

## **Final Report**

# **Annual Vegetable Industry Seminar 2021**

**Project leader:**

Nathan McIntyre

**Delivery partner:**

AUSVEG Ltd

**Project code:**

VG20000

**Project:**

Annual Vegetable Industry Seminar 2021 (VG20000)

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Level 7

141 Walker Street

North Sydney NSW 2060

Telephone: (02) 8295 2300

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## Summary

VG20000 *Annual Vegetable Industry Seminar 2021* commenced in February 2021 and resulted in the successful delivery of three webinars and the physical Annual Vegetable Industry Seminar, held at the Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre on Wednesday June 9 as part of Hort Connections 2021.

Two of the project's webinars focused on the draft refresh of the vegetable industry's Strategic Investment Plan (SIP) to inform growers and industry stakeholders of the strategy for the next iteration of the plan and provide an opportunity for industry to provide feedback and nominate their priority areas for investment.

This project aimed to showcase the five outcome areas of the SIP by providing a general overview of this process from Hort Innovation in the first webinar held on Wednesday 28 April 2021. The second webinar, held on Tuesday 24 August, reinforced the draft SIP and allowed for grower and industry stakeholder input to assist Hort Innovation in the process of finalising the SIP.

The third webinar was held on Wednesday 22 September and focused on the recently-identified exotic pest American Serpentine leafminer to raise awareness in the industry of this important pest and highlight the issues – and potential solutions – to industry to deal with the pest.

The AVIS at Hort Connections was attended by over 300 growers and industry members who learned from the expert speakers and panels on a wide range of topics. It showcased investments in several major levy-funded areas, including VegKIT, VegNET, export development and horticulture industry marketing to highlight the impact of these major projects for the vegetable and wider horticulture industry.

While COVID-19 restrictions caused some logistical issues for speakers and attendees, AUSVEG was able to pivot the content to find suitable alternative speakers where required to ensure a high-quality event was still delivered for those able to attend Hort Connections 2021. Attendees in Victoria and other locations that were not able to attend were able to watch the live-streamed sessions, which were also recorded for use post-event.

VG20000 was the latest instalment to a series of successful seminars held in previous years – namely, the 2016-2018 Global Innovations in Horticulture Seminars, and Export Opportunities for Carrots, Sweet Corn, Bean, Broccoli and Baby Leaf – Symposia and the previously-run AVIS seminar in 2019. The project team arranged for key presenters to address the Australian horticulture industry and introduce new information that can help growers – and the broader industry – increase the profitability, efficiency and productivity of their farming operations. The seminars and webinar speaker list were developed by AUSVEG in consultation with Hort Innovation to ensure thorough coverage of key projects and investments.

It is recommended that the AVIS is continued as a longer-term, 3-year project that focuses on the core delivery of a physical seminar to align with the Hort Connections conference. Based on feedback from participants, it is also highly recommended that funding for vegetable levy payers is reinstated to assist them and new attendees to participate in the seminar and learn the valuable levy-funded content that is on offer at the event.

## Keywords

Strategic Investment Plan, VegNET, VegKIT, Marketing, Export Market Development, Annual Vegetable Industry Seminar

## Introduction

The Annual Vegetable Industry Seminar (AVIS) has been delivered in various formats (and under different names) for a number of years. Previous projects have provided growers with an overview of leading technologies and innovations from overseas in order to assist them improve productivity and profitability within their businesses. Feedback over the duration of previous seminars has been overwhelmingly positive, with growers continually gaining useful information on new products and services to assist their businesses.

VG20000 *Annual Vegetable Industry Seminar 2021* continued to build on this foundation to showcase more locally developed solutions and Hort Innovation-funded research and development (R&D) investment projects that are directly benefiting growers. Growers have a continued need to understand the levy investment landscape and gain valuable information on how R&D investments are supporting their businesses through projects that deliver on the strategic investment plan's (SIP's) five outcomes.

This project focused on the draft refresh of the vegetable industry SIP to highlight the key investment areas to growers over the five year duration. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, a webinar series was introduced to expand the value offering to growers and industry by providing them with more touchpoints throughout the year. The project also placed a greater emphasis on local technologies, innovations and projects to attendees.

VG20000 was significant for growers as it provided them with the opportunity to have input into the draft refresh of the SIP process and have their voices heard, which was successfully implemented a direct feedback mechanism and live in-session questions from growers, as well as being able to discuss areas of concern directly with speakers at Hort Connections.

The move to showcase local projects and technologies has been well received by participants given the quality work being conducted by research organisations and service providers, along with strong advancements in the Australian ag tech sector. With an inability for growers to travel overseas to look at technology solutions, local solutions have become more important. The AVIS acts as a conduit between growers and suppliers.

Alignment with the SIP was a pivotal component of this project and this was a major focus of the physical seminar. The following SIP outcomes being discussed:

### **Outcome 1: Export Market Growth**

This outcome was covered in the seminar through the “Vegetable Export – International Trade Outlook” session, which was delivered as a panel discussion with a series of industry experts to discuss the current vegetable export landscape.



### **Outcome 2: Increased Demand and value of the Domestic Vegetable Industry**

This panel discussion was titled “VegKIT: Can kids learning to love veggies drive future demand?” and tied in closely with the second outcome area. This session was a one-hour panel discussion moderated by Claire Gardner from Flinders University.



### Outcome 3: Improved Farm Productivity

This outcome was covered within the “Advanced Crop Protection: Feeding people not pests” session. This was run in conjunction with QDAF and discussed several key pest issues that have been addressed with levy investment, including Serpentine leafminer and Fall armyworm.



### Outcome 5: Improved Industry Capabilities for Innovation and Adoption

The “Classroom to Career” session focused on building capability within the industry and highlighted the importance of positioning the horticulture industry as an attractive employment prospect for job seekers and graduates.





## Methodology

The methodology outlined in this project built on from the successful delivery of similar events. The activities undertaken within this project, as outlined in the RFP, were:

1. Identify seminar and webinar topics that align with the vegetable industry Strategic Investment Plan and seek input and approval from Hort Innovation for proposed agenda and potential speakers.
2. Develop implementation plan for the seminar and all webinars, including speakers and delivery dates, in conjunction with Hort Innovation.
3. Invite growers to the seminar as well as promoting it to growers via a dedicated media release to industry and regional media, the National Vegetable Industry Communications Program (VG18000), including *Vegetables Australia* and the AUSVEG Weekly Update, as well as the various VegNET officers and AUSVEG's extensive industry networks.
4. Develop participant evaluation surveys for the in-person seminar and webinar series.
5. Convene the webinar series and the in-person Annual Vegetable Industry Seminar to bring together all relevant industry stakeholders, as well as members of the Vegetable Strategic Investment Advisory Panels (SIAPs), to learn about and discuss new horticultural practices applicable for the Australian vegetable industry. The seminar will be held at Hort Connections, an event with suitable facilities for a seminar of such size and nature.
6. Record speaker presentations from the in-person seminar and disseminate information presented at the seminar to Australian vegetable growers and the wider industry.
7. Develop post-seminar and webinar communications materials for the National Vegetable Industry Communications Program and VegNET for dissemination to the wider industry.
8. Produce a Final Report containing all relevant information relating to the Annual Vegetable Industry Seminar to be submitted to Hort Innovation and circulated to all relevant industry stakeholders. The Final Report, including detailed recommendations and associated outputs will be submitted to Hort Innovation by 30 September 2021.

As this project was delivered to a hybrid audience, a large cohort of growers and industry was able to be reached across the range of project activities. The first webinar attracted 92 registrants, while the second webinar resulted in 104 registered attendees. The final webinar on American Serpentine Leafminer attracted over 160 registrations with 122 people attending on the day. The physical seminar attracted over 300 attendees at Hort Connections from across Australia and while the Victorian delegates couldn't attend physically due to COVID-19 travel restrictions, the seminar was broadcast to all Victorian delegates virtually and also recorded for post-event purposes.

All webinars contained live polls to engage with the respective audiences while also having dedicated Q&A time at the end to allow participants to provide feedback on the SIP refresh process and the webinar content overall. The seminar was less aligned to generating feedback opportunities but rather to provide an education platform to attendees on current investments in the vegetable industry.

The target audience for the Annual Vegetable Industry Seminar is primarily levy paying vegetable growers, but members of the supply chain were also encouraged to participate in the webinar and seminar program.

In order to attract attendees to all activities, a range of promotional activities were developed and distributed to maximise attendance. Promotional EDMs were sent out through the AUSVEG database and webinar content was also promoted through the AUSVEG Weekly Update and social media channels. In addition to this, AUSVEG and Hort Innovation collaborated on speaker topics and content for the webinars and seminars to ensure that they would be impactful for all participants and provide key information on the draft SIP and core levy investment projects. A project reference group was established, consisting of key Hort Innovation and AUSVEG staff, who collectively drove the successful outcomes of the project.

## Outputs

Output	Status
Webinar Series	Completed (Appendix 1)
Annual Vegetable Industry Seminar at Hort Connections 2021	Completed (Appendix 2)
Speaker Presentations	Completed (Appendix 2) Available here: <a href="https://hortconnections.com.au/speaker-sessions-2021/">https://hortconnections.com.au/speaker-sessions-2021/</a>
Post Event Feedback Survey	Completed (Appendix 3)
COVID-19 Risk Management Plan	Completed (Appendix 4)
Communications Plan	Completed (Appendix 5)
Final Report	Completed

## Outcomes

The primary outcome of the AVIS was to present relevant information on levy investments and the draft SIP refresh process to growers and relevant industry members. Attendance at the AVIS was maximised by holding the event during the main session at Hort Connections, while the three webinars were well-attended by growers and the broader industry.

By offering participation in the seminar and webinars to a broad range of levy payers, AUSVEG sought to ensure that a greater number of vegetable growers were able to learn about new developments applicable to their business. As an industry, there is a recognised need for a forum for vegetable growers to knowledge share and gain a greater understanding of the levy system and how it impacts their businesses.

Below are the specific outcome areas outlined in the project RFP and how they were successfully achieved through the webinar and seminar content.

### **Increased awareness of Hort Innovation’s R&D investments and related programs by the Australian vegetable industry, as well as greater understanding of the levy system and Hort Innovation membership.**

The AVIS project has successfully covered this outcome through the delivery of the first two webinars focused on the draft SIP process and the seminar at Hort Connections that highlighted several major levy funded projects. The webinars provided an in-depth overview of the levy system while giving growers the opportunity to have greater input into this process than has been previously provided. Through the provision of live polling and Q&A time within the webinars, attendees were able to provide input into the process. Refer to appendix 6 for poll data.

The inclusion of the seminar as a concurrent session at Hort Connections opened the content to a wider audience who were able to gather information on key Hort Innovation R&D investments. The change saw over 300 delegates attend the AVIS seminar at Hort Connections eclipsing previous attendance rates. The seminar was also the major component for increasing awareness of levy funded projects with several major projects included within the program. These include, VegNET, Veg Kit and Export and Market Development among others.

### **Knowledge transfer to the vegetable industry value chain on research findings, best practice, emerging risks and opportunities.**

The seminar at Hort Connections provided the knowledge transfer opportunity to showcase key research findings from some of the largest vegetable industry projects funded by Hort Innovation. Information on risks and opportunities were also covered, particularly in the export and advanced crop protection sessions as these topics have been areas of significant interest for growers, either through COVID-19-related impacts or the global issues facing vegetable exports.

### **Change in participants attitude and aspirations towards adopting R&D outcomes on farm which will subsequently contribute to building a stronger, more resilient Australian vegetable industry.**

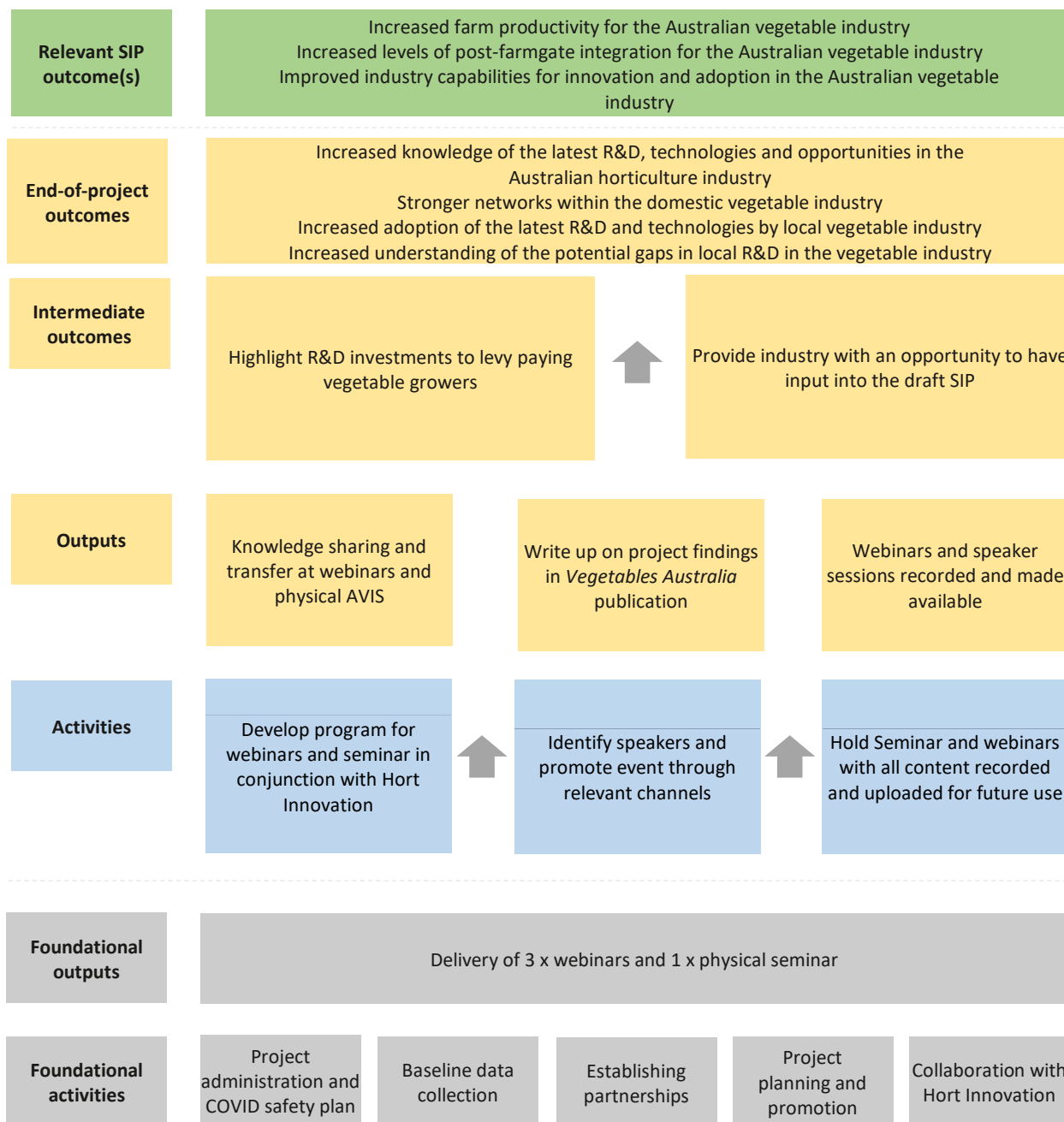
The feedback received from participants was very positive to the content delivered throughout Hort Connections. By carefully selecting the topics, the AVIS was able to share information with growers and provide them with information to enhance their businesses. In the survey data collected from attendees, the speaker sessions overall rated positively among delegates.

### **Enhanced communication and sharing of knowledge and information of technical developments, with and amongst all sectors of the vegetable industry.**

The sharing of technical information through the delivery methods of this project has effectively communicated important aspects of the vegetable levy, what value growers are getting in return for their levy – either directly or indirectly – and also provided them with a platform to have input into helping shape the SIP for the next iteration through the interaction and engagement provided through the webinar content. Contact details of relevant speakers were also provided to participants on the webinars to ask question post-event if needed.

## Monitoring and evaluation

### Program Logic



### Scope

The purpose of this M&E plan has been to ensure that the project delivered on its objectives and collected valuable information for future similar investments. The M&E results will be utilised by Hort Innovation and AUSVEG as the project delivery partner to determine areas for improvement on future projects. Given the ongoing nature of the AVIS in various formats, ensuring that the program remains valuable and relevant to vegetable levy paying growers is of high importance.

The Key Evaluation Questions (KEQs) for this project are outlined below:

- Has the project been successful in helping to improve the latest research, technologies and export opportunities in the vegetable industry?
- Has the project been successful in communicating the lessons learned from attending growers to the wider industry?
- Has the project been successful in generating discussion and ideas from the participants for potential research that can be undertaken in the Australian vegetable industry to help improve production and profitability?

### Performance Expectations

Logic level	What to monitor	Performance expectation (KPIs) and/or monitoring questions	Data collection – method (e.g. survey) and source (e.g. growers)	Timing of, and responsibility for, data collection	Result
Activities and outputs	Successfully run and administer 3 x webinars and 1 x physical seminar  Knowledge sharing and transfer at webinars and physical AVIS	- 100 growers in attendance at the AVIS seminar at Hort Connections  - 30-50 attendees at each of the webinars	- Data from Hort Connections on total attendees checked-in to events  - Data collected from the webinar platform on total registrations and final attendance	Ongoing (Project lead)	Over 300 growers attended AVIS at Hort Connections  Over 300 attendees across three webinars
Intermediate outcomes	- Highlight R&D investments to levy paying vegetable growers  - Provide industry with an opportunity to have input into the draft SIP	R&D investments highlighted to over 300 attendees at Hort Connections.  Webinar platform provided input opportunities for the approximately 50 attendees at the first 2 webinars.	Polling questions asked of attendees at the webinar.  Feedback obtained from attendees at Hort Connections	Post webinar and seminar data collection for final report purposes	
End-of-project outcomes	Increased knowledge of the latest R&D, technologies and opportunities in the Australian horticulture industry  Stronger networks within the domestic and international horticulture industry	All attendees gained greater insights into the levy system and core projects within this.	Data gathered from surveys and post event feedback	End of project for final report purposes	

	<p>Increased adoption of the latest R&amp;D and technologies by local vegetable industry</p> <p>Increased understanding of the potential gaps in local R&amp;D in the vegetable industry</p>				
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**Monitoring data collections and analysis**

Data was collected from multiple sources during VG20000, with attendees at the webinars asked to complete live polls during each event. In addition to this, the AVIS was included in the Hort Connections post-event survey to collect information on the seminars suitability for attendees. Below are some of the collated datasets from the webinars. Information on the polling data has been included in appendix 3 and 6.

**Evaluation data collection and analysis**

Based on the data obtained from the webinars and seminar, it is clear that participants are eager to provide feedback on the Strategic Investment Plan and how the levy is invested moving forward. Data obtained from the first webinar shows that extension and domestic and international market growth are the most important areas for levy investment over the next 5 years. When comparing the evaluation of this project against the Key Evaluation Questions, the following information has been identified.

**Has the project been successful in helping to improve the latest research, technologies and export opportunities in the global horticulture industry?**

Yes.

Attendees were provided an open line to provide feedback, this enables all current and future projects to ensure that they are aligning with the views of levy payers. This project has obtained direct feedback from growers on the areas where they believe the levy should be spent. In addition to this, by holding the seminar as one of the concurrent sessions as Hort Connections, it provided a platform to engage with a wider industry cohort to showcase several of the largest projects in the vegetable industry and increase awareness of the outcomes from these projects.

**Has the project been successful in communicating the lessons learned from attending growers to the wider industry?**

Yes.

AUSVEG has distributed the learnings from this project through all relevant channels including *Vegetables Australia* and other third-party media outlets. By also extending this project to include additional touch points at the webinars, participants provided input on multiple occasions as opposed to a single access point throughout the year.

**Has the project been successful in generating discussion and ideas from the participants for potential research that can be undertaken in the Australian vegetable industry to help improve production and profitability?**

Yes.

The project has successfully identified the areas that growers would like to see vegetable levy investment. In line with the draft SIP, extension and export market development have been identified as areas for increased R&D investment to improve the productivity and profitability of the vegetable industry.

This project has shown that there is a strong appetite for projects of this nature that provide growers with a platform to engage with the direction of future levy investments. Utilising the seminar to highlight major levy projects also provided an excellent platform to reinforce the value that the levy has on a wide range of industry stakeholders including growers and the subsequent supply chain at Hort Connections.

#### **Reporting and continuous improvement**

This project has reported through a range of methods, including milestone reports, articles in *Vegetables Australia* Spring 2021 edition, content on AUSVEG website and coverage in media outlets. In addition to this, this project has also delivered findings and outcomes at the Hort Connections industry conference and supplemented this delivery through a series of successful webinars to disseminate information to industry.

To ensure that future similar projects will provide value to industry, feedback will be taken on board that has been obtained from this M&E process to guide the next iteration of the project. Consultation with growers and SIAP members will also be conducted for ideas on future topics and themes.

## **Recommendations**

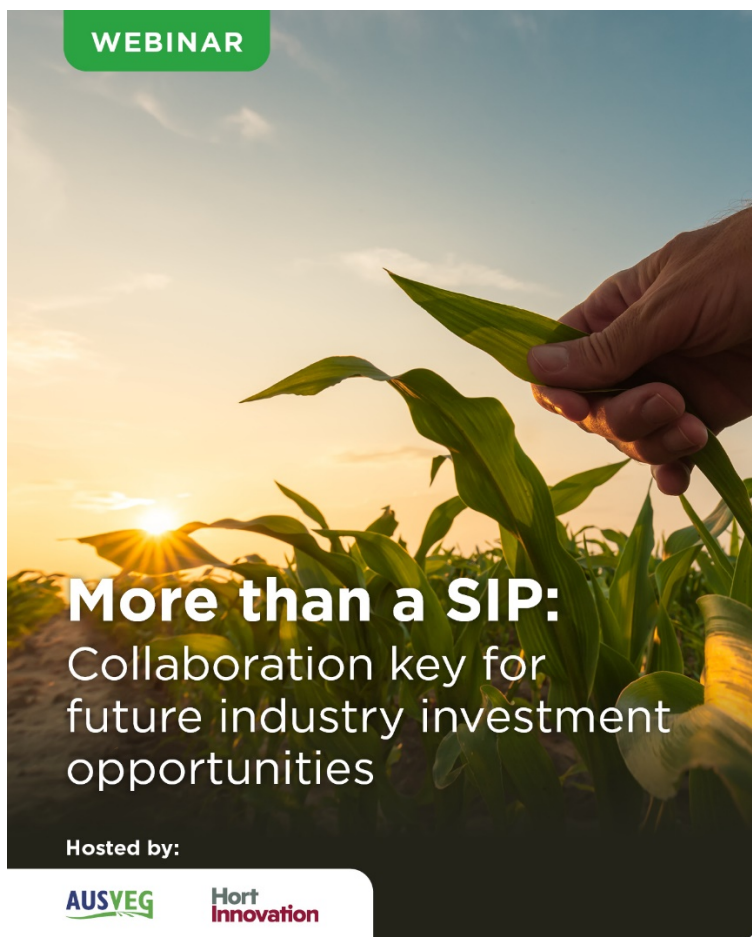
The recommendations from this project are:

- To continue with a long-term project of a similar nature. Based on feedback from participants, it is suggested that a 3-year project that focuses on the core delivery of a physical seminar to align with the Hort Connections conference.
- Based on feedback from participants and industry, it is highly recommended that funding for vegetable levy payers be reinstated to assist growers to participate in the seminar and learn from the valuable content.
- Future content should focus on a mix between project delivery outcomes for industry along with emerging technologies and innovations that have real-world solutions for growers. These solutions should be sourced from a mix of local and global companies.

## Appendices

### Appendix 1: AVIS webinar promotional material

#### Webinar 1



#### **You're invited**

#### **More than a SIP: Collaboration key for future industry investment opportunities**

Did you know that the vegetable industry has a Strategic Investment Plan (SIP) that provides the roadmap to guide Hort Innovation's investment of levies and government contributions?

In 2021, Hort Innovation is engaging with vegetable growers and industry stakeholders to develop a refreshed SIP for the vegetable industry that will span from 2022-2026. The vegetable SIP will lay the foundation for decision making in levy investments, representing a balanced view of stakeholders from within the industry, helping Hort Innovation prioritise and implement relevant R&D, marketing and export needs over the next five years.

Hort Innovation and AUSVEG are hosting a webinar to provide an overview of what the SIP renewal process will look like for the vegetable industry and how you can provide input.

#### **SPEAKERS**

**MC:**



**Nathan McIntyre**, National Marketing Manager, *AUSVEG*

**Speakers:**



**Matt Brand**

Chief Executive Officer,  
Hort Innovation

Matt joined Hort Innovation as CEO in 2018. He's driven by his passion to achieve the very best for Australia's horticulture growers and the sector as a whole. Matt is responsible for the overall strategic direction of the company and works closely with industry stakeholders to ensure that Hort Innovation is delivering for the sector.



**James Whiteside**

Chief Executive Officer,  
AUSVEG

James Whiteside is the Chief Executive Officer of AUSVEG, the peak industry body representing Australia's vegetable and potato growers.

Prior to joining AUSVEG in December 2016, James had a 23 year career with Incitec Pivot Limited, Australian agriculture's largest input supplier and a significant manufacturer of a range of chemicals for agriculture and mining. James served as the Chief Operating Officer of Incitec Pivot Fertilisers for five years, and was Chief Executive Officer of Quantum Fertilisers, the Hong Kong-based joint venture fertiliser trading company.

James is also a Director of Verdant Minerals Limited, a private resources company with a substantial phosphate project in the Northern Territory.



**Mark Spees**

Industry Strategic Partner,  
Hort Innovation

Mark is the Industry Strategic Partner for the vegetable cluster, which includes onions, potatoes, sweet potatoes, processing tomatoes, melons, mushrooms and of course, vegetables. He leads Hort Innovation's collaboration with the vegetable cluster to identify and execute strategic investments that will bring benefit to his industries.



**Adam Briggs**

Head of Data & Insights,  
Hort Innovation

Adam drives Hort Innovation's Data & Insights function. He leads the management of the industry analysis R&D portfolio and the undertaking of investment analysis and supports the delivery of the Monitoring & Evaluation Framework.



**Brian Ramsay**

Managing Director,  
Inovact Consulting

Brian Ramsay is Managing Director of Inovact Consulting, an Australian firm that specialises in strategy and advice for industry service organisations and businesses on how to lead, design and succeed with industry-wide innovation.

He works with business, industry and government leaders to design implementable strategies that have impact and to catalyse systemic change for industry organizations and across multiple sectors. Brian has particular expertise in agrifood industries, including horticulture, meat, dairy, cotton, grains and seafood.

Brian is currently working with Hort Innovation on the renewal of the Strategic Investment Plans for each industry.

Webinar 2

A promotional image for a webinar. It features a close-up of a hand holding a small green seedling with roots. In the background, there are rows of similar seedlings in a black nursery tray. A green banner in the top left corner contains the word 'WEBINAR' in white. The main title 'Looking ahead: Setting the direction of levy investment for the next five years' is overlaid in white text. At the bottom, it says 'Hosted by:' followed by the logos for AUSVEG and Hort Innovation.

**WEBINAR**

**Looking ahead:**  
Setting the direction of  
levy investment for the  
next five years

Hosted by:

**AUSVEG** **Hort  
Innovation**

**You're invited**

**Looking ahead: Setting the direction of levy investment for the next five years**

Hort Innovation is in the process of developing the next five-year Strategic Investment Plan (SIP) for the Australian vegetable industry. The vegetable SIP is the roadmap that ensures levy investment decisions align with industry for research, development, extension, and marketing (Domestic and International) investment priorities.

An important part of the process is listening to what growers have to say. Hort Innovation, in collaboration with AUSVEG, will be hosting a webinar to provide an update on the SIP renewal process and allow the vegetable industry and growers to provide final input.

## SPEAKERS

MC:

**Nathan McIntyre**, National Marketing Manager, *AUSVEG*

SPEAKERS:



### **Mark Spees**

Industry Strategic Partner,  
Hort Innovation

Mark is the Industry Strategic Partner for the vegetable cluster, which includes onions, potatoes, sweet potatoes, processing tomatoes, melons, mushrooms and of course, vegetables. He leads Hort Innovation's collaboration with the vegetable cluster to identify and execute strategic investments that will bring benefit to his industries.



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Head of Data & Insights,  
Hort Innovation

Adam drives Hort Innovation's Data & Insights function. He leads the management of the industry analysis R&D portfolio and the undertaking of investment analysis and supports the delivery of the Monitoring & Evaluation Framework.



### **Brei Montgomery**

Head of International Trade,  
*Hort Innovation*

Brei is the Head of International Trade at Hort Innovation. She focuses on building the profile and positive reputation for Australian Horticultural industries to advance global markets, including incorporating strategic agility into planning in an increasingly virtual world.



**Byron de Kock**

Head of Research & Development,  
*Hort Innovation*

Byron is the Head of Research and Development at Hort Innovation. He inspires the team to design and deliver world class R&D that has the highest potential to impact for growers, our communities, and the planet. Byron loves to listen to growers and find ways for the R&D program to make a difference for them now and in the future.



**Jane Wightman**

Head of Extension,  
*Hort Innovation*

Jane is this Head of Extension and leads a regionally based team who are focused on increasing the on-ground impact of levy investments. The Extension team manage the Industry Development portfolio and collaborate with growers and industry stakeholders to identify, prioritise and work towards finding solutions for cross industry regional problems.

Webinar 3



**You're invited**

**American Serpentine Leafminer:  
Are you prepared?**

*A webinar hosted by AUSVEG and Hort Innovation Vegetable Fund*

American serpentine leafminer (ASLM) is a harmful new pest that has just arrived in the country. You will learn from three industry and scientific experts of American Serpentine leafminer as they each present on the pest. They will cover all the areas that are necessary for you to prepare for this new important pest. These experts will explain the nature of the pest and the broad range of crops that it attacks, including vegetables, ornamentals and other valuable commodities.

International expert, **Robert Senn** will discuss the European experience of managing ASLM, while three local experts, **Dr Greg Chandler**, **Senior Agronomist Penny Goldsmith** and **Dr Peter Ridland** will explain current and past projects that are preparing the Australian vegetable industry for this pest, what to look for, and the future of management, including what beneficial insects may help to control it.

**SPEAKERS**

*MC:*

**Madeleine Quirk**, Project Officer, *AUSVEG*

*SPEAKERS:*

**Robert Senn**, Syngenta Global Technical Manager for Insecticides

**Penelope Goldsmith**, Senior Agronomist at River District Co-operative (ORDCO)

**Dr Greg Chandler**, Hort Innovation R&D Manager for Biosecurity

**Dr Peter Ridland**, The University of Melbourne Honorary Research Fellow



**Robert Senn**  
Syngenta Global  
Technical Manager for  
Insecticides

Robert is an Agronomist by profession, technical manager in insecticide development at the moment in charge for spiropidion and pheromones for Syngenta globally. Before this role, Robert was in charge of the diamides and thiamethoxam. Robert has more than 30 years' experience within the company.

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*Robert Senn will speak on the European experience and chemical control agents to support the management of exotic leafminers including ASLM.*



**Penny Goldsmith**  
Senior Agronomist at  
River District Co-  
operative (ORDCO)

Penny is the Senior Agronomist at ORDCO. After completing her degree at UWA she moved to the Ord in 2008 to work for The Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development. In 2012 she went to work as an Agronomist for ORDCO and has gained experience in many crops: chia, maize, melons, beans, chickpeas and sandalwood.

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*Penelope Goldsmith will be speaking about the history, current situation and the impact that ASLM is having on industry in Kununurra.*



**Dr Greg Chandler**  
Hort Innovation R&D  
Manager for  
Biosecurity

Greg has a Ph.D. in Plant Systematics from the Australian National University and has been with Hort Innovation since early 2020, having previously held several roles at Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment (2013-2020) involving pre-border, border, and post-border plant health surveillance and diagnostics. Greg is always looking for new and emerging plant health threats and he was invited as a technical expert to the CCEPP meeting to discuss the arrival of SLM enabling the rapid formation of a research and extension project. We are in the process of pivoting that project to tackle ASLM, leveraging existing resources for maximum efficiency.

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*Dr Greg Chandler will speak on how investing levy funding in two projects on exotic leafminers has prepared the Australian vegetable industry for the arrival of these pests.*



**Dr Peter Ridland**  
The University of  
Melbourne Honorary  
Research Fellow

Peter, from the University of Melbourne, has worked in agricultural entomology since 1971. Between 2001 and 2004, he led an ACIAR leafminer project in Indonesia developing effective pest management strategies for *Liriomyza huidobrensis* and *L. sativae*. In the recently concluded Hort Innovation project on polyphagous leafminers, he undertook a leading role in the biological control component. He was the lead author on three literature reviews on aspects of biological control of *Liriomyza* spp., co-supervised two postgraduate students investigating aspects of parasitoids of *Liriomyza* spp. and contributed to a range of other research and extension components. He continues his involvement in parasitoids of leafminers in the recently commissioned HI project focusing on *L. huidobrensis*.

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*Dr Peter Ridland will share over 20 years of experience with exotic leafminers and how to prepare for ASLM, focusing on biological control across the Australian landscape.*

Appendix 2: Session recordings

**Classroom to Career:** <https://youtu.be/wYNbrGHH46g>

**Advanced Crop Protection:** <https://youtu.be/iXi0ukcbN9c>

**Vegetable Exports – International Trade Outlook:** <https://youtu.be/O17hbpeEFsQ>

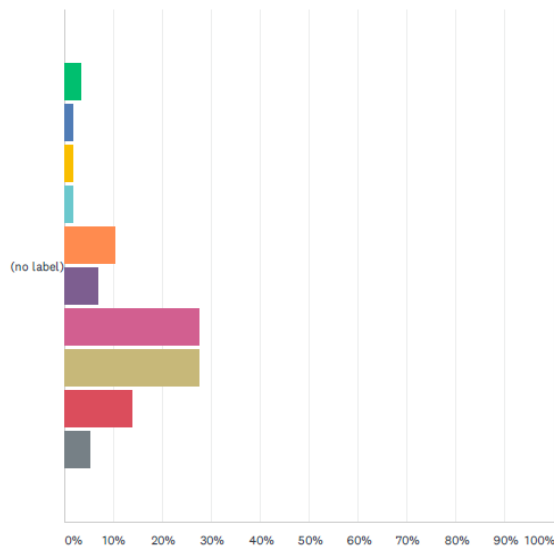
**Marketing Panel Session: Building Strong Category Brands:** <https://youtu.be/NTz2hqdrOJs>

**VegKIT: Can kids learning to love veggies drive future demand?** <https://youtu.be/BwkEugv-Ig0>

Appendix 3: Post Event Survey

If yes, how do you rate Hort Connections 2021 to other similar events you have been to previously?

Answered: 116 Skipped: 74



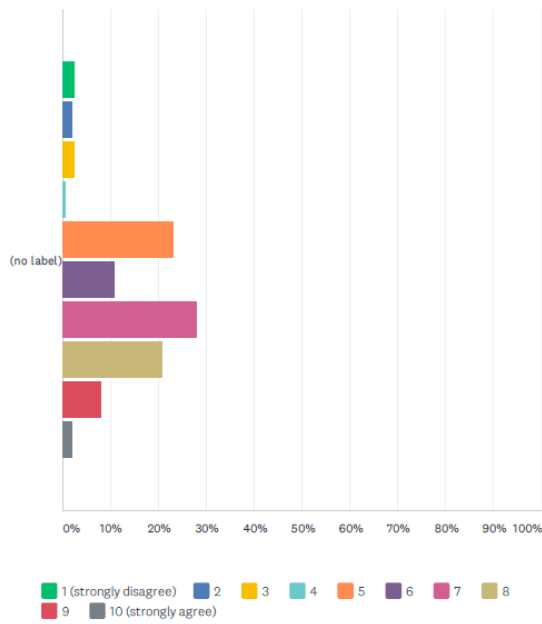
1 (significantly worse) 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 (significantly better)

	1 (SIGNIFICANTLY WORSE)	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10 (SIGNIFICANTLY BETTER)	TOTAL	WE AV
(no label)	3.45%	1.72%	1.72%	1.72%	10.34%	6.90%	27.59%	27.59%	13.79%	5.17%	116	
	4	2	2	2	12	8	32	32	16	6		



Q13 The speakers at Hort Connections 2021 met or exceeded my expectations

Answered: 164 Skipped: 26



	1 (STRONGLY DISAGREE)	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10 (STRONGLY AGREE)	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
(no label)	2.44%	1.83%	2.44%	0.61%	23.17%	10.98%	28.05%	20.73%	7.93%	1.83%	164	6.49
	4	3	4	1	38	18	46	34	13	3		

Appendix 4: Covid-19 Safety Plan <https://www.bcec.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/BCEC-Safe-Event-Guideline.pdf>

## Appendix 5: Communications

### VG20000: Annual Vegetable Industry Seminar

vegenotes  
82 | Spring - 2021

#### Facilitators

Project VG20000 was facilitated by AUSVEG.

#### Major findings

The Annual Vegetable Industry Seminar disseminated important information on levy-funded research that directly benefits growers via a combination of an in-person seminar and online webinar formats, which is critical for growers to understand the overall benefit of the levy investment system.

The Seminar was held in conjunction with the Australian horticulture industry's premier event, Hort Connections, and took place on Wednesday 9 June at the Brisbane and Convention Exhibition Centre.

Around one hundred levy-paying vegetable growers – covering a diverse range of growing regions, crops, ages and cultural backgrounds – attended the Seminar, which highlighted the benefits of adopting the outcomes of industry-funded research and other research and innovations developed across the world. They heard from some of the world's leading industry researchers and thought leaders who provided an overview of how growers can improve their businesses, particularly in light of the current global economic climate.

The Seminar incorporated five panel discussions with local and international experts. Subjects ranged from career opportunities in the vegetable industry; advanced crop protection; international trade outlook on vegetable exports; marketing and building strong brands; and children's vegetable consumption. Each session included a facilitated Q&A session to allow for growers to ask questions specific to their operations.

"An important function of the face-to-face seminar is to offer informal networking opportunities for participants to allow growers to discuss the seminar's presentations and to build strong networks with a diverse range of growers and industry participants," Project Lead and AUSVEG National Marketing Manager Nathan McIntyre said.

To support the in-person Seminar at Hort Connections, a webinar series consisting of a range of topics was

recorded pre- and post-seminar to continue increasing awareness of important project outcomes and innovations to industry. This will ultimately increase the overall value and legacy of VG20000 to levy-paying vegetable growers for years to come.

"The webinars will be recorded and hosted on a dedicated page on the AUSVEG website. It will feature topics on levy-funded projects to showcase the outcomes of industry-funded research that can improve the productivity and profitability of vegetable growing businesses," Mr McIntyre said.

"AUSVEG selected the most appropriate topics and speakers in consultation with Hort Innovation to cover a broad range of issues that provided growers with all the necessary information to make informed decisions regarding their businesses."

All speaker presentations at the in-person seminar and webinars were recorded and distributed after the event. AUSVEG is housing the seminar recordings on a dedicated page on the AUSVEG website and hosted on its YouTube channel, allowing for easy dissemination and embedding of the content across various industry sources.

In addition, Hort Connections also featured a hybrid attendance approach that allowed delegates to attend virtually. The speaker content from the seminar was made available on the virtual platform for those unable to attend, particularly those delegates who were based in locked down Victoria.

#### Outcomes

AUSVEG will continue to liaise strongly with existing projects to further extend the reach of the outputs from VG20000, including the *National Vegetable Industry Communications Program* and the various

VegNET projects to ensure that a wide range of growers from all regions can benefit from the project.

VG20000 aimed to promote knowledge transfer to the vegetable industry value chain on research findings, best practice, emerging risks and opportunities. It also sought to change participants' attitude and aspirations towards adopting R&D outcomes on-farm, which will subsequently contribute to building a stronger, more resilient Australian vegetable industry.

"Another outcome from this project will be enhanced communication and sharing of knowledge and information of technical developments with, and among, all sectors of the vegetable industry," Mr McIntyre said.

#### Background

The Annual Vegetable Industry Seminar was run in conjunction with Hort Connections 2021 and showcased the outcomes of industry-funded research that can improve the productivity and profitability of vegetable growing businesses.

The in-person Seminar incorporated a mix of presentations that communicated the outcomes of levy-funded R&D projects and other relevant research and innovations. Each session included a facilitated Q&A session to allow for growers to ask questions, as well as informal networking opportunities.

There was also a virtual attendance option for those delegates unable to attend in-person.

To support the seminar at Hort Connections, a webinar series consisting of relevant topics was recorded pre- and post-Seminar. These webinars – along with the Seminar recording – are being hosted on the AUSVEG website.

#### Acknowledgements

This project was funded by Hort Innovation using the vegetable research and development levy and contributions from the Australian Government.



#### Further information

Please contact AUSVEG on 03 9882 0277 or email [info@ausveg.com.au](mailto:info@ausveg.com.au).

Annual Vegetable Industry Seminar presentations can be viewed by visiting the Hort Connections website: [hortconnections.com.au/speaker-sessions-2021](http://hortconnections.com.au/speaker-sessions-2021).

The final report for this project will be made available on InfoVeg. Readers can search 'VG20000' on the InfoVeg database: [ausveg.com.au/infoveg/infoveg-database](http://ausveg.com.au/infoveg/infoveg-database).

Hort Connections speaker EDM



The [program](#) is shaping up as one of the most exciting to date with industry leading experts set to present on the latest products, services and technologies in the horticulture industry.

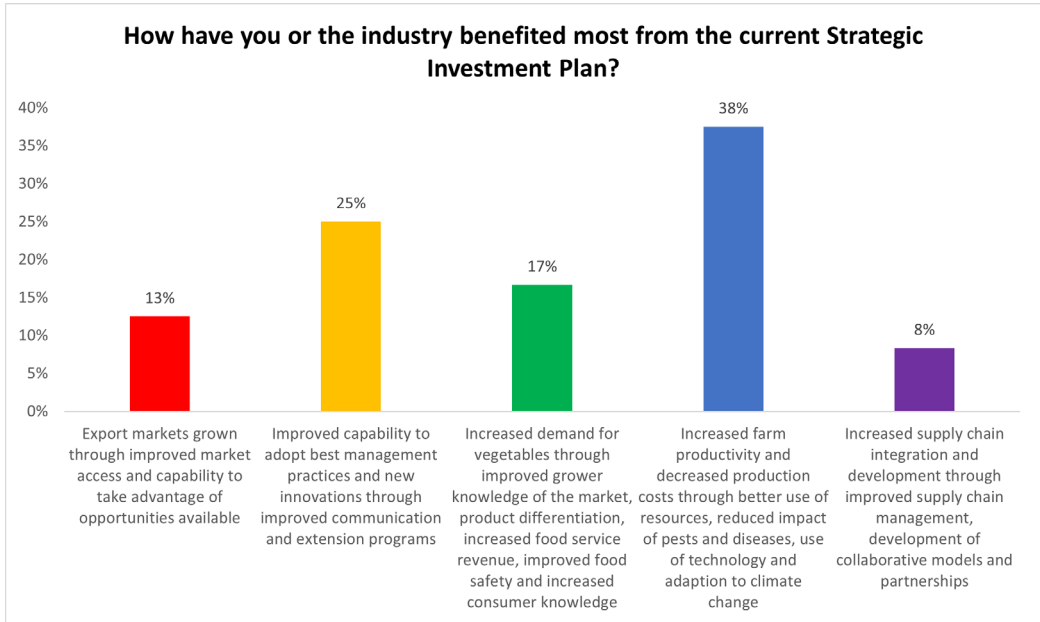
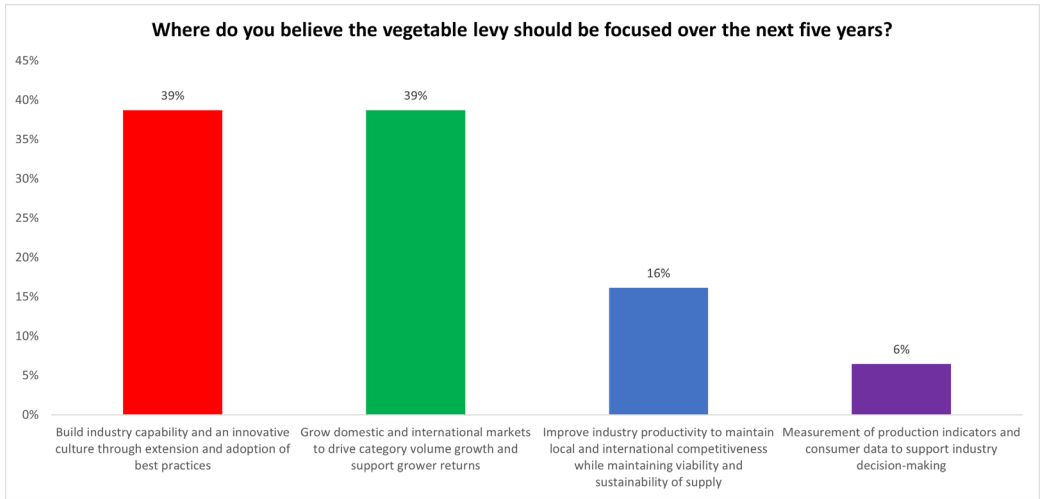
**Key topics include:**

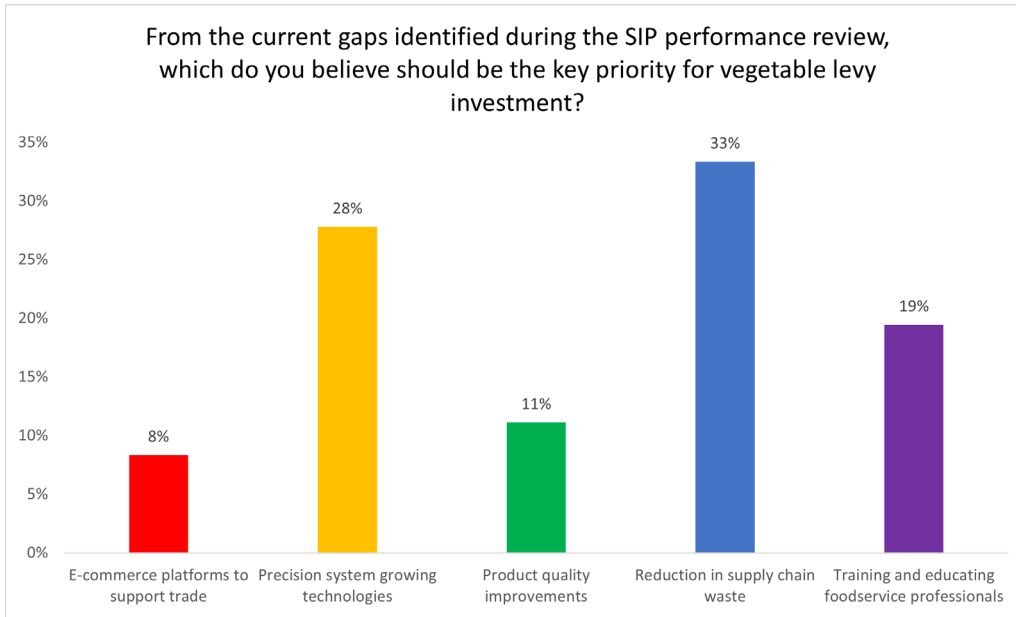
- Mental Fitness
- How to increase consumption of fresh produce
- Fall Armyworm and Serpentine Leaf miner
- Attracting talent to the horticulture industry
- Ethical employment practices



Appendix 6: Poll data

**Webinar 1 poll data:**





**Webinar 2 poll data:**

