

VG16060 - Vegetable Agrichemical Pest Management Needs and Priorities – 2nd Quarterly Industry Update

SUMMARY

AUSVEG is coordinating the Vegetable Agrichemical Pest Management Needs and Priorities (VG16060) project, a strategic levy investment under the Hort Innovation Vegetable Fund.

The project's objective is to coordinate the vegetable industry agrichemical pest needs by identifying and prioritising potential gaps through implementation of an effective prioritisation process for the vegetable industry.

In this 3 year project, the Project Coordinator, Patrick Arratia, will establish a priorities database (by crop), that will identify industry pest priorities and categorise them regionally (where appropriate), he will also assist on the update of the Strategic Agrichemical Review Process documents (SARP). Using this database, the Project Coordinator will generate a yearly priority list for each commodity, resulting in the development of a gap list that identifies the top five agrichemical priorities for each commodity, to be supplied to Hort Innovation as a draft and final list, prior to the annual AgChem Collaborative Forum.

GROUND WORK

For this second quarter, the Project Coordinator has continued industry consultation and engagement with growers and agronomists in Gippsland (VIC), Shepparton/Swan Hill (VIC), Bowen/Ayr (QLD), Virginia (SA), Lockyer Valley (QLD), Sydney Basin (NSW), Devonport (TAS) and Hobart (TAS). Over 60 growers and agronomists have been consulted for this project to discuss pest and diseases in their specific regions.

A workshop has taken place in Devonport, at the Forthside Vegetable Research Facility, covering growers from the North-west Tasmanian region. The workshop took place on the 14th of February, targeting carrots and peas. A total of 15 people attended the workshop and the workshop ran for approximately 2 hours. Pest, disease and weed issues, for targeted crops, were discussed by the group, recorded and subsequently added to the projects database. Further grower visits were held following this workshop, crops such as brassicas and beans, which are also grown in the region, were discussed.

CHEMICAL ACCESS ADVISORY GROUP (CAAG)

As part of this project, the Project Coordinator has organised a Chemical Access Advisory Group (CAAG) for holding meetings twice a year. The intention of these meetings is to seek advice from Hort Innovation R&D Minor Use Project Manager and CAAG members, technical group, in prioritising and shortlisting pest, disease and weed issues identified during industry consultation.

The CAAG is comprised of experts in each of the relevant disciplines, some of the expertise the CAAG members brings to the project include:

- Insecticide Resistance - expertise and experience on insecticide resistance in aphids across Australia, and management strategies to help growers and advisers control resistant pests.
- Plant Pathology - expertise and experience in plant pathology, over 20 years of experience in diagnostic plant pathology and integrated disease management of horticultural crops and pathology support to a number of R&D projects.
- Integrated Pest Management - 30 years of experience in agriculture, horticulture and integrated pest management.
- Technical specialist weed expert, 20 years of experience in weed research.

The First CAAG meeting took place in AUSVEG Camberwell office, Melbourne, the 7th of March. The main objective of this first CAAG meeting was to familiarize CAAG members with the project, improve the prioritisation process and data gathering methodology. Due to not having a robust data base as yet, the pests priorities recorded up to date have not been shortlisted to the top five priorities for the agchem forum. This step will be postponed and completed before the agchem forum, which will take place in the second part of the year.

AGCHEM FORUM

The Agchem forum is a platform that facilitates a direct and formal discussion between the users of agchem technologies and the manufacturers. The Agchem forum provides a platform for information sharing and cross industry collaboration to support product registration applications that can deliver cost savings, productivity gains and improve access to agchem technologies for Australian growers.

Hort Innovation has supported the horticultural sector to gain access to additional funding for strategic investments. For the last couple of years Hort Innovation has access assistant grants for access to industry priority uses of agchem chemicals.

A number of different projects have been funded to renew important minor use permits and for label extension to improve agchem access for vegetable growers. Some of the projects that are being funded are VG16020, ST15027, ST15026, ST16006, MT17012 and ST17000. For further details about these projects, please [click here](#) to access Hort innovation – Vegetable Minor Use Permits and Label Registrations – March 2018 Update.

This is why it is extremely important for vegetable growers and agronomists to participate and to have their say in regards to pest issues, Hort Innovation needs to know what are the real pest issues for vegetable growers in Australia so funding's can be expended effectively and efficiently to address the real pests issues for vegetable growers.

Vegetable Agrichemical Pest Management Needs and Priorities (VG16060) project gives growers and agronomists the venue to express and manifest pest issues, one of them being online crop specific survey.

NATIONAL PEST SURVEY

We take this opportunity to kindly remind growers and agronomists to get involved and to please take the time to fill in these crop-specific surveys, which cover beans and peas, beetroot, brassica leafy vegetables, brassicas, carrot, celery, cucumber, eggplant, leek, lettuce, parsley, peppers, silverbeet and spinach, snow peas and sugar snap peas, spring onions and shallots, sweet corn, sweet potato, zucchini and other vegetables.

This online crop specific national pest survey is an extremely important tool for this project to gather pest, disease and weed information from vegetable growers and agronomists across Australia. Information gathered via online crop specific surveys will compliment information gathered for industry consultation (workshops and one on one).

Pest priorities identified via online survey, crop specific workshop and one on one consultation will be entered to the pest priorities database and then through the prioritisation process. Pest priorities identified will inform industry actions at the annual AgChem forum, aid in updating industry Strategic Agrichemical Review Process documents (SARPs) and identify potential solutions to address these gaps.

Click in the banner or link below to access crop specific surveys:



Link:

<https://ausveg.com.au/vg16060/#Surveys>

NEXT REGIONAL WORKSHOPS

VG16060 industry consultation continues, in the next few months Patrick Arratia, project coordinator, will be visiting and conducting 2 crop specific workshops/working groups in the following regions:

- Bundaberg (QLD) Early May Crops: Sweet potato, zucchini
- Mareeba (QLD) Late May Crops: Sweet potato, pumpkins
- Coffs Harbour (NSW) Mid June Crops: Leafy vegetables (TBC)
- Perth (WA) Late June Crops: TBC

So keep an eye open on Patrick, more details will be released soon! If you are interested in participating and/or if you would like to have one workshop hosted in your region, please contact Patrick Arratia at patrick.arratia@ausveg.com.au or on 03 9882 0277, or contact your local VegNET coordinator.