

# **Horticulture Innovation Australia**

## **Final Report**

**Vegetables Australia (continuation of  
VG09095)**

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AUSVEG Ltd

Project Number: VG12033

## **VG12033**

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# Contents

Summary .....	3
Keywords.....	5
Introduction .....	6
Methodology .....	8
Outputs .....	11
Outcomes .....	13
Evaluation and Discussion.....	16
Recommendations.....	18
Scientific Refereed Publications .....	20
Intellectual Property/Commercialisation .....	21
Acknowledgements.....	22
Appendices .....	23

## Summary

*Vegetables Australia* is the flagship print communication tool for the communication programs funded by the National Vegetable Levy, rising from its launch in July 2005 to its current prominence as a cornerstone of research and development (R&D) communication in the vegetable industry.

The magazine was launched after the Industry Communications Audit revealed that vegetable growers were supportive of a magazine designed to disseminate R&D information. Research conducted at the time highlighted a low level of internet and email use among growers, suggesting that a magazine format would be an appropriate and relevant mode of communicating with growers about the National Vegetable R&D program. *Vegetables Australia* continues to be one of the most preferred methods of communication in the Australian vegetable industry.

The overall objectives of the publication of *Vegetables Australia* have remained consistent since the inception of the project: to present R&D projects and information in a clear and easy-to-understand manner, and to interpret and condense the key elements of new research, projects, news and events in a form that is practical for vegetable levy payers and a broader audience.

Since its first publication, *Vegetables Australia* has grown to be the most widely distributed magazine in horticulture, as certified by the Audited Media Association of Australia's Circulations Audit Board, with approximately 6,000 readers receiving each edition of the magazine. By reaching such a broad audience across the entire Australian vegetable industry, *Vegetables Australia* has simultaneously aided and informed a greater understanding of R&D performed in key areas, such as pest and disease management and best farming practices.

Over the life of the project, *Vegetables Australia* has published 21 bi-monthly editions (six issues per annum), with all editions made available both in hard copy format and in soft copy on the AUSVEG website. Each edition has either met or exceeded the requirement of 20 pages of R&D content per edition, including stories on recently released milestone and final reports, as well as updates on domestic and international R&D relating to broader industry issues. Additionally, while compiling each edition of *Vegetables Australia*, the editorial team consults experts and interviews leading researchers and academics to ensure the scientific and technical accuracy of articles.

This focus on R&D outcomes has ensured that vegetable levy payers and other industry members were kept informed on R&D covering a wide range of topics, showing growers the tangible returns of levy investment and encouraging future uptake of R&D on-farm.

In addition to reporting on innovative R&D projects and recognising leading growers in the vegetable industry, *Vegetables Australia* has also reported on topical issues, including Country of Origin Labelling and concerns around exploitative labour hire firms. With a holistic view of the industry being crucial to maintaining a successful vegetable growing business, this aspect of *Vegetables Australia* has ensured that vegetable levy payers were aware of important developments in the broader industry, which could affect their growing operations.

Ultimately, *Vegetables Australia* remains committed to acting as a reliable vehicle for the distribution of a broad spectrum of R&D information, as well as communicating news and issues to key players in the Australian vegetable industry. To carry on the success of this project, it is recommended *Vegetables Australia* is consolidated into a broader Vegetable Communications Program that includes the Vegetable Industry Communications Strategy and *Vegetables Australia*. It is also recommended to continue publishing both the hard copy and the digital formats of the magazine.

## **Keywords**

vegetables; Australia; magazine; publication; vegetable industry; research and development (R&D); AUSVEG; Horticulture Innovation Australia Limited

## Introduction

*Vegetables Australia* was launched in July 2005, after the Industry Communications Audit revealed that vegetable growers were supportive of a magazine designed to disseminate R&D information.

Research conducted at the time highlighted a low level of internet and email use among growers. In light of these restrictions, the magazine format was deemed an appropriate and relevant mode of communicating with growers about the National Vegetable R&D program, and continues to be one of the most preferred methods of communication in the Australian vegetable industry.

Today, *Vegetables Australia* is 52-page, bi-monthly magazine that is distributed nationally to those who pay the National Vegetable Levy and other individuals associated with the industry, such as local and international researchers and supply chain members. The magazine is distributed in January, March, May, July, September and November – the alternate months to its sister publication, *Potatoes Australia*.

Production of *Vegetables Australia* involves members of the AUSVEG Communications Team and a graphic designer. In addition to these roles, the magazine receives recurring input from a variety of specialised contributors who provide expert content in areas such as biosecurity and export development. There is also budgetary provision for the use of freelance writers for each edition.

A combination of high quality stock imagery and research photographs are published alongside the articles, while freelance photographers are commissioned on a regular basis to provide a high level of professionalism to the magazine.

*Vegetables Australia* is printed externally by a Victorian-based printer on a high quality gloss paper source, and distributed by a Victorian-based mail house.

*Vegetables Australia* is audited annually by the Audited Media Association of Australia's Circulations Audit Board, which has found it to be the most widely distributed magazine in horticulture, received by approximately 6,000 individuals. Engaging external auditors to conduct this study provides credibility to the title.

### Rationale

The primary purpose of the magazine is to communicate outcomes of research and development that is funded by the National Vegetable Levy. The project states that *Vegetables Australia* must fill a quota of 20 pages of R&D per edition. This target continues to be reached, if not exceeded, in every edition of the publication.

The magazine is also produced to communicate vegetable industry news from Australia and abroad, address timely issues and challenges, provide insight into the work of leading individuals in the industry and feature columns from regular contributors offering practical advice relating to on- and off-farm issues. Members of representative state bodies also contribute recurring columns to the magazine, which centre on news and issues specific to their home state.

## **Industry impact**

*Vegetables Australia* is a vital form of hard copy communication that is delivered to its primary readership (vegetable growers and processors), who do not necessarily access digital media services on a regular basis. Ongoing feedback continues to be overwhelmingly positive from readers, who very much appreciate the hard copy publication. *Vegetables Australia* is well-supported by the industry and valued by growers as a reliable source of information.

Feedback received through reader surveys and anecdotally at the National Horticulture Convention and other industry meetings suggests that the grower profiles in particular form an extremely popular component of *Vegetables Australia* and are enthusiastically engaged with by its readership.

The magazine's readership has continued to grow and, thanks to several media releases issued subsequent to its distribution, *Vegetables Australia* has been the subject of heightened media interest, with many of the country's high profile metropolitan and rural media outlets requesting subscriptions to the magazine. This assists in building relationships with the media to ensure the communication of R&D more widely to growers.

## **Overall objectives**

Since its inception, one of the primary aims of *Vegetables Australia* is to present R&D projects and information – which are often quite scientific in nature – in a manner that is clear and easy to understand.

The magazine strives to interpret and condense the key elements of new research, projects, news and events into a form that is of specific and practical use to vegetable levy payers and a broader audience, while simultaneously aiding and informing their greater understanding of areas such as pest and disease management and best farming practices.

Ultimately, *Vegetables Australia* remains committed to acting as a reliable vehicle for the distribution of a broad spectrum of R&D information, news and issues to key players in the Australian vegetable industry.



# Methodology

*Vegetables Australia* stands as one of the vegetable industry's leading journals and performs an essential role in the dissemination of R&D information, news and feature stories to its target audience of approximately 6,000 vegetable growers, processors and industry representatives throughout Australia.

## Article development

The AUSVEG Manager – Communications, Senior Communications Officer/Editor, Writer/Journalist and Graphic Designer are responsible for overseeing all aspects of production of *Vegetables Australia* magazine.

Editorial planning for each edition of the magazine requires a detailed story list and pagination sheet, which outline what will appear in the magazine and the way in which it will be presented. These are reviewed and approved at a number of levels before interviews are commenced and validation regarding the appropriateness of the work is cross-checked with the relevant research body where required.

In maintaining the quality of written material, an in-house style guide is used to ensure consistency of content and language. Quality control measures are in place throughout the proofing and editing processes to ensure content is appropriate and relevant to the audience.

Freelance writers and photographers are then sourced at a competitive industry standard and rate, and subsequently commissioned. All content submitted by freelance writers and contributors is then edited to ensure copy is accurate and free from errors.

The editorial team is required to oversee the design of the magazine. This involves working closely with the in-house graphic designer to ensure the magazine is laid-out correctly and appropriate images are used.

The designer is responsible for all design elements of *Vegetables Australia*, including crop marks, bleed and maintaining colour accuracy. Within any edition of the magazine, the designer is required to adjust photographs supplied from freelance photographers, source additional stock images externally or from AUSVEG's image library and place all editorial.

On completion of the magazine, the designer is responsible for uploading final artwork to the printer. Once proofs of the magazine are returned to AUSVEG, it is the role of the designer and editorial team to thoroughly proof the magazine for any errors. Once all design and editorial inspections are satisfied, the magazine is signed off and the printing job is cleared to commence.

To ensure the magazine is distributed according to deadlines, AUSVEG is in constant communication about its requirements with the printer and mail house. This ensures that the R&D content within the magazines is delivered to growers in a timely and cost-effective manner.

Following publication, the magazine is regularly reviewed to ensure its visual appeal and information is consistent with the requirements of the project, and engaging for the readership. Feedback on the

magazine is regularly obtained through the annual reader survey and many workshops and industry meetings that are held throughout the year, where readers are in attendance. This feedback is then relayed to the editorial team for consideration in future editions.

### **Style and format**

To maintain a strong visual appeal and contemporary look, the latest graphic design software and methodologies are used in creating the magazine. High quality freelance photography complements the articles and conveys R&D in an effective way, ensuring the magazine looks appealing to its audience.

Each 52-page edition of *Vegetables Australia* includes a range of R&D articles, grower profiles, contributor columns and news. Following is a list of the regular R&D and feature columns that appear in the magazine every edition.

- **Veggie bites:** The regular “Veggie bites” section provides relevant statistical data on the local and international vegetable industry in an easy-to-read format that is visually appealing, complemented by diverse, vibrant graphics.
- **Industry advice columns:** The “Ask the industry” column provides a platform for industry professionals to offer on- and off- farm advice to readers to aid them in improving the efficiency of their operations.
- **State news columns:** News from each state’s vegetable grower representative body is delivered in “Around the States”, so that readers are aware of what actions are being taken in their industry in different parts of the country.
- **Young grower feature:** The “Q&A Young Grower profile” features an informal conversation with a young person working in the industry in each edition. The decision to include this segment was based on the need to encourage young people to pursue rewarding careers in the vegetable industry, and to remind them that there are others successfully doing so.
- **Grower feature:** The regular “Grower profile” provides readers with insights into the lives and operations of other growers in their industry. This segment is designed to allow growers to benefit from the practices employed by their peers and to inspire them to further expand their own operations. It also showcases the diversity of people that work in Australian horticulture.
- **Biosecurity brief:** AUSVEG Biosecurity Adviser, Dr Kevin Clayton-Greene, contributes the “Biosecurity brief” for each edition of the magazine. This allows growers to remain informed about measures that they must take to prevent biosecurity incursions in Australia, which could potentially devastate the vegetable industry.
- **EnviroVeg and EnviroNews articles:** The AUSVEG Environment Coordinator contributes the “EnviroVeg” and “EnviroNews” sections of the magazine. These articles highlight the adoption of environmentally sustainable practices by individuals in the vegetable industry in the hope of inspiring other growers to prioritise sustainability in their own operations.
- **Economic outlook:** The AUSVEG Economist sources economic data, mostly from the Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences (ABARES), and interprets key statistics and information so readers can compare this data to the performance of their own farming operations.

- **The Front Line:** This regular column examines pertinent biosecurity issues facing vegetable growers and is written and submitted by the AUSVEG National Manager – Scientific Affairs.
- **Export column:** As part of AUSVEG’s ongoing activities in the field of exports, a regular column examining export opportunities and recent developments in the sector is written by the AUSVEG Export Development Team.
- **Veggie Stats:** Each edition of *Vegetables Australia* includes an in-depth profile of a vegetable commodity to enable deeper insights into the production and trade performance of key Australian vegetable products. The AUSVEG Economist prepares the data for each commodity.
- **InfoVeg:** This column is dedicated to the InfoVeg project – an online portal hosted by the AUSVEG website, where growers and industry members can access information and projects funded by the National Vegetable Levy, as well as podcasts.
- **Industry in the media:** This section of the magazine provides an overview of the main topics AUSVEG has covered in the media since the previous edition of the magazine.
- **Minor use and permits:** This column is written and supplied by the AUSVEG Minor Use and Agronomy Coordinator, who provides the latest news and updates relating to minor use as well as a list of current permits.

### **Dissemination to industry**

*Vegetables Australia* is delivered to recipients around the 15<sup>th</sup> day of the publication month and distribution is conducted through an external mail house based in Victoria. A database of recipients is continuously maintained and updated within AUSVEG, before it is sent electronically to the mail house prior to the distribution of each edition.

In addition to hard copy distribution, the magazine is made available electronically to levy-paying growers via the AUSVEG website. The magazine is also distributed through the National Horticulture Convention, as well as other industry events and conferences.

From 2011 onwards, *Vegetables Australia* distribution figures have been subject to an annual external audit from the Audited Media Association of Australia’s Circulations Audit Board. The latest audit has confirmed *Vegetables Australia* as the most widely distributed magazine in horticulture, a fact that continues to be represented on the magazine’s cover page. At the time of this report, *Vegetables Australia* is delivered free of charge to approximately 6,000 recipients to disseminate R&D information and outcomes.

## Outputs

All deliverable outputs for VG12033 were met throughout the life of the project, comprising 21 bi-monthly editions of *Vegetables Australia* where all deadlines were met (six issues per annum). The magazine was made available both in hard copy format and digital format on the AUSVEG website.

AUSVEG also maintained a National Vegetable Database that was used as a distribution list for *Vegetables Australia*. This database is regularly updated to ensure the magazine reaches a wide audience.

A comprehensive library of images for use in *Vegetables Australia* magazine was also maintained and increased through freelance photographers and stock imagery subscription throughout the life of the project.

Each edition of *Vegetables Australia* required at least 20 pages of R&D content; this target was reached, if not exceeded, in every edition of the publication. R&D content includes a range of R&D stories on recently released milestone and final reports drawn predominantly from Horticulture Innovation Australia's vegetable R&D program, as well as domestic and international R&D that relates to broader industry issues. The R&D articles in the magazine are aligned to the three pillars of the vegetable industry's strategic plan, which helps to drive focus on what the industry is striving to achieve and show how the levy is developing solutions in these areas.

### List of R&D articles

A breakdown of the total number of R&D pages per edition of *Vegetables Australia* is listed below. For a complete list of R&D articles, see Appendix 1.

**September/October 2012:** 20.99

**November/December 2012:** 20.91

**January/February 2013:** 21

**March/April 2013:** 22

**May/June 2013:** 26.66

**July/August 2013:** 23.32

**September/October 2013:** 22.5

**November/December 2013:** 22.66

**January/February 2014:** 26.49

**March/April 2014:** 23.41

**May/June 2014:** 22.48

**July/August 2014:** 22.25

**September/October 2014:** 20.5

**November/December 2014:** 21.25

**January/February 2015:** 26.66

**March/April 2015:** 25.91

**May/June 2015:** 22.32

**July/August 2015:** 24.99

**September/October 2015:** 22.91

**November/December 2015:** 24.23

**January/February 2016:** 24.82

## Outcomes

Throughout the life of the project, it has been a key priority of *Vegetables Australia* to ensure that readers truly benefit from the publication of the magazine. To achieve this, *Vegetables Australia* has strived to promote the adoption of positive R&D outcomes and other new technologies that will assist growers' production in terms of yield, profit and long-term viability, as well as environmental impact, in every edition. *Vegetables Australia* complements and provides an additional source of information to other vegetable industry communications media, particularly those that are produced via electronic means.

The production of *Vegetables Australia* is an essential and proven mechanism to deliver effective communication to growers and industry members. R&D content is produced through a rigorous process of research, analysis and interviews. Experts are consulted to provide input on feature R&D stories and interviews are sought with leading researchers and scientists to ensure the content of articles is accurate and representative of the key research outcomes. As a result, *Vegetables Australia* continues to deliver at least 20 pages of R&D content per edition, for six editions per year.

Vegetable growers rightly want to see tangible returns on their levy investment and the magazine has continued to strengthen and develop its comprehensive coverage of levy-funded projects to ensure that growers do receive maximum benefit by being aware of outputs of the National Vegetable Levy. Ultimately, adoption of R&D outcomes will directly allow growers to see a tangible return for their levy investment and encourage future uptake after seeing the benefits first-hand.

To assist in promoting the magazine to the readership and gaining wider industry recognition, an audit is conducted regularly by the Audited Media Association of Australia's Circulations Audit Board to verify distribution numbers and confirm the publication is the most widely distributed magazine in horticulture. A key outcome for this approach is greater visibility and promotional value within the industry, as validation of distribution numbers is incredibly important in relation to credibility.

### Publication highlights

*Vegetables Australia* has registered some notable achievements in its most recent project cycle. In addition to the regular coverage of levy-funded R&D final reports and projects, the magazine strives to unearth innovative developments in the Australian vegetable industry as well as celebrate the success of leading growers. Following is a list of five highlights from this project.

#### **Young grower profile: Emma Germano (see Appendix 2 and 3)**

*"Q&A Young grower profile" published in Vegetables Australia March/April 2013*

This edition of the Young grower profile focused on Emma Germano, a leading vegetable grower in Victoria who is emblematic of upcoming generations in the vegetable industry. After growing up on her family's vegetable farm, Ms Germano developed a strong business background before returning to Germano Cauliflowers to manage sales, logistics and business development.

This profile, which also featured as the cover story, garnered her thoughts on the main challenges facing growers and the ways to encourage more young people to take up work in the Australian vegetable industry. Ms Germano has since received the prestigious Nuffield Scholarship, which she used to gain an insight into Australia's role in feeding the world into the future.

**R&D: Veggie Stats – Lettuce (see Appendix 4)**

*"Lettuce in the limelight" published in Vegetables Australia July/August 2014*

To enable deeper insights into the financial, production and exporting performance of key Australian vegetable products, *Vegetables Australia* developed a series of crop-specific Veggie Stats profiles using data from the Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences (ABARES) and the Global Trade Atlas.

The inaugural instalment of Veggie Stats focused on lettuce production, and outlined an introduction to the article in addition to two pages of graphics and concise information that identified the key statistics on lettuce production, financial performance and long-term trends for the commodity.

**R&D: The Front Line column (see Appendix 5)**

*"Is Bambi the next big headache for growers?" published in Vegetables Australia March/April 2015*

This edition of The Front Line biosecurity column examined the expanding range of Australian feral deer and how they are increasingly becoming a problem for vegetable growers. The article included comments from Invasive Species Council CEO Andrew Cox, who confirmed that feral deer was the biggest emerging pest problem for growers in eastern Australia.

The article discussed how deer can pose a significant biosecurity risk to many vegetable growing operations, as weeds and plant pathogens can be carried between properties on hooves. Deer-induced damage to fences is also widespread and, as deer are prolific grazers, they often target vegetable crops on a daily basis.

**Grower profile: Jerrod Nichols (see Appendix 6 and 7)**

*"The light at the end of the tunnel" published in Vegetables Australia May/June 2015*

The Grower profile and cover story for this edition focused on Jerrod Nichols, a rhubarb grower from northeast Tasmania. When major vegetable processor Simplot closed its doors in Scottsdale in 2013, Mr Nichols looked to diversify into fresh market lines to ensure his business remained profitable. After meeting a rhubarb grower from Queensland who was looking to expand into Tasmania, Mr Nichols took a chance to grow the crop and has never looked back.

This article not only explained that challenges that come with growing rhubarb, it also highlighted the innovative nature of many growers in the industry. Mr Nichols, as an example, worked with his cousin and her husband to transform a tonne of rhubarb waste a week into various products that have since developed into a popular side business.

**Industry issue: Labour hire (see Appendix 8)**

*"A fair go for seasonal workers: Published in Vegetables Australia January/February 2016*

In addition to reporting on innovative R&D projects and recognising leading growers, *Vegetables Australia* also reports on topical issues within the industry. Recently, the rise of exploitative labour hire firms is undoubtedly endangering the reputation of the Australian horticulture industry. This is an important issue for growers throughout Australia, as they rely heavily on hired labour during peak seasonal periods.

This article detailed AUSVEG's proposed new system of accreditation for labour hire companies, which would require them to seek approval from three federal organisations and the statutory body in charge of occupational health and safety in the state in which the firm is registered. This proposal aims to restore the integrity of Australia's labour hire system and allow the horticulture industry to thrive.



# Evaluation and Discussion

## Commissioned review

A review of the AUSVEG Vegetable and Potato Communications programs, which includes the publication of *Vegetables Australia*, was commissioned by Horticulture Innovation Australia Limited in 2015. This review examined the performance and achievements of the project and provided recommendations on future communications activities. The review was conducted for both the vegetable and potato industry communications programs; however, this section will only focus on the review of *Vegetables Australia*.

The review found the *Vegetables Australia* and its sister publication, *Potatoes Australia*, were “the most respected source of information from all the communication projects that were reviewed”. Respondents spoke highly about the quality and professional nature of the magazines, which are highly anticipated and provide the readers with information on R&D outcomes and other industry development issues.

*Vegetables Australia* and its sister publication *Potatoes Australia* received an average score of 4.0 out of 5 from those interviewed, which indicated that it ‘more than meets my expectations’.

## Independent Review

As a requirement of the project, an independent review of the AUSVEG Vegetable and Potato Communications programs, which includes the publication of *Vegetables Australia*, was completed by Tom O’Meara. This review examined the performance and achievements of the project and provided recommendations on future communications activities. The review was conducted for both the vegetable and potato industry communications programs; however, this section will only focus on the review of *Vegetables Australia*.

The review was complimentary of the AUSVEG Vegetable Communications program, including publication of the magazine, with the reviewer highlighting “the continued demand for hard copy which is consistent with the national and international demand for niche market publications”. The reviewer noted the success of using traditional methods of communication to better inform all sectors of the vegetable growing community, as this results in better transfer of R&D outcomes to the industry.

The reviewer also conducted a series of formal and informal interviews with readers to generate feedback on the publication. He noted: “The supply of R&D information by AUSVEG is now even more critical with the need to increase volumes and retain quality”, adding that “digital access is still an issue” for many readers.

Respondents noted that one of their main sources of information is the hard copy version of *Vegetables Australia*, which is often read from cover to cover. They enjoy reading R&D articles in hard copy format and find the magazine quite informative. In particular, the editions highlighting grower success in the industry, such as the award winners from the annual National Horticulture Convention, are eagerly anticipated by readers as these article sufficiently acknowledge the success of their peers in the

industry.

The reviewer concluded: "The success of the project provides a credible platform moving forward to feed the significantly increased demand of R&D needs of the industry."

### **Grower Feedback Survey**

To obtain both qualitative and quantitative data from readers, *Vegetables Australia* conducts annual reader surveys to gain valuable information relating to readership demographics and attitudes towards content. The feedback from grower and non-grower readers provides a rounded industry perspective on the role of the publication within the Australian vegetable industry.

During the final year of the project, AUSVEG conducted a hard copy and online survey for growers and industry members who read *Vegetables Australia*. Looking forward, the magazine will endeavour to cater to the findings contained within the survey.

Results from the entire survey sample of seven indicated:

- 71 per cent of respondents said that News, R&D articles, Grower profiles and New Products/Advertisements were of most interest to them.
- R&D articles are useful to their business (average 3.3 out of 5 rating).
- The majority of respondents noted that R&D content in the magazine influences the way they run their business.
- Each edition of the magazine can be passed on to 10 people in a business.

## Recommendations

Based on the feedback from both internal and external reviews into *Vegetables Australia*, as well as observations from the AUSVEG Communications team, the following recommendations should be taken into account for future *Vegetables Australia* projects.

### **Recommendation 1: *Vegetables Australia* should be consolidated into a broader Vegetable Communications Program including the Vegetable Industry Communications Strategy (VICS) and *Vegenotes***

There are currently three industry-funded projects that relate to communications in the vegetable industry: *Vegetables Australia*, VICS and *Vegenotes*. Each of these has separate reporting requirements despite being conducted by the same team and having similar aims. These three projects should be combined into one Vegetable Communications Program to streamline reporting requirements and increase the efficiency of communications to the vegetable industry.

### **Recommendation 2: Continue the hard copy format of magazine and continue publishing editions online on the AUSVEG website**

According to the HIA-commissioned review, hard copy is the preferred method of delivery for *Vegetables Australia*, particularly as many subscribers leave the magazine in the workplace for staff to read. Subscribers of the magazine also highlight that the hard copy format of the magazine should be maintained, as per the recommendations of the HIA-commissioned reviewer.

### **Recommendation 3: Increase the use of the HIA branding and funding statements, including a summary at the start of the article**

While articles in the magazine mention that a project was funded by Horticulture Innovation Australia Limited, it is important that future communications have greater brand recognition and the use of levy funds. In continuing focus of R&D content in magazine, it is important for the AUSVEG Communications team to readily access milestones and final reports of levy-funded research from HIA.

### **Recommendation 4: Maintain use of stock images and freelance photography**

According to the HIA-commissioned review, the use of photos adds value to the stories. It is recommended that a budget for stock images and freelance photography is continued to maintain the professional and high quality nature of the magazine.

### **Recommendation 5: Maintain Grower and Young grower profile features**

The magazine gives readers the opportunity to connect and see how other growers are implementing innovations. The popularity of the grower profiles, which was reiterated in reader feedback, is important to subscribers as it provides a sense of community in the industry and celebrates the achievements of their peers. While these profiles are not always specifically R&D related, it is recommended to include them in future editions of the magazine.

**Recommendation 6: Provide a stronger incentive to complete the annual reader survey**

Given the low number of respondents to the annual reader survey, it is recommended that a stronger incentive is provided for growers to complete the survey.

## **Scientific Refereed Publications**

None to report.

## **Intellectual Property/Commercialisation**

No commercial IP generated.

## Acknowledgements

AUSVEG wishes to acknowledge and thank the following individuals and organisations for their contribution, service or assistance in what has been the highly successful implementation of *Vegetables Australia*.

- Horticulture Innovation Australia Limited.
- Members of the former Vegetable Industry Advisory Committee (IAC).
- Vegetable R&D researchers, consultants and others belonging to institutions, universities and any other relevant bodies.
- Commissioned freelance photographers and journalists.
- Contributors and advertisers for *Vegetables Australia*.

# Appendices

## Appendix 1

A list of all R&D projects and levy-related articles that appeared in the current project period.

Project number	Article title	Pages	Issue published
	Veggie bites	1	September/October 2012
VG06117	Building better beetroot	1.5	September/October 2012
VG11013	Biosecurity brief	1	September/October 2012
VG07070	Managing mildew and beating white blister	1.83	September/October 2012
VG12704	2012 Italy/Israel Female Grower Study Tour	0.5	September/October 2012
VG13018	Designing a better industry	1.5	September/October 2012
	Soil solutions	1.5	September/October 2012
	Protecting plant health	0.66	September/October 2012
VG12008	EnviroNews	2	September/October 2012
VG12008	EnviroVeg Profile: Fostering the future of Frais Farms	2.5	September/October 2012
	Ask the industry	1	September/October 2012
VG11038	The results are in: new data from the 2011 Agriculture Census	2.5	September/October 2012
VG10115	Vegetable industry service providers: Invitation to register	1	September/October 2012
VG13096	Minor use permits	0.5	September/October 2012
VG09009	Sweetening the product	1.5	September/October 2012
VG11038	Skills and Training Survey for vegetable growers	0.5	September/October 2012



	Reader survey	2	November/December 2012
	Veggie bites	1	November/December 2012
VG11013	Biosecurity brief	1	November/December 2012
VG09037	Weighing up the benefits of high vegetable intake	1.5	November/December 2012
VG13018	Teaming up for a better future	1.75	November/December 2012
VG11038	Investing in a valuable asset	0.5	November/December 2012
MT06049	Sterilising the threat	2.16	November/December 2012
	Soil solutions	1	November/December 2012
VG11711	Asian odyssey	1.5	November/December 2012
VG13096	Minor use permits	0.5	November/December 2012
VG12008	EnviroNews	2	November/December 2012
VG12008	EnviroVeg Profile: Glasshouse empire	3	November/December 2012
VG11038	How serious is the Chinese threat to Australian vegetable growers?	2	November/December 2012
	Ask the industry	1	November/December 2012
	Veggie bites	1	January/February 2013
	Thinking regional, staying seasonal	4	January/February 2013
VG07081	Developing a sweet solution to enhance eye-health	1.5	January/February 2013
VG11013	Biosecurity brief	1	January/February 2013
VG12014	Providing a presence (including a Notice of Annual Vegetable Levy Payers Meeting 2013)	2	January/February 2013
VG13096	Minor use permits	0.5	January/February 2013
	Soil solutions	1	January/February 2013
	Striving to find a spinach solution	1.5	January/February 2013
VG12008	EnviroNews	2	January/February 2013
VG12008	EnviroVeg Profile: Small acreage, big	2	January/February 2013

	gains		
	Ask the industry	1	January/February 2013
VG12704	Investigating innovation in Italy and Israel	2	January/February 2013
VG08045	Growing productivity	1.5	January/February 2013
	Veggie bites	1	March/April 2013
	Immersed in the field	2	March/April 2013
VG08051	Meet the natural enemy of SLW – E. hayati	2	March/April 2013
VG11013	Biosecurity brief	1	March/April 2013
	Innovation, collaboration and consumer orientation the focus at Future Forum	1.5	March/April 2013
	Bee Centre central to food security	1	March/April 2013
VG12048	Putting science into action	1	March/April 2013
VG12042	Maximising market opportunities	1	March/April 2013
	Soil solutions	1	March/April 2013
VG13018	New projects to propel industry forward	1	March/April 2013
VG13096	Minor use permits	0.5	March/April 2013
VG10094	Assessing attitudes towards the growing green leaf category	2	March/April 2013
VG12008	EnviroNews	2	March/April 2013
VG12008	EnviroVeg Profile: View to the future	2.5	March/April 2013
	Ask the industry	1	March/April 2013
VG12014	Industry in the media	1	March/April 2013
VG12014	Grow your industry! Notice of Vegetable Levy Payers' Meetings	0.5	March/April 2013
	Veggie bites	1	May/June 2013
VG12050	Looking forward: Emerging technologies in vegetable production	2	May/June 2013

VG11034	Soil matters	1.75	May/June 2013
VG08026	Canker culprit identified	1.66	May/June 2013
VG12069, VG12045 and VG12070	Investigating inhibitions to fresh produce purchase	1.75	May/June 2013
	Soil solutions	1	May/June 2013
VG12008	Need help? Call 1800 Agronomist	1	May/June 2013
	Seeds without sex	2	May/June 2013
VG12071	Summing up	1.5	May/June 2013
VG11013	Biosecurity brief	1	May/June 2013
VG13096	Minor use permits	0.5	May/June 2013
VG11708	"You never stop learning"	3	May/June 2013
VG12008	EnviroNews	2	May/June 2013
VG12008	EnviroVeg Profile: Growing sustainably	2	May/June 2013
	Global horizons: Growing for the future	1	May/June 2013
	Ask the industry	1	May/June 2013
VG12014	Industry in the media	1	May/June 2013
VG12008	1800 Agronomist hotline to be launched in May	0.5	May/June 2013
VG12707	2013 Carrot Growers Study Tour advertisement	1	May/June 2013
	Veggie bites	1	July/August 2013
VG12046	Waste not to be wasted	1.5	July/August 2013
VG12050	Sterilisation technology means fruit flies may become a pest of the past	1.5	July/August 2013
	Ask the industry	1	July/August 2013
	Future farms: Where robots do the dirty work	1.5	July/August 2013

VG12008	EnviroNews	2	July/August 2013
VG12008	EnviroVeg Profile: Staying on track: Controlled traffic farming and modern farming systems	2	July/August 2013
VG12050	The 2013 Emerging Technologies in Horticulture Seminar: Celebrating leadership and innovation	1.66	July/August 2013
VG12093	Dealing with the dragon: Accessing the world's largest consumer market	1.75	July/August 2013
VG12071	Summing up: The Federal Budget outcomes for agriculture	1.5	July/August 2013
VG11013	Biosecurity brief	1	July/August 2013
	Super foods: Isolating desirable traits in fresh produce	0.75	July/August 2013
VG12014	Industry in the media	1	July/August 2013
VG12014	Growers get bigger say in the allocation of levy funds to research and development projects	0.5	July/August 2013
VG13096	Minor use permits	1.5	July/August 2013
VG12706	2013 Women in Horticulture Study Tour advertisement	0.5	July/August 2013
	Soil solutions	1	July/August 2013
	New research reveals the importance of eating leafy greens	0.66	July/August 2013
VG12008	Need help? Call 1800 Agronomist advertisement	1	July/August 2013
	Veggie bites	1	September/October 2013
	Sweet corn trials aiding future production	0.5	September/October 2013
VG12078	Project Harvest taps into consumer habits for fresh vegetables	2	September/October 2013
VG13096	Minor use permits	1	September/October 2013
VG12008	EnviroNews	2	September/October 2013

VG12008	EnviroVeg Profile: Linton Brimblecombe: Dedicated to sustainable practice	2	September/October 2013
VG12071	Summing up: Keys drivers of growth for the vegetable industry	1.5	September/October 2013
VG12043	Veggie-branding: Highlighting the health benefits of Australian vegetables	1.5	September/October 2013
	Ask the industry	1	September/October 2013
VG12050	Functional fungus: Conferring stress tolerance to vegetable crops	2	September/October 2013
VG11706	International innovation exchange: Investigating growing operations in Europe and the Middle East	1.5	September/October 2013
VG12050	Fabricating genes: Professor Lars Nielsen discusses synthetic biology	1.75	September/October 2013
VG09023	Aubergine armament: Protecting eggplant from pestilent fruit fly	2	September/October 2013
VG12014	Industry in the media	1	September/October 2013
	Soil solutions	1	September/October 2013
VG13020	A new study investigates food safety management in Australian vegetable businesses	0.75	September/October 2013
	Veggie bites	1	November/December 2013
VG11013	Biosecurity brief	1	November/December 2013
VG11706	2014 Germany and France Grower Study Tour	0.5	November/December 2013
VG12071	InfoVeg advertisement	0.5	November/December 2013
VG12100	Enter the dragon	1.5	November/December 2013
VG12078	Project Harvest unveils new Interactive Research Tool	1	November/December 2013
VG12008	EnviroNews	2	November/December 2013
VG12008	EnviroVeg Profile: Laying the ground for future success	2	November/December 2013

VG12071	Australian vegetable export opportunities in Asia	2	November/December 2013
	Ask the industry	1	November/December 2013
VG12707	Carrot Grower Study Tour: Getting to the point	1.5	November/December 2013
VG12084	Measuring consumer attitudes to insects and eco-labels	1.66	November/December 2013
VG10048	Delivering RD&E bang for your levy buck	1.5	November/December 2013
	Soil solutions	1	November/December 2013
VG12014	Industry in the media	1	November/December 2013
VG12014	Vegetable IAC Update	0.5	November/December 2013
VG13096	Minor use permits	1	November/December 2013
	Reader survey	2	November/December 2013
	Veggie bites	1	January/February 2014
VG11013	Biosecurity brief	1	January/February 2014
VG12078	Opportunities for an Aussie-grown taste of Asia	2	January/February 2014
	Ask the industry	1	January/February 2014
VG12008	EnviroNews	2	January/February 2014
VG12008	EnviroVeg Profile: Houston, we have a solution	2	January/February 2014
VG12071	Economic outlook: An economy in transition	2	January/February 2014
VG12706	Women shine in southern Europe	1	January/February 2014
VG12706	Greenhouses prove effective during Syngenta visit	0.75	January/February 2014
VG12014	2014 Annual Vegetable Levy Payers' Meetings	0.25	January/February 2014
VG11711	Young Growers' Study Tour: Oriental lessons as young guns head east	1.5	January/February 2014

VG12053	Next crop leads the way	1	January/February 2014
VG09038	Searching for sustainable soil health systems	2	January/February 2014
VG12043	Veggie lessons now just a click away	2	January/February 2014
	Soil solutions	1	January/February 2014
VG13033	2014 Produce Innovation Seminar	1	January/February 2014
VG12101	Reverse Trade Mission: Asian trade delegates forge new links with Australian growers	1.66	January/February 2014
VG13096	Minor use permits	0.33	January/February 2014
VG13033	2014 Produce Innovation Seminar	1	January/February 2014
VG12014	Industry in the media	1	January/February 2014
VG13034	Exporting to Japan ad	1	January/February 2014
	Veggie bites	1	March/April 2014
VG11013	Biosecurity brief	1	March/April 2014
	Biosecurity: It begins on your farm	1	March/April 2014
VG13067	Mission possible: Seizing Aussie export opportunities	2	March/April 2014
VG13067	More export growth, a priority for Hayden	1.66	March/April 2014
VG12008	EnviroNews	2	March/April 2014
VG12008	EnviroVeg Profile: A frank discussion about biosecurity	2	March/April 2014
	Ask the industry	1	March/April 2014
VG12071	Report casts spotlight on farm finance	2	March/April 2014
VG12078	Korean cabbage cravings could create cash-flow	1.75	March/April 2014
VG12083	The what, where and why of vegetable imports	1.5	March/April 2014
VG08012	Fusion farming focus for Scott's	2	March/April 2014

	scholarship report		
VG12091	Crisis plan could avert disaster	1.5	March/April 2014
VG12014	Industry in the media	1	March/April 2014
VG13096	Minor use permits	0.5	March/April 2014
VG12014	Regional Roadshow	1	March/April 2014
VG12014	2014 Annual Vegetable Levy Payers' Meeting	0.5	March/April 2014
	Veggie bites	1	May/June 2014
	Untreated irrigation water: A clear biosecurity risk	1.5	May/June 2014
VG11013	Biosecurity brief	1	May/June 2014
VG12008	EnviroNews	2	May/June 2014
VG12008	EnviroVeg profile: Irrigation focus: Harnessing the Elements	2	May/June 2014
VG13035	2014 Reverse Trade Mission advertisement	1	May/June 2014
VG12071	Fluid economics	2	May/June 2014
VG12700	Study Tour wows Aussie growers	1.5	May/June 2014
	Ask the industry	1	May/June 2014
VG13035	Opening eastern doors during Australia Week in China/Dozens enlist for Reverse Trade Mission	0.66	May/June 2014
VG13067	Market Update: Japan	1	May/June 2014
	Negating adverse impacts of nitrous oxide within the NT DPI	1	May/June 2014
VG08029	Seeking irrigation efficiency	1	May/June 2014
VG13706	2014 Women in Horticulture Tour advertisement	0.5	May/June 2014
VG11711	2014 Young Grower Study Tour to Japan and South Korea	0.5	May/June 2014



	Eight pointers to irrigation success	1.66	May/June 2014
VG12014	Industry in the media	1	May/June 2014
VG12014	2014 Annual Vegetable Levy Payers' Meeting	0.33	May/June 2014
VG13096	Minor use permits	0.33	May/June 2014
VG13020	Safe food equals safe reputations	1.5	May/June 2014
	Veggie bites	1	July/August 2014
	Ask the industry	1	July/August 2014
VG12071	Economies of scale: Size matters	2	July/August 2014
	New gateway to biosecurity information	1	July/August 2014
VG12071	Veggie Stats: Lettuce in the limelight	3	July/August 2014
VG11013	Biosecurity brief	1	July/August 2014
VG13035	Local growers to see benefits from Reverse Trade Mission	1.5	July/August 2014
VG12014	Industry in the media	1	July/August 2014
VG12008	EnviroNews	2	July/August 2014
VG12008	EnviroVeg Profile: EnviroVeg Platinum audits prove successful	2	July/August 2014
VG13033	Innovations unveiled: Seminar prompts industry to think outside the box	1.75	July/August 2014
VG13034	The 2014 Exporting to Japan Symposium: Learning the ins and outs of Japanese trade	1.5	July/August 2014
VG11706	Touring the brassica hub of Europe	1.5	July/August 2014
VG13706	2014 Women in Horticulture Tour ad	1	July/August 2014
VG12071	Tune in to InfoVeg Radio	0.5	July/August 2014
VG13096	Minor use permits	0.5	July/August 2014
	Veggie bites	1	September/October 2014
VG13033	Rob Baan: Let's change the way we look	2	September/October 2014

	at fresh vegetables and health		
VG11013	Biosecurity brief	1	September/October 2014
VG13078	Soil health for soil wealth	1.5	September/October 2014
	Pests nibble at veggie growers' bottom lines	2	September/October 2014
VG12071	Veggie Stats: Key carrot facts and figures	2.5	September/October 2014
VG12071	Vegetable exports: Capitalising on the dining boom	2	September/October 2014
VG12008	EnviroNews	2	September/October 2014
VG12008	EnviroVeg Profile: A golden opportunity	2	September/October 2014
	Ask the industry	1	September/October 2014
VG12094	Customers seek out natural-looking veggies on the shelf	1	September/October 2014
VG13069	Hong Kong market overview	1.5	September/October 2014
VG12014	Industry in the media	1	September/October 2014
	Veggie bites	1	November/December 2014
VG12104	Ladybird farm robot trial a huge success	1.5	November/December 2014
VG11013	Biosecurity brief	1	November/December 2014
	Soil-borne plant pathogens: Common pests and methods for control	1.75	November/December 2014
VG13078	Integrated Crop Protection: Making the process easier for growers	1.75	November/December 2014
VG12071	Emerging technologies and their impact on productivity	2	November/December 2014
	Ask the industry	1	November/December 2014
VG12071	Veggie Stats: Broccoli	2.5	November/December 2014
	Cucumber green mottle mosaic virus confirmed in NT	0.75	November/December 2014
VG12008	EnviroNews	2	November/December 2014

VG12008	EnviroVeg Profile: Evaluating energy: Smart changes cut costs for grower	2	November/December 2014
VG13069	Developing export opportunities in Asia and the Middle East	1	November/December 2014
VG12014	Industry in the media	1	November/December 2014
VG13096	Minor Use Awareness Program: Latest news	0.5	November/December 2014
VG13096	Minor use permits	0.5	November/December 2014
	Reader survey	1	November/December 2014
	Veggie bites	1	January/February 2015
VG11013	Biosecurity brief	1	January/February 2015
	Beneficials: A standing army to assist with on-farm biosecurity	2	January/February 2015
	Queensland trials: Precision agriculture improves crop management	2	January/February 2015
VG11711	Young growers examine export markets in Japan and South Korea	1.5	January/February 2015
VG12071	Rising debt and rising costs swallow Aussie grower profits	2	January/February 2015
	Ask the industry	1	January/February 2015
VG12071	Veggie Stats: Pumpkin	2.5	January/February 2015
VG13092	Weather the storm with the latest technology	1.66	January/February 2015
VG12008	EnviroNews	2	January/February 2015
VG12008	EnviroVeg Profile: Maintaining an environmental conscience	2	January/February 2015
VG13097	Export opportunities continue to develop in 2015	1.5	January/February 2015
	International research on show in Tasmania	1.75	January/February 2015
	Creating an energy efficient cool store	1	January/February 2015

VG13086	How fresh is your broccoli on the shelf?	1	January/February 2015
VG12014	Industry in the media	1	January/February 2015
	2014 reader survey winner	0.25	January/February 2015
VG13096	Minor Use Awareness Program: Latest news	1	January/February 2015
VG13096	Minor use permits	0.5	January/February 2015
	Veggie bites	1	March/April 2015
	When horticulture meets futuristic technology, the possibilities are tremendous	3	March/April 2015
VG12071	New report highlights export opportunities to the Middle East and Asia	2	March/April 2015
VG11013	Biosecurity brief	1	March/April 2015
	Is Bambi the next big headache for growers?	2	March/April 2015
	Weeding out the issues in weed mat plastics	1.5	March/April 2015
	Ask the industry	1	March/April 2015
VG12071	Veggie Stats: Cabbage	2.5	March/April 2015
VG12008	EnviroNews	2	March/April 2015
VG12008	EnviroVeg Profile: Filling the potholes in Controlled Traffic Farming	2	March/April 2015
VG13097	Key facts for exporting to Indonesia	1.66	March/April 2015
VG13706	Women in Horticulture: Behind the scenes of vegetable production in the US	2	March/April 2015
VG12017	Controlling transplant shock in lettuce	1	March/April 2015
VG12014	Industry in the media	0.75	March/April 2015
	Experts gather for Summer School in ag robotics	1	March/April 2015
VG13096	Minor Use Awareness Program: Latest news	0.5	March/April 2015

VG13096	Minor use permits	1	March/April 2015
	Veggie bites	1	May/June 2015
VG12014	Sign up to have your say in HIA	1	May/June 2015
	U.S. spinach conference sheds light on local issues	1	May/June 2015
VG12078 and VG14060	The four consumer groups purchasing vegetables	1	May/June 2015
VG12071	A state-by-state analysis of vegetable growers' financial performance	2	May/June 2015
	Ask the industry	1	May/June 2015
VG12071	Veggie Stats: Cauliflower	2.5	May/June 2015
VG11013	Biosecurity brief	1	May/June 2015
	Vegetable leafminer: The threat on our doorstep	2	May/June 2015
VG12008	EnviroNews	2	May/June 2015
VG12008	EnviroVeg Profile: Flood plain farming: Weighing the risks	2	May/June 2015
VG13097	It's back! A bigger and better Reverse Trade Mission for 2015	1.66	May/June 2015
VG13078	Soil health continues to be front of mind for growers	1	May/June 2015
VG14707	Berlin Fruit Logistica's top five highlights	1	May/June 2015
VG12014	Industry in the media	0.66	May/June 2015
VG13096	Minor Use Awareness Program: Latest news	0.5	May/June 2015
VG13096	Minor use permits	1	May/June 2015
	Veggie bites	1	July/August 2015
VG13116	Vegetable growers plug into profitability	1.75	July/August 2015
VG13097	Exports to rise as Aussie growers see benefits from 2015 Reverse Trade Mission	2	July/August 2015

VG14708	Growers become experts in exporting to South East Asia	1.5	July/August 2015
VG12071	2015 Federal Budget provides opportunity and relief to vegetable growers	2	July/August 2015
VG11013	Biosecurity brief	1	July/August 2015
VG12071	Veggie Stats: Sweet corn	2.5	July/August 2015
VG12700	Aussie growers gain unique insights into U.S. vegetable industry	1.75	July/August 2015
VG13080	Searching for vegetable innovation	1.5	July/August 2015
	March of the red imported fire ant	2	July/August 2015
VG12008	EnviroNews	2	July/August 2015
VG12008	EnviroVeg profile: Doing your homework, reaping the rewards	2	July/August 2015
	Ask the industry	1	July/August 2015
VG13078	More in store for Integrated Crop Protection extension project	1	July/August 2015
VG12014	Industry in the media	1	July/August 2015
VG13096	Minor Use Awareness Program: Latest news	0.66	July/August 2015
VG13096	Minor use permits	0.33	July/August 2015
	Veggie bites	1	September/October 2015
VG13019	On-farm plastic waste: A problem that can't be ignored	1	September/October 2015
VG11013	Biosecurity brief	1	September/October 2015
	The big stink about the Brown marmorated stink bug	2	September/October 2015
	Australian researcher honoured with international accolade	1	September/October 2015
VG13097	Export success at Asia Fruit Logistica	2.5	September/October 2015
VG12071	Veggie Stats: Peas	2.5	September/October 2015

VG12008	EnviroNews	2	September/October 2015
VG12008	EnviroVeg Profile: Focusing on a sustainable future	2	September/October 2015
	Ask the industry	1	September/October 2015
VG12071	New trade figures show increase in vegetable exports	2	September/October 2015
VG12071	InfoVeg: The freshest vegetable R&D	0.66	September/October 2015
VG14709	Dutch innovation in horticulture impresses SA growers	1.5	September/October 2015
VG13096	Minor Use Awareness Program: Latest news	0.5	September/October 2015
VG13096	Minor use permits	1.25	September/October 2015
VG12014	Industry in the media	1	September/October 2015
	Veggie bites	1	November/December 2015
VG12053	Making a difference as a Growing Leader	1	November/December 2015
VG13079	Managing weeds: An integrated approach	1.5	November/December 2015
VG11013	Biosecurity brief	1	November/December 2015
	The Australian biosecurity system under the magnifying glass	2	November/December 2015
VG13097	Growers represent Australian industry in the Middle East	1.66	November/December 2015
VG13078	Using Caliente mustard for biofumigation	1.66	November/December 2015
VG14040	Green beans feel the chill: Preventing post-harvest symptoms	1	November/December 2015
VG12071	Veggie Stats: Beans	2.5	November/December 2015
	Ask the industry	1	November/December 2015
VG12071	InfoVeg: The freshest vegetable R&D	0.5	November/December 2015
VG12008	EnviroNews	2	November/December 2015
VG12008	EnviroVeg Profile: Striving for innovation, market access and environmental	2	November/December 2015

	sustainability		
VG12071	The importance of understanding the consumer	2	November/December 2015
VG12014	Industry in the media	0.75	November/December 2015
VG13096	Minor Use Awareness Program: Latest news	1	November/December 2015
VG13096	Minor use permits	0.66	November/December 2015
	2015 reader survey	1	November/December 2015
	Veggie bites	1	January/February 2016
VG12078 and VG14060	Bountiful harvest in new consumer research	1.66	January/February 2016
VG12071	The link between labour productivity and investment	1.5	January/February 2016
	Ask the industry	1	January/February 2016
VG12071	Veggie Stats: Chillies	2.5	January/February 2016
VG13048	The time is right for broccoli exports to Japan	1.5	January/February 2016
VG13097	Developing trade marks for export	2	January/February 2016
VG11013	Biosecurity brief	1	January/February 2016
VG12071	InfoVeg: Robotics and automation: The farms of the future	1	January/February 2016
	On-farm biosecurity delivers market access	2	January/February 2016
VG12008	EnviroNews	2	January/February 2016
VG12008	EnviroVeg Profile: Total recall: Improving data retention in challenging circumstances	2	January/February 2016
	Inside the mind of a consumer	1	January/February 2016
VG12014	Industry in the media	1	January/February 2016
VG13706	European veg industry inspires Australia's leading ladies	2	January/February 2016



VG13096	Minor Use Awareness Program: Latest news	1	January/February 2016
VG13096	Minor use permits	0.66	January/February 2016

## **Appendix 2**

*Vegetables Australia* March/April 2013 cover

## **Appendix 3**

"Q&A Young grower profile" published in *Vegetables Australia* March/April 2013

## **Appendix 4**

"Lettuce in the limelight" published in *Vegetables Australia* July/August 2014

## **Appendix 5**

"Is Bambi the next big headache for growers?" published in *Vegetables Australia* March/April 2015

## **Appendix 6**

*Vegetables Australia* May/June 2015 cover

## **Appendix 7**

"The light at the end of the tunnel" published in *Vegetables Australia* May/June 2015

## **Appendix 8**

"A fair go for seasonal workers: Published in *Vegetables Australia* January/February 2016

# vegetables

## australia

March/April 2013

**Emma Germano:**

**"The industry needs to focus on rebranding itself"**

**"The pain that's ahead now":  
Taking stock of the Queensland Floods**

**Samantha Cables:  
Immersed in the field**

**Karen Spaulding:  
View to the future**

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**cab**

Audit Period: 01/04/2011 – 31/03/2012



**Name:** Emma Germano

**Age:** 28

**Location:** South Gippsland, Victoria

**Works:** Germano Cauliflowers

**Grows:** Cauliflowers, cabbage, Chinese cabbage, broad beans

# Q&A Young grower profile

INTELLIGENT AND OPINIONATED WITH A STRONG BUSINESS BACKGROUND, EMMA GERMANO IS EMBLEMATIC OF THE NEW FACE OF THE VEGETABLE INDUSTRY.



South  
Gippsland,  
Victoria



## How did you first get involved in the vegetable industry?

Being a farmer's daughter means that I have grown up with exposure to the vegetable industry. After 8 years of studying, owning a restaurant in Melbourne and working as a business and management consultant and trainer, it felt right to apply my skills and knowledge to our family business. For the past 2 years I have become increasingly involved.

## What is your role in the business?

My role in the business is primarily sales and logistics, but I also work on all of our business development. I have more recently become 'hands on' with managing our operations. I am also focused on systemising our processes using new technology.

## Describe your average day at work.

I start the day by speaking to our agents in the national markets, getting feedback in regards to consignments sent and market prices. This then enables me to direct the harvesting team about what orders we are packing into for the following two days. I organise freight, and write-up consignment notes. I help Dad to keep an eye on crops, assisting where possible with irrigation and quality control. I collect data in regards to our yields and picking costs, and enter all our planting information into our system. The best part of my day is managing all of our internal and external customer relationships, though I occasionally get roped into 'catching caulies' and driving tractors.

## What do you most enjoy about working in the vegetable industry?

The most enjoyable thing about working in the vegetable industry is that fundamentally, we are producing a commodity that is healthy and nourishing for the population. I really enjoy the ability to be tapped into the creating life force that enables a plant to grow. We do our best to



nurture and care for the plants, give them the opportunity to reach their maximum potential, but ultimately, it is nature and creation that does all the work. It is the pleasure of gardening on a massive commercial scale. It is difficult to articulate, but there is something very special about it.

## What are the biggest challenges you face as a grower?

Challenges that we face as growers are growing conditions and the elements. The innate ability of the farmer is to take this in his/her stride. The resilience of the Australian farmer never ceases to amaze me. Our biggest challenge is remaining a commercially viable business. All our expenses continue to increase, and the price of our vegetables doesn't follow suit. There is always a lot of market uncertainty, and despite all the supermarket advertisements showing happy, dancing farmers, I think that reality is a far cry from this. Increased government support and investment in agriculture is imperative to secure the farming future of this country.

## How important is good marketing in the vegetable industry in 2013?

I believe that as an industry, we need to band together and advertise our own products. Supermarket-driven advertising is at the mercy of other agendas. We need to not just advertise the end product but create a real awareness of 'where my food



continued over page ►





### Israel. How was that experience and what did you get out of the tour?

I absolutely loved the trip, in fact it felt like AUSVEG had organised the tour just for me! The most eye-opening part of the experience was seeing how Israel is a net exporter, feeding Europe such a large portion of their fruit and veg. Here I was thinking it was all camels and desert! Their agriculture industry is growing and thriving, young people are enthusiastic and fighting to get into the industry. The government is totally supportive and assists the farmers as much as possible. Agronomists are government funded, shipping is subsidised etc. It was amazing how resourceful they are as a nation, and how they grow much more, with much less. It showed me how much potential Australian agriculture has.

### How do you think more young people could be encouraged to take up jobs in horticulture and the vegetable industry in particular?

Again, increased government investment in agricultural education is necessary in traineeships and school curriculums. There needs to be career pathways for young people entering the industry and alternative pathways to farm ownership. If commodity prices were higher, there would be financial incentives too. At the moment, a young person will hardly risk such high start up costs, where return on investment is low. The industry needs to focus on re-branding itself as sexy and intelligent. We are not all hicks in the country! People should look into our industry from the outside, and be itching to get in.

### Where do you see yourself in 5 years?

Hopefully in this business, hopefully with a 300% increase in turnover, more staff employed, with Mum and Dad on a holiday enjoying semi-retirement. I would like to focus on increasing my networks, and involvement in the industry on a political level.

comes from,' 'where would it come from otherwise.' I find it amusing when I watch a consumer nonchalantly place a cauliflower into a shopping trolley, and I wonder if they realise the number of hours and care that someone puts in so that they can have a product that is safe, nutritious and part of a very important economy in this country.

I spent 15 minutes in a supermarket the other day staring at a wall of jams just trying to find one that I could be certain only contained Australian fruit. I had a choice of two out of about 10 different brands, and they were twice the price of everything else. I think more people would care to pick up the Australian fruit if they were educated to know exactly how important it is.

### You were part of the recent AUSVEG Women in Horticulture Grower Study Tour to Italy and



## Lettuce in the limelight

TO ENABLE DEEPER INSIGHTS INTO THE FINANCIAL, PRODUCTION AND EXPORTING PERFORMANCE OF KEY AUSTRALIAN VEGETABLE PRODUCTS, WE HAVE DEVELOPED A SERIES OF SIX CROP-SPECIFIC VEGGIE STATS PROFILES. WHILE THE FIRST TOPIC WILL FOCUS ON LETTUCE PRODUCTION, FUTURE EDITIONS WILL EXAMINE CABBAGE, CARROTS, BROCCOLI, PUMPKIN AND CAULIFLOWER.

R&D

Drive Train

Australian vegetable growers are undoubtedly experiencing significant pressure to continuously explore new opportunities, adopt new farming technologies and adjust the scale and nature of their operations to remain financially viable.

This notion is clearly supported by recent estimates that suggest that average vegetable business profits for levy paying vegetable growers have fallen from \$65,500 in 2011-12 to \$5,000 in 2012-13. This equates to an approximate reduction in business profit of 92 per cent from the previous year, according to the Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resources Economics and Sciences (ABARES). Australian vegetable growers' average business profits have fluctuated over time with median business profits totalling approximately \$46,464 since 2005-06.

### Diversifying crops

Despite the average Australian levy paying vegetable grower experiencing relatively marginal business profit in 2012-13, vegetable yields improved for most vegetables with tomatoes experiencing the largest yield improvements (45 per cent), followed by lettuce (30 per cent), capsicums (12 per cent) and onions (6 per cent), while potatoes and carrots improved at similar rates (1 per cent). This clearly illustrates most growers are continuously aiming to produce vegetables more cost effectively and efficiently; however, in many cases rising costs are negatively impacting on the ability to do this profitably.

Many Australian vegetable enterprises are responding to these challenges by diversifying the mix of vegetables that are produced. This diversification is largely being driven by

vegetable growers' motivation to achieve higher returns, but also to mitigate against risks that arise by solely producing one vegetable type.

The first of our crop-specific Veggie Stats profiles will focus on lettuce, with a detailed snapshot of the key facts and figures available in the following

pages.

Veggie Stats utilises data from ABARES and the Global Trade Atlas, funded by Horticulture Australia Limited (HAL) using the National Vegetable Levy and matched funds from the Australian Government.

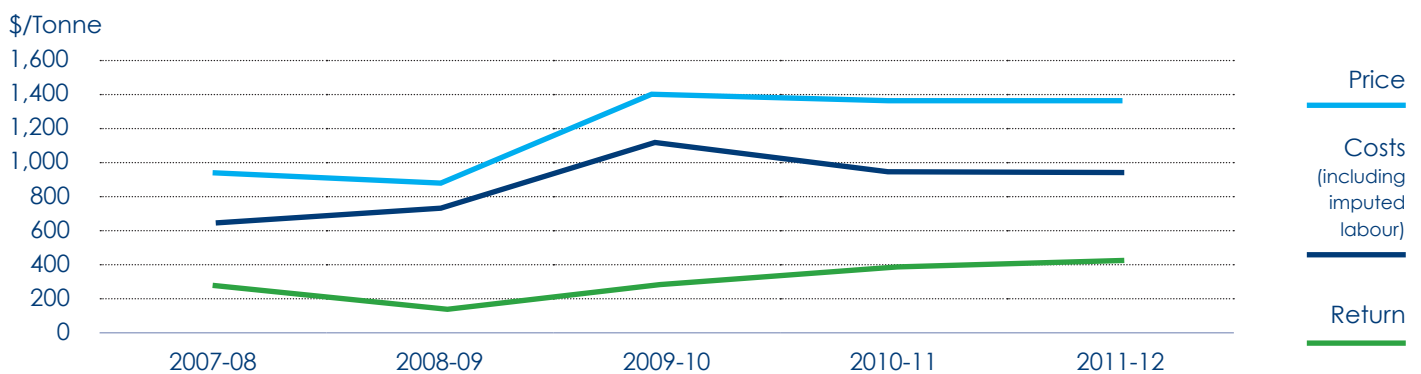


# VEGGIE STATS: LETTUCE

## Lettuce Production – Key facts and figures

- Lettuce growers' average returns have been increasing since 2008-09.
- Since 2007-08, average domestic lettuce prices and costs have both grown at a similar rate of around 45%.
- Lettuce production has varied over the recorded years, with no clear trend.
- Australia's fresh lettuce exports were greater than \$3 million in value in 2012-13.
- More than 40% of Australia's total fresh lettuce exports were sent to Singapore in 2012-13.

## Australian Lettuce Growers' Financial Performance (average per farm)



Source: ABARES vegetable farm survey 2011-12 and 2012-13, page 72  
Returns: The difference between price and costs (including imputed labour).

### Current Financial Performance

Australian lettuce growers' returns on average totalled \$418 per tonne in 2011-12, up 6% on the previous year.

In 2011-12, the average price received per tonne of lettuce was \$1,369, whereas the average cost to produce a tonne of lettuce was \$951.

### Long Term Trends

Lettuce growers' returns, on average, have continually increased annually since 2008-09.



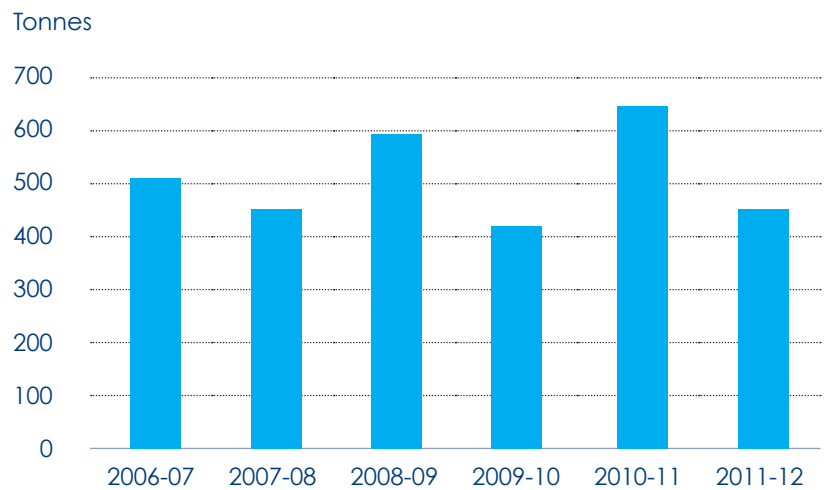
## Australian Lettuce Growers' Production (average per farm)

### Australian Lettuce Production

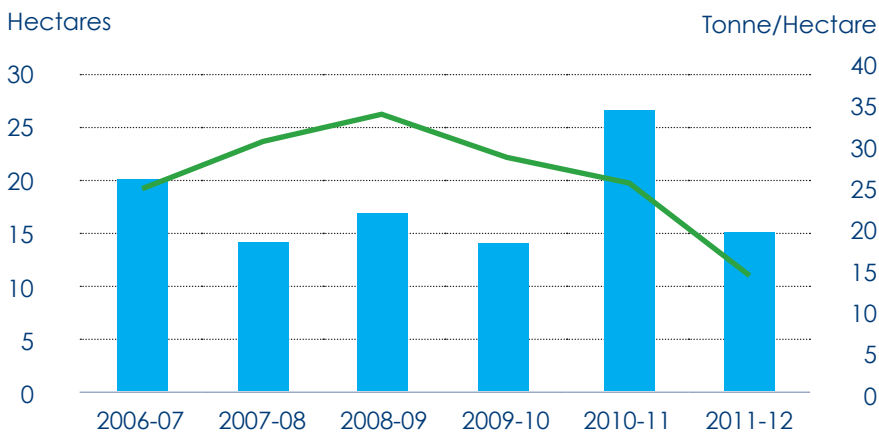
Australian lettuce production per farm averaged 452 tonnes in 2011-12, down 31% on the previous year.

Average lettuce production has varied over the years, with no clear trend.

Source: ABARES vegetable farm survey 2011-12 and 2012-13, page 72



## Area Planted v Yield (average per farm)



Source: ABARES vegetable farm survey 2011-12 and 2012-13, page 72

### Australian Lettuce Production

The average area planted in 2011-12 fell by 42% from the previous year.

In 2011-12, lettuce growers' average yields were the lowest since 2006-07 at 15 tonnes per hectare.

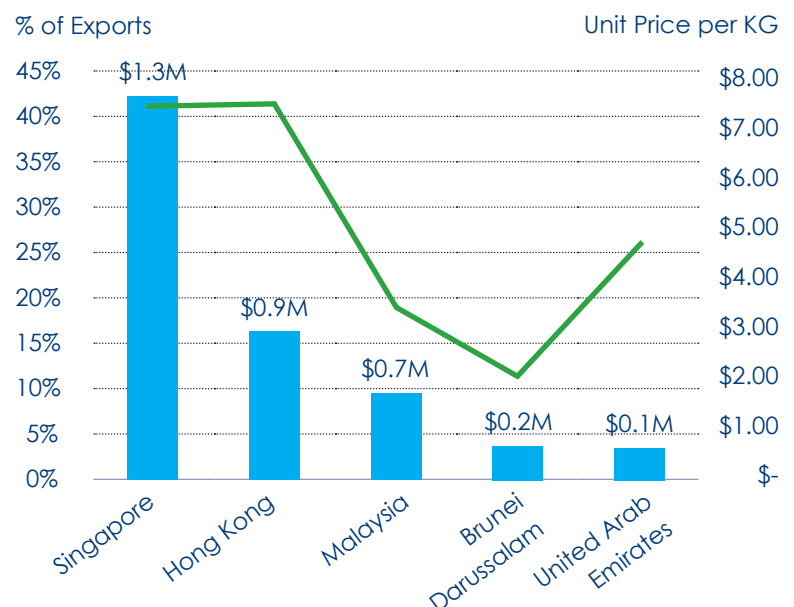
Area Planted  
Yield

## Destination of Australian Lettuce Exports and Export Prices Received

### Exports

The majority of Australia's lettuce exports were sent to Singapore in 2012-13.

Australia's lettuce exports received the highest export price per kg from Hong Kong and Singapore, whilst the lowest export price was Brunei Darussalam at \$1.97 per kg.



Source: UN Comtrade. Commodity 070519





# Oh deer!

## Is Bambi the next big headache for growers?

ICONIC AND ELEGANT, WILD DEER RARELY ELICIT THE SAME SENSE OF LOATHING ATTRIBUTED TO PESTS SUCH AS THE CANE TOAD. HOWEVER, AS AUSVEG BIOSECURITY AND SPECIAL PROJECTS COORDINATOR DR JESSICA LYE RECENTLY FOUND OUT, AUSTRALIAN FERAL DEER ARE EXPANDING THEIR RANGE AND ARE INCREASINGLY BECOMING A PROBLEM FOR VEGETABLE GROWERS.

According to Andrew Cox, CEO of the Invasive Species Council, feral deer pose a major problem to the vegetable industry, as well as agriculturalists across Australia.

“We regard deer as the biggest emerging pest problem in eastern Australia. They’re probably going to become as widespread as pigs and goats,” he said.

“They are prolific grazers so, therefore, they have high consumptions of vegetable matter each day.

“Until now they’ve predominantly been in forested areas but they’re moving out of the forested areas into the grasslands and woodlands and they are feeding on crops.”

Mr Cox explained that deer-induced damage to fences is becoming more common and they are increasingly a nuisance in urban areas, damaging gardens and causing road accidents.

“There are populations now emerging in north-west New South Wales, also in the Western Slopes, Condobolin, up near

Cobar and Moree. Down the south they’re near the border area. Around the Grampians there are red deer; sambar is the big one in Victoria.”

From a grower’s point of view, weeds and plant pathogens can be carried between properties on hooves and in deer faeces. Feral deer can also vector animal pests such as ticks and pathogens that affect human health such as *E. coli*, making them a biosecurity risk for a wide range of production industries. Most importantly, they have a liking for anything

green and fresh.

“They like fresh growth. If there is a food source of course they’re going to be attracted to it. We shouldn’t assume they will stick to the forests. They will expand further, if there is no control program, as their numbers increase and they are forced to inhabit new areas,” Mr Cox said.

“I’ve had a lot of complaints from land owners who are up every night dealing with deer.

“They’re quite hard to control because once you go after them they all scatter.”

A Toowoomba Valley horticulturalist recently spoke to *ABC Country Hour* about the impact of deer in the region.

“This year my son had beans in. They came in and took off all the tops of the beans when they were young, so he lost a lot of money there. Every time they come in they cost you money... these are a major farming pest,” he said.

**More facts needed**

While it is evident that deer species are dispersing across many areas of Australia, very little is known about deer distribution or current population numbers. This has implications for determining what the current and future impacts of feral deer will be on agricultural regions.

“It’s difficult to get a handle on the numbers because of the lack of studies. The last study was done about 10 years ago. A very conservative estimate was in the order of about 200,000 deer at that time. We think that was a gross underestimation,” Mr Cox said.

“In good seasons they increase their numbers by about 70 per cent, depending on the species.”

Most information about feral deer in Australia has arisen from anecdotal evidence, Mr Cox explained.

“We’re certainly hearing

from around the country that there are lots of concerns from agricultural groups, growers and farmers that deer are already a serious problem. There are other places where deer aren’t a problem yet but it’s clear they will become a problem pretty quickly.

“Probably what’s missing are some extra tools in the tool box... we certainly need to understand much more about where deer are and develop some new control measures.”

**Friend or foe?**

Despite the lack of research, Mr Cox said it is clear that escapes from deer farms and deliberate releases have contributed to growing populations.

“Deer farming was very lucrative until the early to mid-1990s and then the bottom dropped out of the market and people just opened their gates. That’s when the new populations emerged.”

The status of deer is also inconsistent within Australia. In Queensland and South Australia, they have been declared a pest. However, in New South Wales, Victoria and Tasmania, feral deer are protected for recreational hunting purposes.

The Invasive Species Council is adamant that recreational hunting is not enough to control deer population growth.

“When you’re doing feral animal control for an emerging species, you should be directing your efforts to where the densities are low and to the edges of the deer population to try and prevent the spread. That’s exactly the places where the hunters are not,” Mr Cox said.

However, Fred Davies, a deer farmer from Dunolly in Victoria, believes that declaring deer as a pest species in the state would be a mistake because the domestic market for deer meat is in a growth phase.

“...Why on earth would you make them a pest and shoot them to rot in the bush. This is an industry we have ready and waiting right in front of us,” he recently told *The Weekly Times*.

As deer continue to make their presence known in agricultural regions, the warning from the Invasive Species Council is clear: “If you don’t act early then you lose your chance to control the problem.”

**i** Any unusual plant pest should be reported immediately to the relevant state or territory agriculture agency through the Exotic Plant Pest Hotline (1800 084 881).

For further information, see the farm biosecurity website at [www.farmbiosecurity.com.au](http://www.farmbiosecurity.com.au), or contact AUSVEG Biosecurity and Special Projects Coordinator Dr Jessica Lye on (03) 9882 0277 or email [jessica.lye@ausveg.com.au](mailto:jessica.lye@ausveg.com.au).



“Deer farming was very lucrative until the early to mid-1990s and then the bottom dropped out of the market and people just opened their gates. That’s when the new populations emerged.”

- Andrew Cox, Invasive Species Council





# vegetables

australia

May/June 2015

**Jerrod Nichols**

The road to  
rhubarb

Country of  
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Time for change

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## The light at the end of the tunnel

ONCE THE HOME OF A MAJOR VEGETABLE PROCESSOR, SCOTTSDALE IN TASMANIA'S NORTH-EAST NOW BOASTS ONE OF AUSTRALIA'S LARGEST RHUBARB PRODUCERS. DIMI KYRIAKOU SPEAKS TO JERROD NICHOLS ABOUT HOW HIS CHANCE ENCOUNTER WITH THE CROP SPAWNED AN ARRAY OF POSSIBILITIES.

The funny thing about life is that you never know when a certain event will transform into a hidden opportunity. While it also depends on an individual's ability to look outside the square, a little bit of help from the people around you never goes astray either.

For Jerrod Nichols, this event occurred in 2003 when Simplot shut its doors in Scottsdale with a view to centralise its Tasmanian

factories in the state's north-west. Given that Tasmania's vegetable farms were responsible for supplying 85 per cent of the nation's frozen peas and beans, it was certainly a difficult time for local farmers to adjust.

As the costs to send produce to the other side of the state skyrocketed, some growers in Scottsdale chose to sell up or merge their farms. Jerrod, on the

other hand, looked to diversify.

"At that stage we were running a mixed farming operation with beef and fat lamb production, mixed vegetables

and poppies. We continued along that vein until the mid-2000s when we started doing some fresh market lines," he says.

"After growing a few other options, we came across a rhubarb grower from Queensland who was looking to expand."

### Taking a risk

The grower hailed from Tamborine Mountain in Queensland, which didn't lend itself well to rhubarb growing. Hot summers, combined with some pest and disease issues, meant the grower was looking to other locations to expand the crop – and he had his sights set on Tasmania.

"We've got a lovely climate here for most things. We're not too far from the coast so we don't get particularly cold, frosty weather in the winter. We're in

a decent rainfall area and we average around 40 inches. The soils are volcanic basalt salts predominately, which have good fertility and are suitable for growing most things," Jerrod says.

"The rhubarb plant is more tolerant of cold than it is of heat; it practically shuts down if you get consecutive days of 30 degrees or warmer. In the summer just gone, our thermometer only struck 30 degrees one day. So our rhubarb isn't going to shut down due to excess heat too many times!

"I was fairly confident that if we could produce a good product, the market would be there for rhubarb."

Jerrod now has 65 acres dedicated to rhubarb. The produce, marketed under the brand of Razz Rhubarb, supplies Tasmania and the majority of the mainland states, as well as Hong Kong.

"Our market has certainly grown. In the last five or six years there has been some really positive press coming through from chefs who have used rhubarb in different recipes. It's seen a little bit of a resurgence and an increase in demand."







## New crop, new challenges

Jerrod says one of the best things about growing rhubarb is the challenges it presents.

“Rhubarb has been a great challenge because there haven’t been any guidelines to go by. We’ve learnt as we’ve gone along,” he explains.

A successful Integrated Pest Management (IPM) strategy means that Jerrod hasn’t used any insecticides on the crop for about five years. Its biggest threat, the *Heliiothis* caterpillar, now has enough natural predators to keep it at bay.

“Weed control has also been a big one, but we’ve got a pretty good program in place now where we get things under control early when we first plant out. We do have a little bit of fungus that comes in if we have consistent wet weather for a period, but we have strategies in place for that.”

After some trial and error in the early years, Jerrod now prefers to

grow the rhubarb crop from crowns rather than seed, as he believes it is difficult to achieve a true replica of the parent plant using seed. However, this approach is also far more time-consuming.

“You have to let the crowns grow in the ground for a couple of years before we can dig them up, split them and replant them out. We’ve been lucky enough to get hold of a really nice variety and we have a product that’s as good as what anyone can produce,” he says.

“Every day there is something slightly different thrown at you, but just the overall satisfaction of seeing the expansion of the crop and producing a consistently good product has been exciting.”

## A glass of rhubarb

As any vegetable grower can attest, the issue of waste is a difficult one to overcome when buyer standards are so high. Jerrod says that a significant amount of crop is waste, but thankfully his cousin and her husband found a solution to that.

Jan and Holger Hughes returned to live in Scottsdale after 20 years of living in

Africa. Their time in a third world country taught them to avoid wasting food, so they set about finding a way to salvage the rhubarb seconds. Now, they transform about a tonne of rhubarb waste a week into various products.

“They were just playing around with some ideas – Holger is one to tinker with things. In an attempt to make some rhubarb champagne, he came up

with a non-alcoholic version and decided it was marketable. After running that idea by a few people, he thought there would be some legs in it,” Jerrod explains.

The Rhu Bru business has since taken off and the Hughes are now producing 18 rhubarb products with some available in the major supermarket chains, including a popular rhubarb compote. Back on the farm, there are also plans to expand the rhubarb growing division.

“It’s a process we can’t do super quickly, but we’re continually expanding. We’ve got structure to expand through the summer months when local product stops on the mainland,” Jerrod says.

He is a firm believer that Australia’s vegetable industry has a bright future ahead.

“I think the vegetable industry is in a pretty healthy place at the moment, which is predominately on the back of the Australian dollar dropping to a reasonable level

and regaining our share of the Australian market without the added pressure of imports.

“Tasmania is also in a pretty good position to grow a lot of things going forward, particularly with the new irrigation line.

“Opportunities will come knocking over the next few years, provided the currency does the right thing. We just have to take it one day at a time.”







## A fair go for seasonal workers: improving Australia's labour hire system

THE RISE OF EXPLOITATIVE LABOUR HIRE FIRMS IS ENDANGERING THE REPUTATION OF THE AUSTRALIAN HORTICULTURE INDUSTRY, POTENTIALLY DETERRING FOREIGN WORKERS FROM RETURNING. AS THE INDUSTRY IS HEAVILY DEPENDENT ON THESE FOREIGN WORKERS IN PEAK SEASONAL PERIODS, AUSVEG HAS PROPOSED A NEW SYSTEM OF ACCREDITATION FOR LABOUR HIRE COMPANIES THAT PROMISES TO RESTORE CONFIDENCE TO BOTH GROWERS AND WORKERS.

Australia's vegetable industry relies on the participation of tens of thousands of casual workers, including backpackers and foreign students, many of whom come to Australia for the opportunity to earn a wage to sustain them during travel or study. Unfortunately these workers can fall prey to unscrupulous labour hire companies that exploit their vulnerability in a number of ways, including underpayment and subjection to unlawful working conditions.

Due to a chronic shortage of local workers and an inability to take on the administrative burden of contracting seasonal labour, Australian growers often have no choice but to turn to labour hire companies during

the busiest times of the season.

Growers deal with the constant worry that if they do not harvest their crops within a critical period of time, the crops will go to waste. Labour hire firms provide a vital service, aggregating labour across multiple farms to provide continuity of work for growers and workers alike. Growers, however, currently have no satisfactory way of knowing for sure whether the company they have contracted to source labour is operating legally and fairly.

Growers are encouraged to have a signed agreement with their labour hire firm to ensure that correct wage and working conditions are adhered to. However, this current system,

despite being well-meaning, is not strong enough to properly deal with those labour hire firms that use exploitative practices. The lack of effective regulation in the sector allows companies that are identified as breaking the law to simply shut down and spring up again as a new enterprise, in a practice known as 'phoenix activity'.

### Australia's reputation at risk

The issue is clearly a significant one. Not only is a breach of human rights taking place, the international reputation of the Australian horticulture industry is at risk of being seriously damaged. This can already be seen in statistics from the Department of Immigration and Border Protection, which show that over the past two years, the number of 417 visas issued has dropped by more than 34,000. The concerning drop in numbers can also be partly attributed to changing economic conditions in partner countries such as employment levels and currency fluctuations.

A 417 visa is a 'Working Holiday' visa that can only be obtained by a person between 18 and 31 years of age and

allows the holder to stay in Australia for up to one year and work for up to six months with any one employer.

The impact of a decline in people travelling on these visas could be devastating for Australian horticulture businesses. With more export opportunities available than ever before and ongoing pressure for growers to meet ever-increasing quotas, damage to labour supply means that businesses cannot achieve their potential. This does not only affect individual businesses; due to the nature of the problem it will be the entire Australian economy that also shows the damage, something that could have repercussions for the whole country.

### A new plan

To prevent such a situation, it is imperative that the industry acts now. AUSVEG has proposed a new plan that aims to resolve the problems of the current system. This plan proposes that the Federal Government introduces an official Register of Approved Firms. To be eligible for inclusion on this list, labour hire companies would need approval from four government

#### AUSVEG's proposed accreditation scheme would require approval from four organisations:

- The Australian Taxation Office.
- The Department of Employment.
- The Department of Immigration and Border Protection.
- The statutory body in charge of occupational health and safety in the state in which the firm is registered (e.g WorkSafe Victoria).



### Benefits to growers

- Easy access to more productive and efficient workers.
- Risk of legal action against growers is minimised.
- Growers can be confident that they are using fair, safe labour hire companies.

### Benefits to workers

- Easy access to fair, safe working conditions.
- A better experience of Australian seasonal work.

departments, including the Australian Taxation Office, the Department of Employment, the Department of Immigration and Border Protection and the statutory body in charge of occupational health and safety in the state in which the firm is registered.

For these bodies to grant approval, companies would need to prove a history of compliance with Australia's workplace, industrial relations and taxation laws and be subject to regular inspection or auditing to demonstrate continuing compliance.

This accreditation would not exist simply as a symbolic hurdle to be checked off by companies. The Register of Approved Firms should be made easily available to the public by being posted on the websites of both the Department of Employment and the Department of Immigration and Border Protection. It should also be widely promoted to anyone looking to access a temporary work visa in Australia as well as within the industry to give growers the confidence that their hired labour is being treated fairly.

### The importance of a fair system

Under this proposed model, both growers and workers would be protected from unscrupulous companies. Both parties would be able to easily choose a labour hire firm that is operating fairly and legally, with the intended result being that workers are more productive and more likely to return to the same farms time and time again.

The importance of this intended outcome cannot be overestimated. The Australian horticulture industry is heavily reliant on foreign seasonal workers and these workers must be protected to ensure the industry's continued success. It is the hope of AUSVEG that the Federal Government and all sectors of the industry will support the proposal and together implement an effective reform, one that will restore integrity to Australia's labour hire system and allow the horticulture industry to thrive.



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