.au
- Finished artwork can also be sent through the 'Quickcut' pre-flight and pdf delivery system. Specifications can be found under the publication *Potatoes Australia*.

advertising representative

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advertising rate card 2009

the magazine for potato growers

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- Direct mailed to all potato levy payers.
- Direct mailed to associated industry bodies such as consultants, state agriculture departments, agronomists, research institutes, private advisers, decision makers and media.

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August 2009	13 July	27 July	17 August
October 2009	11 September	28 September	15 October
December 2009	16 November	30 November	15 December

advertising rates

Advert	Casual (\$)	3x rate (\$)	6x rate (\$)
Full page colour	1670	1545	1470
Half page colour	1002	927	882
Third page colour	668	618	588
Quarter page colour	551	510	485

Inserts available. Details supplied on request. Please note GST is not included in above rates. Agency commission 10%.

preferred positions

Inside front cover	30%	Outside back cover	30%
Inside back cover	20%	Other specified	10%



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