

**Leadership development
enabling growers to attend
national greenhouse
conference**

Stephen Goodwin
Australian Hydroponic &
Greenhouse Association

Project Number: VG06142

VG06142

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Purpose of the Report:

This report describes the outcome of a leadership development strategy conducted in association with the national industry conference by the Australian Hydroponic & Greenhouse Association in Launceston, 24-27 June 2007 for the protected cropping industry.

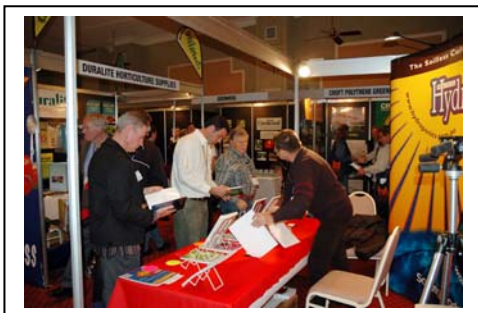
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Conference delegates taking advantage of a break to network and visit trade booths

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Summary

A biennial national conference for the greenhouse and hydroponic industry is conducted by the Australian Hydroponic & Greenhouse Association (AHGA). In 2007 it was held in Launceston, Tasmania. The national conference has grown to become a major event, but the single most important measure of success, grower and industry leader attendance, has previously not met expectations. There are a number of possible reasons for this. Many of the large number of greenhouse vegetable businesses are family operated and the growers have never considered the benefits of conference attendance as a priority and the costs associated with travel, accommodation and registration have also been a deterrent. Project VG06142 *Leadership development enabling growers to attend (a) national greenhouse* conference, was designed to address this shortcoming by providing encouragement to greenhouse producers and industry leaders to attend the conference and to provide networking opportunities with other industry stakeholders, sharing of personal experiences and the opportunity to meet and discuss relevant topics with key researchers, growers and retailers. In addition, out of its own funds the AHGA also awarded encouragement scholarships to four promising full-time members of the industry in Australia, as a means of attracting future industry leaders to this important educational forum.

An evaluation survey conducted after the conference demonstrated that this approach has been successful and it is anticipated that the AHGA will submit an application for further grower support for the 2009 national conference to be conducted in Sydney. In the light of this success, HAL might consider similar initiatives to enhance grower attendance at other horticultural industry national conferences. To value add on this initiative, the AHGA Board will consider reducing its registration fee for AHGA grower members and increasing its fee for trade exhibitors at the 2009 national conference to offset this lost revenue. The AHGA Board will also consider new initiatives in its conference program structure for 2009 to provide greater opportunities for growers to interact and to participate in presentations on practical and technical matters and to broaden the scope of the program to embrace alternative crops, current specialty crops and varying technical levels for new industry entrants.

Introduction

The Australian Hydroponic & Greenhouse Association conducts a biennial national conference for the protected cropping industry. In June 2007 the 9th consecutive biennial national conference was held in Launceston, Tasmania at the Hotel Grand Chancellor. The theme of the conference was “*Challenge the Future*”. Presentations and workshops, plus an extensive trade exhibition run concurrently, were directed towards the issues of water, sustainability, high productivity and production efficiency, modernisation and expansion, and the demand for safe, quality produce.

The overall objective of the biennial conference is to provide greenhouse vegetable producers with a forum for the dissemination of research information, the presentation of core educational topics at basic and advanced levels relevant to hydroponic and greenhouse production and pest and disease management, and

showcase grower experiences focused on improvements to productivity and quality in the commercial and retail sectors. In addition, growers are able to meet suppliers of the latest greenhouse hydroponic systems and computerised technology, as well as allied products and technical information services, at the trade exhibition run concurrently.

As the most significant activity of the AHGA, the national conference has grown to become a major event with in excess of 300 attendees, but the single most important measure of success, grower and industry leader attendance, has previously not met expectations. There are a number of possible reasons for this. Many of the large number of smaller greenhouse vegetable businesses that dominate the industry are family operated and the growers have never considered the benefits of conference attendance or baulk at the costs associated with travel, accommodation and registration. Project VG06142 was designed to address this shortcoming by providing encouragement to greenhouse producers and industry leaders to attend the conference. In addition, out of its own funds, the AHGA in 2007 also awarded encouragement scholarships to four promising full-time members of the industry in Australia, as a means of attracting future industry leaders to this important educational forum.

Methods and activities

To be eligible for support from project VG06142, applicants must have qualified in one of the following categories:

- Conference fresh face
- Industry leader

They must also have been a bona-fide fulltime grower in the greenhouse vegetable industry. A **fresh face** must have been verified by the AHGA as never having previously attended a biennial national conference. An **industry leader** must have been verified by the AHGA as a main contact for the hydroponic and greenhouse industry in his/her region.

Interested persons were requested to apply for a grant and these were considered by members of the AHGA conference committee. A copy of the application form is in Appendix 1.

A post conference evaluation reported on in final report for VG06042, was conducted of all delegates, and a survey of recipients of leadership development grants was conducted separately at a later date. Although feedback from recipients was a requirement of a grant, none had been received up to the time this report was due. The survey form mentioned was prepared in an effort to gather the required information. A copy of the evaluation survey form can be found in Appendix 2. In the survey, the AHGA sought to identify the benefits to recipients of attending the conference and their understanding of the role of and level of satisfaction with the AHGA as its national representative body. Interest in attending future conferences and networking opportunities was also canvassed. The survey attempted to drill down into recipients' reaction to the program and whether it was beneficial. A copy of the program is attached in Appendix 3. This included the workshops, which were conducted on selected topics considered to be areas of strong interest to industry. A substantial trade exhibition is run concurrently with each conference and the AHGA sought the reaction of recipients to it.

There was also opportunity for recipients to provide their own insights. All of this information will prove useful to the AHGA when it sits down to plan the next biennial national conference to be held in Sydney in July 2009.

Evaluation

Thirty one grants were awarded to growers and industry leaders (Appendix 4) from all five eligible States, including 28 fresh faces and three industry leaders (Table 1), and 20 recipients responded to the evaluation survey. Tasmania was excluded, being the home State for the conference and the relatively minor travel expense.

Summary of responses to conference survey

There was a strong positive response from all respondents concerning their experience at the conference. All respondents believed that they had benefitted from their attendance at the conference both as a grower/industry leader and in their understanding of the industry as a whole, with 82% giving a strong to very strong response. The conference also provided 100% of respondents with an understanding of the role of the AHGA as their national Association and of the benefits of membership, although surprisingly only 59% believed strongly to very strongly that the AHGA adequately represented their interests at the conference. I am not sure how to interpret this given the level of positive response overall.

Table 1. Summary of leadership grant recipients who attended the AHGA national conference, Launceston, June 2007.

State	Fresh Face	Industry Leader
Queensland	4	1
NSW	8	
Victoria	11	
South Australia	2	1
Western Australia	3	1
Total	28	3

Every respondent had a positive networking experience at the conference with 75% having a strong to very strong experience. Interestingly, although industry leaders were encouraged to ‘spread the word’ amongst their fellow growers after the conference, in fact every respondent, including the ‘fresh faces’, commented that they had spoken to other industry colleagues in their area about the conference. Eighty one per cent responded enthusiastically to this question, implying that they had given it a glowing reference.

The AHGA attempts to provide an informative, stimulating and practically useful speaking program for growers at each conference, so it was interesting to read the responses to questions on this topic. Ninety three per cent of respondents found the program highly interesting, but strangely only 60 and 67% were as effusive in their praise for the level of stimulation and practical usefulness, respectively. Ninety two percent of respondents found the talks delivered at an understandable level, while the same found them neither too basic, nor too advanced.

Two workshops were conducted during the program on topics of industry interest and a third was held in association with the AHGA AGM to stimulate growers and other industry stakeholders to participate in the discussion:

1. Minor pesticide use – GAP analysis & further pesticide needs, plus a presentation on a new APVMA initiative for reduced-risk pesticides.
2. Marketing opportunities for hydroponic produce – where are they and how can you get to them.
3. Future Directions – discussion on future models for the administration and representation of the protected cropping industry (held in conjunction with the AHGA AGM).

Both program workshops were facilitated by experts in the field and were considered by the AHGA to be highly productive. The vast majority of grant recipients attended the workshops. The Future Directions workshop involved a panel representing the different sectors of the protected cropping industry e.g. vegetables, floriculture, herbs, greens (lettuce/Asian veg) as the basis for general discussion. A highly productive discourse ensued that provided a platform for further possible industry action by the AHGA.

The hydroponic and greenhouse industry makes the greatest use of technology of any area of horticultural production in Australia. As such, the trade exhibition provides growers with an opportunity to see the latest technology and to network not only with exhibitors and technical specialists of hardware products, but also with providers of other services such as financial, pest and disease management and consultants. The trade exhibition featuring approximately 40 exhibitors, received favourable feedback. All respondents found it interesting, with 93% learning about new products of interest to them and of new practices and relevant information. This was a great outcome and it concurs with the informal feedback received from the trade exhibitors who reported a heightened level of positive interest from potential new clients. The AHGA attributes this to the increased grower attendance directly resulting from this leadership development project (VG06142). During the negotiation between the AHGA and HAL for this project it was mentioned that it may need to be continued for two to three biennial conferences to maximize its effect. There is clear evidence that it had a positive impact on the 2007 conference that should encourage HAL to provide similar support to the 2009 and 2011 national conferences.

In addition to the survey, respondents were also provided with an opportunity to comment on any matter that interested them. Interestingly, only two respondents declined this opportunity and some valuable comments were made.

Comments

1. One respondent suggested that the conference should be free to growers. This is a radical suggestion, but one worthy of serious consideration. Editorial note: At its next meeting, the AHGA Board will consider making the 2009 conference available to bona fide growers at a reduced registration cost, while trade exhibitors should be requested to pay more for their stands and sponsorship as an offset for lost revenue. It will also consider an approach to HAL for a further leadership development grant to assist growers with the cost of travel.
2. Three respondents admitted to being 'beginners' or 'not yet in the industry', one saying he had not seen a greenhouse setup prior to attending the conference. Their general reaction was that the conference was very beneficial and informative, but perhaps too advanced for them. The suggestion was made for consideration to be given to attracting more of their beginner level to future conferences and to attempt to cater for their needs in the program. Note: The AHGA structures its program into four concurrent rooms with eight speaking sessions. It attempts to cater for all levels. Perhaps we could program a number of presentations on structures, hydroponics, pest and disease management at the beginner level in one of the streams e.g. consider topics such as availability of government grants or industry subsidies to help with initial setup costs, where do you start and who can help?
3. There was a general theme of more involvement for and by growers in some of the comments e.g. 'growers need the chance to meet more growers who grow similar crops', 'suggest identify crop grown on name badge (Ed note – perhaps colour code crop type e.g. green – vegetables, red – flowers, yellow – herbs and blue – leafy greens, so it could read John Smith, Townsville, QLD, **Green spot**, tomatoes), 'growers and industry leaders to have more opportunities to provide feedback on where industry is heading and suggestions for future directions', 'there needs to be more emphasis on farm visits or more presentations from growers. Science and technology is good, but hearing first hand from growers with experience is priceless'
4. One comment strongly supported open forums (see comment on workshops in above report) at the conference, in particular on developing best practice IPM and environmental performance such as low water use and water recycling. Also establishing and marketing an industry '*green credential*' should be considered.
5. From an industry educator at East Gippsland TAFE – 'Enjoyed conference immensely (friendly, well organised, very stimulating and beneficial). Found conference attendance valuable to an educator because it keeps him/her up to date with current industry directions, informs on new technology, connects with industry and leaders.'

6. Overall very positive comments were made concerning the AHGA. These included:
 - ‘Congratulate the AHGA for presenting a conference with major meaning and learning for growers, both Australia and NZ wide and other areas
 - ‘Complemented on a wonderful dinner
 - ‘Complemented on bus trip (farm tour) – learnt and comprehended items directly attributable to growing operations
 - ‘Although main aim was the conference program, was able to order a new irrigation controller from a trade exhibit
 - ‘Found program was rewarding and useful, especially from a networking point of view
 - ‘Conference was well organise with a good range of topics and speakers
 - ‘Farm tour was of great benefit, especially the capsicum grower (New Life)
 - ‘Have been able to consider alternative crops with information/ideas provided
 - ‘Been attending since 2003 and finding conference improving each time (industry leader, WA)
 - ‘Networking opportunities priceless
 - ‘Learnt easy-to-use techniques and relationship with marketing, particularly from UK presenter
 - ‘Great networking opportunity and useful time to canvass ideas in relation to growing
 - ‘Good opportunity to meet people and make industry contacts
 - ‘Information gave me a better understanding of industry.’

7. Finally – Conference focussed on big crops – tomatoes etc. More focus on speciality crops would benefit! (Ed: Might challenge that one.)

Implications

If I were to suggest a simple goal for future national conferences it would be ‘*To attract more growers*’. Trade exhibitors go along to meet and hopefully do business with growers at a not insubstantial cost to them. The suggestion that the conference should be free to growers needs serious consideration by the AHGA Board. The AHGA clearly runs a successful biennial national conference and there is evidence that it is continuing to improve. The national conference is conducted for the benefit of growers, both to learn, to network, to make valuable trade contacts and to keep abreast of new technology. So the AHGA and HAL should be endeavouring to continue to explore avenues to attract more growers and in particular new growers to each

conference. The AHGA Board prides itself in operating a fiscally prudent conference budget, but essential costs have to be met. It will consider the suggestion of providing conference registration to AHGA grower members at a *reduced cost* along with an increase in the cost of trade stands to offset the above grower concession. Some have already indicated their willingness to support such a move, but it needs wider consultation.

Informal feedback from trade exhibitors reported a heightened level of positive interest from potential new clients at the 2007 national conference. Businesses say this is what they come to a conference for. The AHGA attributes this to the increased grower attendance directly resulting from this leadership development project (VG06142).

The strong response from all growers to the question about post conference discussions with growers in their area was encouraging. This should increase awareness and level of interest in future conferences amongst growers, a positive outcome of this leadership development partnership between the AHGA and HAL.

There were a number of interesting comments made about the potential introduction of a beginners' component into the program. There was also a suggestion for a future workshop – an open forum discussion to develop an industry EMS involving environmental and IPM best practices that could be used as a *green* marketing credential. A point was made that the conference caters for the big crops such as tomatoes. This is a not uncommon observation, albeit misplaced. Much of the program is on topics of generic interest and application. However the AHGA Board will consider possibly restructuring its program to identify some special interest areas including speciality crops and beginners instruction as mentioned.

There were comments about the need for more opportunities for grower to grower interactions, possibly presentations from experienced growers, forums for grower feedback to direct future actions etc. There were also many positive comments about networking opportunities currently being provided at the conference. A national conference cannot be everything to everyone. The AHGA aims to conduct a conference providing as much as possible to as many people as possible, while maintaining its high standards. Perhaps with some fine tuning we can further increase the attractiveness of this conference to growers in Australia.

Recommendations

1. On the basis of the high level of satisfaction measured against all performance indicators amongst fresh face and industry leader recipients of leadership development grants, and on the positive feedback from trade exhibitors at the 2007 national conference, the AHGA is convinced that this new initiative (VG06142) was an unqualified success. The AHGA therefore will be submitting to HAL an application for a further leadership development project for the 2009 national conference.

2. That HAL considers similar initiatives to enhance grower attendance at other horticultural industry national conferences

3. That the AHGA Board considers reducing its registration fee for AHGA grower members and increasing its fee for trade exhibitors at the 2009 national conference

4. That the AHGA Board discusses new initiatives in its conference program structure to provide greater opportunities for growers to interact and to participate in presentations on practical and technical matters

5. That the AHGA Board discusses new initiatives in its conference program structure to broaden its scope to embrace alternative crops, current specialty crops and varying technical levels for new industry entrants

Acknowledgements

Thanks are due to Saskia Blanch, AHGA Administrator, for her efforts in assisting with the development of the project, in establishing contact with grower groups around Australia to alert them to its availability and in liaising with growers and industry leaders in the application and evaluation survey phases. HAL and the national vegetable levy administered by Ausveg are thanked for their financial support, without which it would not have been possible to conduct the conference and continue the high standard set by previous conferences. The AHGA would particularly like to thank HAL for the new initiative expressed in this project. The leadership development grant enabled many more growers to experience the conference for the first time. Hopefully with further funding opportunities for the same purpose the AHGA will be able to claim resounding support from growers in the future.



Conference delegates in modern tomato greenhouse on farm tour near Devonport.

Appendices

Appendix 1. Application form for leadership grant



Moraitis Hydroponics 2007 Australian Hydroponic & Greenhouse Industry National Conference

GROWER TRAVEL SUBSIDY

The Moraitis Hydroponics 2007 National Conference of the Australian Hydroponic & Greenhouse Industry will be held at Hotel Grand Chancellor, Launceston, 24-27 June 2007.

To encourage up to 40 approved growers and industry leaders to attend the conference, travel and accommodation subsidies are available. The subsidies will be restricted to conference fresh faces and regional industry leaders.

Knowledge and ideas gained by growers attending the conference will enable them to achieve improvements in management decisions in crop production and crop protection, as well as environmental control, systems management, post-harvest handling techniques and investment and modernisation decisions.

The result will be improved standards of greenhouse technology, productivity, product quality and profitability.

Subsidies: Based on available discounted airfares to Launceston and the cost of accommodation for three days the AHGA and HAL offer the following subsidies:

- \$300 for grower delegates from NSW, SA and Vic
- \$400 for those from Queensland and Western Australia.

Three subsidies each will be offered to WA, Queensland and Victoria with the balance divided between the SA and NSW industries, bearing in mind that there are two greenhouse regions in NSW; the North Coast and the Sydney Basin.

The AHGA will be sole arbiter.

Eligibility: To be eligible for financial support, applicants must qualify in one of the following categories:

- **Conference fresh face;** A person must be a bona-fide fulltime grower in the greenhouse vegetable industry and verified by the AHGA as never having previously attended a biennial national conference
- **Industry leader;** A person must be a main contact for the hydroponic and greenhouse industry in their region and verified by the AHGA as such.
- Recipients to provide formal feedback to the AHGA and their regional grower groups on the subsidy and the conference following the event. For example, what stood out, what they learned, what they could now put into practice, suggestions/recommendations for future AGHA events, etc.
- Recipients to receive an annual subscription for the Soilless Newsletter, where they will be kept up to date with industry events, information and news on significant issues and AHGA activities such as the introduction of bumblebees for crop pollination, proposed restrictions on calcium nitrate, biosecurity threats, etc
- Applications should be received by the AHGA and postmarked no later than 1/6/07.



MORAITIS HYDROPONICS 2007 NATIONAL CONFERENCE
GROWER TRAVEL SUBSIDY APPLICATION FORM

Name

Company

Position/Occupation

Address

.....

City/TownState.....Postcode

Country.....

Phone No: Fax No:

Email:

Date of Birth:.....

Crops grown:.....

System type;

Industry affiliations:.....

.....

Location:

- *Please describe the benefits you believe this subsidy and conference will have on you, those around you, and your work environment or research:*
- *Please list any industry activities in which you are or have been involved and describe your contribution:*
- *Please list any leadership positions and experiences you have been involved with and describe your responsibilities in each:*
- *The Fresh Face & Industry Leader Travel Subsidy offered by the Australian Hydroponic & Greenhouse Association and HAL are provided on an equal opportunity basis. No decision made in awarding this funding is based on race, colour, religion, national origin, disability, sex, age, sexual orientation or ancestry.*

Submit to: The Administrator, AHGA, PO Box 538, Narrabeen, NSW 2101
administrator@ahga.org.au

Applications sent by post should be postmarked no later than 1 June 2007

Appendix 2.

MORAITIS HYDROPONICS 2007

Australian Hydroponic & Greenhouse Industry National Conference

Conference Detailed Program

Day 1 – Sunday 24th June 2007

Time	Topic	Presenter
1.00 – 5.00pm	Trade exhibition open to public & delegates	
1.00 – 6.00pm	Registration	
1.30 -	Official opening trade exhibition, present medallions to sponsors	
5.15 – 7.00pm	AHGA AGM, discussion on future directions of the industry	
7.00 – 8.00pm	Welcome cocktails	

Concurrent presentations. Thanks to those who returned the preference survey, which helped greatly in laying out the sessions. You have a choice of 9 out of 20 presentations. **Hints:** Decide your program early and start by first choosing your priority topics which are only presented once (marked 1 of 1). Also, don't just choose the first presentation of topics with multiple presentations, a later slot may suit better and have fewer attendees. You will probably need to cycle through your options in order to make your final choices.

Day 2 – Monday 25th June 2007

Time	Topic	Presenter
8:00 – 9.00am	Registration & trade exhibition open	
9.00 – 9.30am	Welcome & official opening – Senator the Hon. Eric Abetz	
9.30 – 10.15am	Presentation of awards and scholarships Short presentation by major sponsor	
10.15 – 11.00am	Morning Tea	
11.00 – 11.45 am	Keynote speech 1 – Changing times, changing trends: a snapshot of the 21 st Century consumer and worker	Mark McCrindle
11.45 – 12.30pm	Keynote speech 2 – Generic promotion for fresh produce does work	Veronica Richardson
12.30 – 12.45pm	Short presentations by gold sponsors	
12.45 – 2.00pm	Lunch	
2.00 – 2.40pm	Concurrent Lectures, Session A - (# 1 of 9)	
Room 1	Successful IPM in practice (# 1 of 2)	Horst Sjostedt
Room 2	Opportunities from new crops - making the most of greenhouse and hydroponic horticulture (# 1 of 3)	Jeremy Badgery-Parker
Room 3	Automation developments and possibilities in packhouse facilities in the future (# 1 of 2)	Rene de Vos
Room 4	Retail value adding - benefits for you and your client (# 1 of 2)	Steven Palmer

2.50 – 3.30pm	Concurrent Lectures, Session B - (# 2 of 9)	
Room 1	Where IS the best place to grow greenhouse crops in Australia ? (# 1 of 2)	Graeme Smith
Room 2	Fundamental management of hydroponic systems (# 1 of 3)	Rick Donnan
Room 3	Marketing greenhouse vegetables in Alberta, Canada (# 1 of 1)	Joe Doef
Room 4	Bumbles in the driving seat - IPM the NZ way	Terril Marais
3.30 – 4.15pm	Afternoon Tea	
4.15 – 4.55pm	Workshop # 1 (# 1 of 2)	
Room 1	Minor pesticide use – GAP analysis & further pesticide needs, plus a new APVMA initiative for reduced-risk pesticides	Facilitator: Peter dal Santo
5.05 – 5.45pm	Concurrent Lectures, Session C - (# 3 of 9)	
Room 1	Effective use of heat buffer systems (# 1 of 1)	Ben van Onna
Room 2	Opportunities from new crops - making the most of greenhouse and hydroponic horticulture (# 2 of 3)	Jeremy Badgery-Parker
Room 3	Overseas disease threats to Australian ornamental and vegetable hydroponic crops - what to look out for (# 1 of 2)	Len Tesoriero
Room 4	Hydroponic heated tomato growing is top sport! (# 1 of 2)	Toon van Oomen
5.45pm –	Evening free	

Day 3 - Tuesday 26th June 2007

<i>Time</i>	<i>Topic</i>	<i>Presenter</i>
08:00am –	Trade exhibition open	
9.00 – 9.40am	Concurrent Lectures, Session D - (# 4 of 9)	
Room 1	Successful IPM in practice (# 2 of 2)	Horst Sjøstedt
Room 2	Understanding irrigation in protected cropping and soilless culture (# 1 of 2)	Graeme Smith
Room 3	Nitrate accumulation in leafy vegetables, a potential food safety and product quality problem (# 1 of 2)	Sophie Parks
Room 4	Year round berry fruit production (# 1 of 1)	Mike Nichols
9.50 – 10.30am	Concurrent Lectures, Session E - (#5 of 9)	
Room 1	Temperature integration for optimum crop photosynthesis (# 1 of 2)	Ben van Onna
Room 2	Aquaponics & Green Rooftops (# 1 of 1)	Brett Roe & David Midmore
Room 3	Growing greenhouse vegetables in Alberta, Canada (# 1 of 2)	Joe Doef
Room 4	Renewable energy heating and reduced reliance on fossil fuels (# 1 of 2)	Ken Holland
10.30 – 11.15am	Morning Tea	
11.15 – 11.55am	Concurrent Lectures, Session F - (# 6 of 9)	
Room 1	Hydroponic heated tomato growing is top sport! (# 2 of 2)	Toon van Oomen
Room 2	Fundamental management of hydroponic systems (# 2 of 3)	Rick Donnan
Room 3	Risky business - new developments in on-farm assurance programs (# 1 of 1)	
Room 4	Automation developments and possibilities in packhouse facilities in the future (# 2 of 2)	Rene de Vos
12.05 – 12.45pm	Concurrent Lectures, Session G - (# 7 of 9)	

Room 1	Renewable energy heating and reduced reliance on fossil fuels (# 2 of 2)	Ken Holland
Room 2	Fundamental management of hydroponic systems (# 3 of 3)	Rick Donnan
Room 3	What Asian vegetable is that? - developing an innovative marketing strategy for Asian vegetables (# 1 of 1)	Jenny Ekman
Room 4	Overseas disease threats to Australian ornamental and vegetable hydroponic crops - what to look out for (# 2 of 2)	Len Tesoriero
12.45 – 2.15pm	Lunch - Trade exhibition closes after lunch	
2.15 – 2.55pm	Concurrent Lectures, Session H - (# 8 of 9)	
Room 1	Temperature integration for optimum crop photosynthesis (# 2 of 2)	Ben van Onna
Room 2	Understanding irrigation in protected cropping and soilless culture (# 2 of 2)	Graeme Smith
Room 3	Bumbles in the driving seat - IPM the NZ way (# 2 of 2)	Terril Marais
Room 4	Retail value adding - benefits for you and your client (# 2 of 2)	Steven Palmer
3.05 – 3.45pm	Concurrent Lectures, Session J - (# 9 of 9)	
Room 1	Where IS the best place to grow greenhouse crops in Australia ? (# 2 of 2)	Graeme Smith
Room 2	Opportunities from new crops - making the most of greenhouse and hydroponic horticulture (# 3 of 3)	Jeremy Badgery-Parker
Room 3	Nitrate accumulation in leafy vegetables, a potential food safety and product quality problem (# 2 of 2)	Sophie Parks
Room 4	Growing greenhouse vegetables in Alberta, Canada (# 2 of 2)	Joe Doef
3.45 – 4.15pm	Afternoon tea	
4.15 – 4.55pm	Workshop # 2 (# 2 of 2)	
Room 1	Marketing opportunities for hydroponic produce – where are they and how can you get to them ?	Facilitator: David Costa
4.55pm	Lecture component of conference ends.	
7.00 – 7.30pm	Pre-dinner drinks	
7.30pm – late	Conference dinner in auditorium	

Day 4 - Wednesday 27th June 2007

8.00am – 4.45pm Farm tours (depart Grand Chancellor Hotel)

Appendix 3. Cover letter and survey form to grant recipients

Post Conference Grower Evaluation for Growers who received a Travel Grant from HAL

Dear

Back in June 2007 you received a travel grant that enabled you to attend the Australian hydroponic and greenhouse industry national conference in Launceston. We hope you enjoyed the experience. This was made possible by a project funded by Horticulture Australia Limited (HAL).

As with any HAL project a final report is now required on the success of the project. To complete this I am required to survey grower delegates who received a grant to attend the conference.

The aim of providing financial encouragement to attend the conference was for growers to continue to improve their greenhouse technology, productivity, product quality and profitability. Growers who received a travel grant had either not previously attended a national conference or were considered to be industry leaders in their region.

HAL requires the AHGA to report back on the success of this project. As a result I am seeking your cooperation. I apologise for the fact that some considerable time has passed since the conference was held and your recollection may not be as good as you might wish.

I would be grateful if you could provide two things for me.

1. Complete the attached survey
2. Provide a brief general comment on what stood out, what you learned and what you were able to take back to your farm and put into practice. Any suggestions/recommendations for future AHGA conferences would also be appreciated.

A copy of the conference program is attached for additional assistance.

I would be very grateful if you could complete this and return it to me at your earliest opportunity as I am already overdue with the final report for HAL. Additionally, I will be leaving for overseas on 19 April and I would like to have your responses back and the final report written before then.

I hope you enjoyed your experience in Launceston and look forward to seeing you in Sydney in 2009 where the next national conference will be held.

Kind regards,

Stephen Goodwin

2007 conference chairman

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2007 National Conference Survey Form

Complete to the best of your ability.

Question		Response					
		0	1	2	3	4	5
1. General							
Did you find the conference -	Overall beneficial to you as a grower/industry leader?						
	Beneficial to your understanding of the industry?						
	Provided you with an understanding of the role of the Australian Hydroponic & Greenhouse Association (AHGA) as your national industry Association and the benefits of membership to it?						
Do you feel that the AHGA adequately represented your interests at the conference?							
Would you attend a future national conference?							
Any further comments on the above are welcome:							
Do you think the conference helped you to be a better grower/industry leader?							
Did you make any useful new contacts?							
Since returning, have you spoken to growers in your area about the conference?							
2. Program: The program comprised 2 invited speakers, 20 topics of which you could hear 8 and 2 workshops. There was also a trade exhibition							
Did you find the program -							
	Informative						
	Stimulating						
	Practically useful						
Did you participate in the workshops?							
Did the speakers present the topics							
	At a level you could follow						
	Too basic						
	Too advanced						
Was the trade exhibition large enough to interest you?							
Did you see any new products that interested you?							
Did you learn any new practices/information from the trade presenters?							

Any further comments on the section on the Program above and/or any suggestions for improving the conference for growers and industry leaders are welcome:

e.g. what stood out, what you learned, what you could now put into practice and any suggestions / recommendations for future AGHA events, etc.

Appendix 4.

Leadership Development Grant Recipients 2007 AHGA National Conference, Launceston

1) Frank Mamaj	“LVE Gourmet Produce” Tomatoes, Morwell Vic – Fresh face
2) Lachlan Moncrieff	Tomatoes, Gosford, NSW - Fresh face
3) Hien Le	“P&D Produce” Toms & Cucumbers, Virginia, SA - Fresh face
4) James Moran	“Lonsdale Hydro” Toms, Lettuce Herbs, Queenscliff, VIC – Fresh face
5) Tintu Baby	Tomatoes Mgr @ VHC Virginia, SA – Industry leader
6) Christine Bartlett	‘Bergzicht’ Cucumbers, Mt Hallen QLD - Fresh face
7) Ian Brooking	‘Bergzicht’ Cucumbers, Mt Hallen QLD - Fresh face
8) Rudolf Skof	‘Skof Produce’ Caps & Chillies, Stanbridge NSW - Fresh face
9) Susanne Skof	‘Skof Produce’ Caps & Chillies, Stanbridge NSW - Fresh face
10) Jenny Earles	‘Jindivick Hydro’ Toms, Cucs, Herbs, Labertouche Vic - Fresh face
11) Lee Earles	‘Jindivick Hydro’ Toms, Cucs, Herbs, Labertouche Vic - Fresh face
12) Ant Barton	‘Spicer Creek Tomatoes’, Central West NSW - Fresh face
13) Emmanuel Cafcatas	‘Cafs Produce’ Cucs & Caps, Virginia SA - Fresh face
14) Hogan Gleeson	‘Urban Ecological Systems’ Hothouse Mgr Nimbin NSW - Fresh face
15) Sam Aloï	‘P&S Hydroponics’ Tomatoes, Rossmore, Sydney - Fresh face
16) Eduardo Chavis	‘P&S’ Hydroponics’ Tomatoes, Rossmore, Sydney - Fresh face
17) Michael Coffey	East Gippsland TAFE – Sale Victoria - Fresh face Industry Training Co-ordinator for Horticulture & Teacher
18) Andrew Pearson	‘Lonsdale Hydroponics’ Queenscliff VIC - Fresh face
19) Max Horvath	Bundaberg – Industry leader
20) Paul Humble	Baldivis, WA – Fresh face
21) Sticky Reddcliff	Townsville QLD – Fresh face
22) Rhonda Reddcliff	Townsville QLD – Fresh face
23) Steve Morrissey	Latrobe Valley Enterprises - Fresh face
24) Paul Meggs	Latrobe Valley Enterprises - Fresh face
25) Harry Trandos	WA – Industry Leader
26) Nathan Clarkson	Barden Asian Hydroponics – C/Coast – Fresh face
27) Wilson Lennard	Kinglake VIC – Fresh face
28) Kim Aspland	Margaret River WA – Fresh face
29) Lauren Aspland	Margaret River WA – Fresh face
30) Jedda Lennox	‘Jindivick Hydro’ Toms, Cucs, Herbs, Labertouche Vic - Fresh face
31) Sam Murphy	Bridge Creek Farm, Shepparton, Victoria – Fresh face