


# vegetables

## australia

July/August 2010

A close-up portrait of Major General Michael Jeffery, an older man with white hair, wearing a dark suit, a light blue shirt, and a red tie. He is smiling slightly and looking towards the camera.

From healthy soils  
to healthy people

**Major General  
Michael Jeffery**

**Andrew Bulmer**  
Getting Involved

**AUSVEG Convention**  
Exceeds all expectations

**Kathryn Adams**  
Value for growers

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# vegetables australia

## AUSVEG Chairman

John Brent

## AUSVEG CEO

Richard J Mulcahy

## Production/Editorial Manager

David O'Neill

AUSVEG

Ph: (03) 9822 0388

Fax: (03) 9822 0688

david.oneill@ausveg.com.au

## Communications Manager

Hugh Tobin

AUSVEG

Ph: (03) 9822 0388

Fax: (03) 9822 0688

hugh.tobin@ausveg.com.au

## Advertising

Max Hyde

Ph: (03) 9870 4161

Fax: (03) 9870 4163

M: 0408 558 938

max@hydemedias.com.au

## Graphic Design

Michael Leigh

AUSVEG

Ph: (03) 9822 0388

Fax: (03) 9822 0688

www.ausveg.com.au

## Print

Southern Colour Pty Ltd

## Distribution Queries

AUSVEG

Ph: (03) 9822 0388

Fax: (03) 9822 0688

admin@ausveg.com.au

## Contributors

Andrew White, Mignonne Rawson,  
Darcy Boyd, Scott Mathew,  
Karen Shaw, Belinda Rawnsley,  
Barbara Hall, Lee Bartlett  
and Jenny Ekman.



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## FRONT COVER:

Major General Michael Jeffery  
*Former Governor-General  
of the Commonwealth  
of Australia.*

Photo by James Cunningham

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# A word from the AUSVEG Chairman

I am extremely pleased to report the outstanding success of the inaugural AUSVEG National Convention, Trade Show and Awards for Excellence.

The Convention which took place from 27-30 May at Jupiters Hotel-Casino on the Gold Coast, was the culmination of months of hard work from the team at AUSVEG, including our Board of Directors. They are to be commended for organising a world-class event that brought together members from all levels of the vegetable and potato industry supply chain.

The Convention featured a first rate speaker line-up, a large horticulture-focused trade show and a social program that allowed growers and industry members to network extensively.

During the Convention I had the pleasure of meeting many

delegates and discussing with them a range of issues which are currently affecting the horticulture industry. These experiences made it clear to me how crucial such events are in revealing the most critical issues facing the industry. This in turn allows for the sharing of ideas and solutions.

The Convention included two days of speaker sessions, with experts reporting on relevant issues, including current R&D projects.

The event also featured presentations by leading industry figures such as: Greg Davis, General Manager of Fresh Produce at Coles; Dr Eva Bennet-Jenkins, Chief Executive Officer of the APVMA; and Sarah Pettitt, Chairman of the Horticulture and Potatoes Board of the National Farmers' Union in the United Kingdom.

The National Awards for

Excellence was one of the highlights of the Convention and showcased our industry's most outstanding members. All finalists should be proud of their achievements and we thank them for their contribution to the horticulture industry.

This National Convention, however, was not just about networking, awards and speaker sessions. It was also about AUSVEG continuing its support for the industry by providing a voice for all its members and member associations; something we aim to continue in the future.

Such an event would not have been possible without the support of our leading partners and our many loyal sponsors. And most importantly, the growers, who make this industry what it is.



John Brent  
Chairman  
AUSVEG

## AUSVEG CEO Message

The inaugural AUSVEG National Convention, Trade Show and Awards for Excellence exceeded even our own high expectations. The crucial support of growers from all over Australia, and of our strategic partners and sponsors, resulted in an event that delivered on its promise to be the biggest gathering of members from across the supply chain ever held in the vegetable and potato industries' history.

An enormous Trade Show with over 70 trade displays greeted delegates and included the industry's leading agribusiness organisations and service providers, who were showcasing the most up-to-date information and services available to vegetable growers.

The exhibitors who were present at the two-day long Trade Show, and our sponsors who supported the event, demonstrated a willingness to put their customers at the forefront of their thinking.

I would urge growers to keep this in mind in their future purchasing decisions, to support these organisations that have supported this important industry event.

The resources gained from the holding of this world class event are already being utilised, with a new Public Affairs Programme established that will give vegetable growers an unprecedented voice at the federal level.

Through this programme, AUSVEG will be expanding its role, lobbying all political parties and decision-makers to ensure horticulture is given the consideration it deserves in the formation of free trade agreements and on other legislative matters.

Hugh Tobin now assumes the joint title of Communications and Public Affairs Manager, which fulfils our promise to expand the scope of AUSVEG and give growers a greater voice on the issues that affect their

livelihoods.

Furthermore, we welcome Darcy Boyd as the new Environment Coordinator. Darcy holds a Bachelor of Environmental Science and a Bachelor of Business Management.

We encourage growers to become involved in the EnviroVeg programme, which they can do through a number of regional seminars that will be conducted throughout each state of Australia in the next 12 months, or by signing up online via the AUSVEG website.

The EnviroVeg programme not only promotes sustainable farming but can provide growers with valuable tools to increase their productivity while remaining environmentally friendly.

For more information on the EnviroVeg project, please contact Darcy Boyd, Environment Coordinator: darcy.boyd@ausveg.com.au, or (03) 9822 0388.



Richard J Mulcahy  
Chief Executive Officer  
AUSVEG



Pg 8 Inaugural AUSVEG National Convention, Trade Show and Awards for Excellence



Pg 26 Learning to love



Pg 28 Major General Michael Jeffery: From healthy soils to healthy people

## Editorial

The inaugural AUSVEG National Convention, Trade Show and Awards for Excellence was an amazing opportunity to meet with growers and members from all levels of the industry supply chain. Speaking with and getting to know vegetable growers from across Australia was an incredibly valuable experience, and this can only assist us as we seek to ensure *Vegetables Australia* addresses the most critical issues for the industry. In this July/August edition we

feature a number of articles showcasing the prominent speakers from the AUSVEG National Convention.

One of the highlights of the Convention was the attendance of Independent Senator for South Australia, Nick Xenophon. Senator Xenophon addressed a special breakfast on Friday, 28 May, highlighting Australia's inadequate labelling laws which he said were not doing enough to help Australian growers compete with imports. Following his address, the Senator spoke

with *Vegetables Australia* (page 11) about where his passion for these issues comes from.

One of Australia's most distinguished citizens, Major General Michael Jeffery, delivered the Convention's keynote address. Afterwards, the former Governor General sat down with *Vegetables Australia* to discuss the topics covered in his powerful address. On page 26, the Major General's views on how the vegetable industry can help solve significant problems

concerning health and sustainability are explored in more detail.

Other interviews included in this edition feature Elders Ambassador and cricketing legend, Glenn McGrath, and Kathryn Adams from the Australian Centre of Intellectual Property in Agriculture. Also we have our usual range of extensive R&D-related project updates and reporting.



Andrew Bulmer, Operations Manager  
at Bulmers Farm Fresh Vegetables

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Hot water shower

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# Convention exceeds

The inaugural AUSVEG National Convention, Trade Show and Awards for Excellence 650 delegates—including a huge number of growers—attending from right across

The AUSVEG National Convention, held at Jupiters Hotel-Casino on the Gold Coast between 27-30 May, exceeded all expectations and delivered on its promise as the largest gathering of growers, researchers, suppliers and representatives from the retail sector ever seen in the vegetable or potato industries.

Delegates were welcomed to the Convention by Queensland Liberal National Party Leader, The Honourable John-Paul Langbroek, at a memorable Welcome Reception on the Thursday night. The event signified the beginning of an exciting weekend which allowed for an unprecedented level of networking between growers and members of the industry supply chain.

Following the Welcome Reception, a large group of young growers gathered for a fun filled evening of ten pin bowling as part of the Young

Growers Night, sponsored by Dow AgroSciences.

## Fantastic Friday

Friday's program began with a special breakfast sponsored by the Queensland Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation (DEEDI). Attendees had the rare opportunity to listen to one of Australia's most high profile politicians, Independent Senator for South Australia, Mr Nick Xenophon.

Over 70 displays greeted delegates when the buzzing Trade Show was officially opened by Gold Coast Mayor, Ron Clarke, at 9.00am. The room quickly filled with growers and other industry members who were eager to engage with the many different exhibitors, including the industry's leading agribusiness organisations and service providers, who were showcasing the most up-to-date

information and services.

Accompanying the Trade Show was an impressive list of first class speakers, headlined by former Governor-General, Major General Michael Jeffery. The session also included prominent researcher, Mr David Hughes, Group General Manager Commercial from Plant & Food Research New Zealand, as well as senior representatives from leading companies such as Elders and Bayer CropScience, and a passionate presentation from Australian Made, Australian Grown campaign Chief Executive, Mr Ian Harrison.

On Friday night, the social program again provided a 'hit', as more than 200 delegates ventured to the Australian Outback Spectacular: a tribute to the Australian Light Horse Brigade, an event provided by DuPont. The show received rave reviews from the delegates in attendance, who returned with

new friends and contacts from all over Australia.

## Super Saturday

Elders Ambassador and cricketing legend Glenn McGrath was the special guest speaker at Saturday's 'Women in Horticulture' Breakfast.

The breakfast also played host to international keynote speaker and Chairman of the Horticulture and Potatoes Board of the National Farmers' Union in the United Kingdom, Ms Sarah Pettitt.

Ms Pettitt's powerful speech provided guests with an insight into the issues currently facing the horticulture industry in the UK.

The Trade Show continued on Saturday, as delegates enjoyed the opportunity to network with suppliers, government departments and other key industry groups and service providers.

A specifically designed R&D



Gold Coast Mayor Ron Clarke and AUSVEG John Brent at the official opening of the Trade Show



AUSVEG Chairman John Brent welcomes delegates at the Welcome Reception



Elders ambassador Glenn McGrath and UK Horticulture Chairman Sarah Pettitt amongst the speakers at the Women in Horticulture Breakfast



Syngenta General Manager Paul Luxton addresses the delegates in the speaker sessions



# all expectations

has been hailed as a stunning success, with an incredible Australia, writes David O'Neill

session, presented by Incitec Pivot, was held in conjunction with the Trade Show and featured some of Australia's most prominent researchers from the science world.

The session included presentations on all the major issues confronting the vegetable industry, such as insects and diseases, soil health and water as well as innovations and new technologies.

Addresses were then delivered by Dr Eva Bennet-Jenkins, CEO of the APVMA, AUSVEG CEO Mr Richard Mulcahy and Mr Paul Luxton, General Manger of Syngenta.

At lunchtime, delegates were treated to the Bayer CropScience Sporting Identities Lunch, which was headlined by Elders Ambassador Glenn McGrath. Former AFL champion Robert "Dipper" DiPierdomenico played host at the lunch asking questions of the champion fast

bowler and the other world class athletes: hockey player and Olympic Gold Medallist with the Kookaburras, Brent Livermore; Olympic silver medallist and cyclist, Michelle Ferris; and

continuing right through lunch. This amazing weekend was capped off with the National Awards for Excellence held on Saturday night. For full coverage and award winners,

Bayer CropScience and its other sponsors, Incitec Pivot, Boomaroo Nurseries, The Australian Government's Department of Immigration and Citizenship, John Deere, Dow AgroSciences, Brisbane Produce Market, Terranova Seeds, The QLD Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation (DEEDI), Dobmac Agricultural Machinery, Toolpak Engineering, Vin Rowe Farm Machinery, The Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, Landpower Australia and the Australian Made, Australian Grown campaign.

Even bigger plans are being discussed for next year's Convention, with the success and momentum generated from this year's event, certain to be beneficial for all Australian vegetable growers.

“Over 70 displays greeted delegates when the buzzing Trade Show was officially opened by the Gold Coast Mayor, Ron Clarke.”

professional Ironwoman, Hayley Bateup.

A large crowd gathered to listen to the sporting identities, as they answered questions from Dipper, with the laughs

see page 16.

### Special Thanks

AUSVEG would like to thank its leading sponsors Elders, DuPont, Syngenta,



Young growers attend the Dow AgroSciences Young Growers Night



Elders exhibit at the Trade Show



Australian Made, Australian Grown Campaign, Chief Executive Ian Harrison



A special sand creation displayed in the hotel lobby, sponsored by Boomaroo Nurseries





Syngenta General Manager Paul Luxton, presents the Grower of the Year Award to Jim Trandos, Trandos Farms



Robert DiPierdomenico and Jessica van Vonderen co-host the gala awards evening

“ The Convention was a stunning success with an incredible 650 delegates, including a huge number of growers, attending from right across Australia. ”



Major General Michael Jeffery addresses the delegates at the speaker sessions



[From left] Lifetime Achievement Award recipient, Luis Gazzola with wife Gloria and Joanne and Paul Gazzola



Professional Ironwoman Hayley Bateup speaks at the Bayer CropScience Sporting Identities Lunch



A bumper crowd at the Gala Awards evening



The Allan Brown Big Band entertains at the National Awards for Excellence



# Truth in Labelling Laws



Independent Senator for South Australia, Nick Xenophon, has highlighted the need for a change in Australia's food labelling laws, at the inaugural AUSVEG National Convention, Trade Show and Awards for Excellence.

Senator Nick Xenophon was guest speaker at a special breakfast held on Friday 28 May at the AUSVEG National Convention on the Gold Coast. After addressing the breakfast he allowed *Vegetables Australia* some time out of his busy schedule to ask where his passion for truth in food labelling—an issue so critical to the vegetable industry—comes from.

Senator Xenophon said that his campaign on labelling laws started following an encounter he had with a South Australian irrigator.

"Ron Gray, a Riverland irrigator first brought to my attention the lack of regulations governing food labelling, complaining that in Australia, growers were unable to compete with imported fruit juice that was being passed off as Australian produce," he said.

This particular issue

influenced the Senator to look more closely at country of origin labelling laws in Australia, in particular, how ineffective they are at informing consumers accurately about the produce they purchase.

## Progress

Senator Xenophon said that progress is being made with the Australian Government currently undertaking a review of labelling laws. "I have also co-sponsored a Private Senators Bill with Senator Bob Brown, and Senator Barnaby Joyce—so from the left and right of politics which is an interesting combination—that will place tighter regulations on imported produce," he said.

"There is a lot of political momentum at the minute, when I go on talkback radio the switchboard lights up about this issue; people are angry that they are being misled."

The Senator used the example of Mad Cow disease to show how Australian laws fail to sufficiently regulate against imported produce and the effect this has on consumers.

"Under those laws you could have been eating a meat pie which is labelled 'Made in Australia', where the pastry, gravy and processing is Australian, but the beef could actually be from a Mad Cow affected country," he said.

## Fight against imports

In his address, Senator Xenophon said that Australian growers were struggling to compete with imported produce.

"In 2009 we (Australia) imported about \$1.6 billion dollars worth of fruit and vegetables and total food imports from that year were a whopping \$8.5 billion dollars," he said.

Despite this worrying trend, the Senator said that the majority of people wanted to buy and eat Australian made produce, but were being let down by laws that allow foreign foods to be passed off as Australian grown or Australian made.

"I believe we see so many imports, especially of foods, because most consumers think they're buying local products when in fact they are buying foreign products," he said.

Senator Xenophon also highlighted the tough requirements placed on growers by retailers and the need for more competitiveness in this sector of the industry.

These points and others raised by the Senator can be viewed in a copy of his address to the AUSVEG National Convention, which can be found on the AUSVEG web site: [www.ausveg.com.au/convention](http://www.ausveg.com.au/convention)

AUSVEG CEO Richard Mulcahy with Senator Nick Xenophon





# Biosecurity Levy to protect the industry

Biosecurity is an issue that is crucial to the operational viability of vegetable growing businesses in Australia. With limited resources presently in place to respond to biosecurity threats in the vegetable industry, AUSVEG has proposed that a biosecurity levy mechanism be put in place to respond to major incursions in the future.

**B**iosecurity threats exist as a range of endemic and exotic pests and diseases, the more serious of which have the potential to affect production and international and domestic trade. An example of one such pest that currently threatens to have devastating consequences for an Australian horticultural industry is the Zebra Chip disease complex.

If there were to be an incursion tomorrow, the potato industry—just like the vegetable industry—currently does not have a mechanism in place which could be used to contain such a problem.

Plant Health Australia (PHA) is the national co-ordinating body that works in partnership with industries to build capacity and to co-ordinate national responses to pest/disease incursions. The PHA also manages the processes associated with the Emergency Plant Pest Response Deed (EPPRD), to which the vegetable industry is a signatory.

## Proposal for a Biosecurity Levy

AUSVEG proposes that an Emergency Plant Pest Response (EPPR) levy be applied at the following rate: All vegetables at

zero per cent of the vegetable value at the point of sale. This requires a YES/NO answer from levy payers.

AUSVEG urges all vegetable and vegetable levy payers who were unable to attend the annual levy payers meetings in May to provide feedback before 15 August by contacting AUSVEG at [info@ausveg.com.au](mailto:info@ausveg.com.au)

## Why does the industry need a biosecurity levy?

With limited resources presently in place to respond to biosecurity threats AUSVEG has proposed that a biosecurity levy mechanism be put in place to respond to major incursions in the future. There is currently no protection mechanism in place for the industry meaning that growers are heavily exposed should an incursion occur.

## What is an Emergency Plant Pest?

An Emergency Plant Pest is a known exotic plant pest, a variant form of a plant pest already established in Australia, or an entirely new serious plant pest, all of which could have an adverse economic impact regionally and/or nationally if

established in Australia. An Emergency Plant Pest may also be a plant pest that is being officially controlled in Australia but requiring a significant emergency response to ensure that there is not a large scale epidemic of regional or national significance.

## What is the process if a biosecurity levy is put in place?

The biosecurity levy will be set at a zero rate so that there is a mechanism for the Federal Government to proceed to fund an Emergency Plant Pest Response. It is impossible for anyone to know the amount of those costs until such an event occurs. Should an incursion occur, the impact is assessed and the quantum is determined in consultation with industry. If the rate is raised from zero the Australian Government will collect and forward to Plant Health Australia amounts collected by the Emergency Plant Pest Response levy. The PHA is required to hold the payments for each participating plant industry in a separate fund.

## What will happen if a levy is not put in place?

Without a biosecurity levy the Federal Government will not step in and provide funding in the event of an incursion. In light of the Equine Influenza outbreak where a levy mechanism was not in place and the taxpayer was left to foot the bill on behalf of the horse industry, the Federal Government has clearly stated that going forward industries without a biosecurity levy mechanism in place will not be supported financially in the case of an incursion.

Each year Plant Health Australia responds to dozens of incursions. If there were to be a major incursion tomorrow the industry currently does not have a mechanism in place which could be used to contain the problem. The industry should act now to protect itself rather than respond once a major incursion occurs.

It is important to note that AUSVEG must consult with growers before the levy can be raised from a zero rate.

**i** Please contact AUSVEG before 15 August to provide feedback at [info@ausveg.com.au](mailto:info@ausveg.com.au)



# Minor use permits

Permit Number	Permit Description (pesticide/crop/pest)	Date Issued	Expiry Date	States covered
PER10908*	Tebuconazole / beetroot, beetroot leaves, chicory, endive, radish, silverbeet & spinach / Sclerotinia rot	9-Jun-10	30-Jun-13	All states except Vic
PER10679**	Mancozeb / specific fruiting and legume vegetables (Asian) / Downy mildew, Anthracnose & Alternaria	10-Jun-10	1-Jan-12	All states except Vic
PER11937***	Dimethomorph & mancozeb / spring onions & shallots / Downy mildew, Purple blotch and Botrytis rots	10-Jun-10	1-Jan-12	All states except Vic
PER11988	Chess (pymetrozine) / cucurbits, eggplant, tomato, lettuce, broccoli, chicory, endive, radicchio & pistachio / Silverleaf whitefly, Lettuce aphid & Green peach aphid	28-May-10	30-Apr-11	All states except Vic

\* APVMA requires two residue trials in each of beetroot (leaves and root) and leafy vegetables for renewal of the permit

\*\* APVMA requires two residue trials in hairy melon or luffa for renewal of the permit

\*\*\* APVMA requires two residue trials in spring onions and shallots for renewal of the permit

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# Still a boy from the bush

One of the highlights of the AUSVEG National Convention held between 27-30 May at Jupiter's Hotel-Casino on the God Coast, was the attendance of Elders Ambassador and cricketing legend Glenn McGrath, writes David O'Neill.

Despite his many commitments at the Convention which included speaking at the National Awards for Excellence Gala Dinner, the former fast bowler took time to chat with *Vegetables Australia* about his strong relationship with Elders, and how he is still very much a boy from the bush.

"My parents owned a sheep and wheat farm just outside Narromine in central NSW, and so I suppose I have been involved with Elders from the very beginning," Mr McGrath said.

From the outside, McGrath and Elders seem the perfect fit, a quintessential Australian company and one of Australia's favourite sons.

"Elders have been around for almost 120 years and is predominantly based in the country, and with me being a country boy who has dealt with Elders most of his life, I think it

is a pretty perfect fit," Mr McGrath said.

"I love getting out to the country areas and meeting people from regional areas all over Australia. Though I've lived

“I love getting out to the country areas and meeting people from regional areas all over Australia. Though I've lived in Sydney for many years now, I still like to think of myself as a kid from the country.”

in Sydney for many years now, I still like to think of myself as a kid from the country."

Before joining Olympians

Michelle Ferris and Brent Livermore, and professional Ironwoman Haley Bateup at the Bayer Sporting Identities Lunch, Mr McGrath addressed the Women in Horticulture

Breakfast.

The event, which raised money for the McGrath Foundation, also recognised the

significant contribution of women to the horticultural industry.

Mr McGrath said the level of support the foundation had received over the last few years had been quite amazing.

"Our goal is to place breast care nurses into the community and increase the awareness of breast cancer in young women," Mr McGrath said.

The cost to place a nurse into the community is approximately \$110,000 and Mr McGrath explained that they can only create a position once they can guarantee at least three years of employment.

"We have 55 nurses out in the community and Elders have been a big supporter of this achievement," he said.

"In the time since I began my role with the company, they have raised in excess of \$400,000 for the foundation."



Elders ambassador Glenn McGrath at the AUSVEG National Convention



# Ask the industry

with  
Scott Mathew

In my travels around Australia, meeting up with growers from all areas who grow a wide variety of crops, I am often asked a number of questions relating to the application of crop protection products.

**Q: What are the keys to getting application right in most situations?**

Getting the best performance from any crop protection product is dependent on a number of factors. The target for spray applications can vary enormously from bare ground to upright leaf crops like onions, to horizontal leaved brassica crops. The canopy structure of the crop also changes as the plants develop. Obtaining coverage only on the tops or outside of target plants may not control pests or diseases that spread from underneath or within the leaves. Achieving an equally distributed deposit on the target surface is not always possible.

Optimum performance from any application of a crop protection product is a function of:

- **Retention:** In general, small droplets are well retained on plant surfaces, particularly shiny and smooth leaves, compared to large drops that tend to bounce off. Fine medium sprays are important for retention on difficult to wet plants like onions, but are more prone to drift. Large drops are surprisingly well retained on easy to wet

leaves, such as mature carrot plants, and many broadleaved weeds. Adjuvants also have a considerable influence on the retention of sprays.

- **Coverage:** Penetration into the crop is one of the key factors that will govern the performance of an applied crop protection product. In general, coarse drops which fall vertically will provide the best penetration in upright leaf crops, while finer drops which move horizontally will achieve better penetration in broadleaf crops. The number of droplets required to achieve adequate cover will be determined by the target surface and size. Crawling insects and broadleaved weeds provide a larger target and therefore require fewer droplets and coverage. Grasses and flying insects provide smaller target areas and require more droplets and coverage.
- **Mode of action:** Penetration and spreading within the treated plant surface will depend on the site of action of the applied product. The activity of protectant fungicides is determined

largely by the even spreading of the active ingredient(s) across the plant surface to form a protective barrier. The activity of systemic fungicides and insecticides is influenced by the ability of the active ingredients to penetrate plant tissue and form a reservoir within the plant tissue.

**Q: I have heard about some new nozzles developed by Syngenta. Why have Syngenta developed a range of nozzles?**

We have divisions within Syngenta that look at achieving the best biological activity from our products and other UK

based divisions that look solely at the practical side around use and application, so that farmers can get the best results from those products in the field. The development of these nozzles has been the result of extensive research and development. Six patented nozzle designs have been developed exclusively by Syngenta Crop Protection and Hypro EU Ltd, and vary in use from horticultural through to broadacre.

For more information on the nozzles and crops they are suitable with, please contact Syngenta Crop Protection.



Scott Mathew, Technical Services Lead from Syngenta





# AUSVEG and Bayer CropScience take the lead with strategic partnership

Since announcing a strategic partnership, Bayer CropScience and AUSVEG have been working together to develop the horticulture industry and battle potential threats.

The partnership has seen Bayer CropScience sharing vital R&D information to assist the industry in addressing major threats to crops, as well as working with AUSVEG to identify market opportunities for vegetable growers.

Mr Joerg Ellmanns, Managing Director of Bayer CropScience, Chairman and Senior Bayer Representative for Australia and New Zealand, said that the partnership between AUSVEG and Bayer CropScience will result in great benefits to Australian growers.

“As a representative of more than 9,000 Australian vegetable and potato growers, AUSVEG

“ We aim to deliver innovative solutions to the market to help farmers grow healthier crops, more efficiently and more sustainably. ”

is closely aligned with Bayer CropScience’s dedicated commitment to Australian horticulture, and we are pleased to be working in close partnership,” Mr Ellmanns said.

“We aim to make this alliance work across a number of platforms to ensure the future viability of the industry.”

Bayer CropScience offers leading brands and expertise in the areas of crop protection, pest control products, high value seeds and

plant biotechnology.

“Bayer CropScience invests €653m (AU\$950m) in global research and development each year. So, for every \$10 growers spend on Bayer CropScience products, roughly \$1 goes towards creating even better products,” Mr Ellmanns said.

### Investment in industry

According to Bayer, this investment ensures that they continue to bring the best possible products to the market to maximise growers’ yields and it resulted in the launch of six new active ingredients in 2009.

Most notably for the horticulture industry, this ongoing investment has brought to the market two products: Belt® and Movento®, which offer farmers new tools to combat sucking and chewing pests.

Both insecticides have a novel mode of action, contributing to the sustainability of Australia’s vegetable production. They are

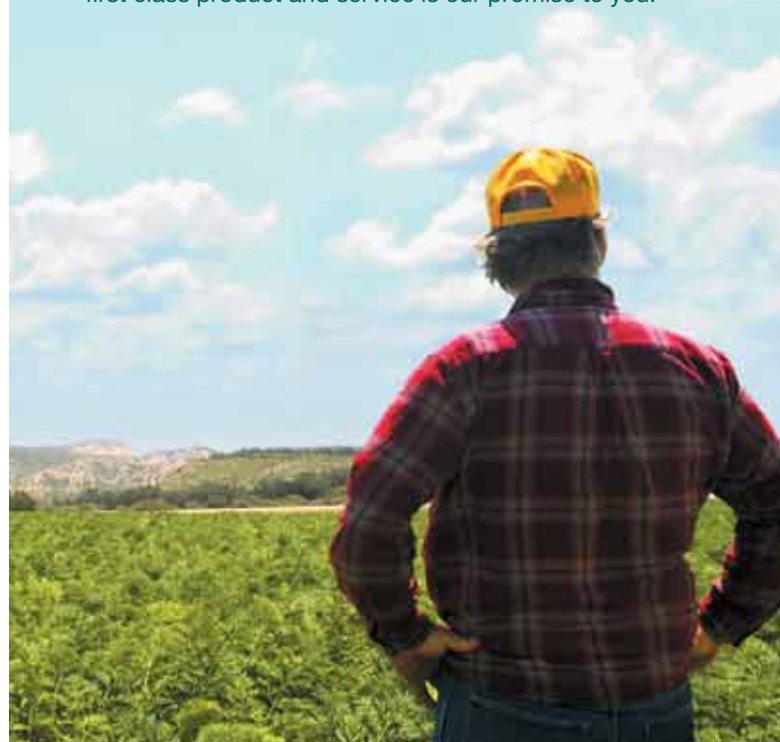




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effective for use on a wide range of fruit and vegetable crops, and according to Bayer they do not have significant adverse effects on the majority of beneficial species.

## Significant support

As further evidence of Bayer CropScience's commitment to AUSVEG and the Australian vegetable and potato industries, the company was one of the lead sponsors of the AUSVEG National Convention held from 27-30 May.

Head of New Business Development at Bayer CropScience, Richard Dickmann, was one of the most well-received presenters when he spoke as part of the speaker sessions that accompanied the

in agriculture; climate change, water saving and marketing challenges, so we thought it was necessary to have a department that looks at all of those issues," Mr Dickmann said.

"For example, our food chain partnership in which we are working with retailers and wholesalers, demonstrates how we are trying to become more involved down the supply chain."

"We aim to deliver innovative solutions to the market to help farmers grow healthier crops, more efficiently and more sustainably."

"Furthermore, we look to find new opportunities to help farmers, not just growing, but actually selling their products more profitably and

“ We aim to make this alliance work across a number of platforms to ensure the future viability of the industry. ”

Convention's Trade Show.

Following his address, in which he spoke of Bayer CropScience's commitment to growers and innovation, Mr Dickmann spoke with *Vegetables Australia*.

Mr Dickmann said the reason for his position and the New Business Development Department, was the company's desire to remain in touch with the challenges confronting growers and to expand its activities beyond core business. "There is a lot of new trends

sustainably," he said.

Mr Dickmann also spoke of Bayer's commitment to developing new products, which are not only good in their own right, but are good in terms of sustainability for other pest control mechanisms.

"We really do see ourselves as one of the companies most committed to bringing out new active ingredients. Nature is moving all the time, pests are becoming resistant all the time, and new modes of action are required," Mr Dickmann said.

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# AUSVEG National Awards for Excellence

The National Awards for Excellence held on Saturday, 29 May were a fitting end to a highly successful Convention weekend. The much anticipated gala evening was a glamorous affair, with the vegetable and potato industries' most outstanding members recognised for their contributions and significant achievements.

Robert 'Dipper' DiPierdomenico was joined by ABC Newsreader Jessica van Vonderen to co-host the industries' night of nights, which included Elders Ambassador Glenn McGrath as a special guest speaker. AUSVEG Chairman John Brent also spoke, telling all finalists that they deserved high praise for their work in enhancing the industry and to be proud of what they had been able to achieve.



[from left] Jim Turley, David Anderson, Luis Gazzola, Len Tesoriero, Andrew Meurant, Colin Hudgson (award accepted on behalf of Andrew Philip), Daniel Maher, Narelle West, Sean Richardson (award accepted on behalf of Syngenta Australia), Jim Trandos.

## AUSVEG National Award Winners 2010

- AUSVEG Lifetime Achievement Award  
**Luis Gazzola**
- AUSVEG Industry Leader Award  
**Andrew Meurant**
- Premier's Award  
**David Anderson**
- Syngenta Grower of the Year Award  
**Jim Trandos**
- Dow AgroSciences Young Grower of the Year Award  
**Daniel Maher**
- Bayer CropScience Researcher of the Year Award  
**Len Tesoriero**
- Elders Productivity Partner Award  
**Syngenta Australia**
- McCain Foods Women in Horticulture Award  
**Narelle West**
- DuPont Industry Recognition Award  
**Jim Turley**
- Boomaroo Nurseries Industry Impact Award  
**Gazzola Farms**
- Brisbane Produce Market Innovative Marketing Award  
**Andrew Philip**



# Lifetime Achievement Award



## 2010 winner – Luis Gazzola

Veteran vegetable grower, Mr Luis Gazzola, was presented with a special Lifetime Achievement Award, for his services to the industry over an incredible 56 years. Mr Gazzola has not only achieved outstanding success in his own business, but he has also represented the interests of growers as President of the Vegetable Growers Association of Victoria over a number of years. A special tribute DVD was shown to the audience, showcasing Gazzola Farms situated in Somerville, Victoria.

Mr Gazzola dedicated the award to his family. "I learnt a lot from my father who started growing vegetables in 1932, and I hope I've been able to pass some of my knowledge onto my three sons," he said. The reason for the continued success of Gazzola Farms was "work, work and more hard work," Mr Gazzola said, as he paid tribute to growers all over Australia who faced the daily challenges of producing vegetables and potatoes.

# Industry Leader Award



## 2010 winner – Andrew Meurant

Elders Horticulture Segment Manager, Mr Andrew Meurant, was recognised with the Industry Leader Award, for pioneering support of industry initiatives such as the AUSVEG National Convention. Mr Meurant played a key role in encouraging support from partners within the supply chain. Without their support, events like the AUSVEG National Convention would not have been possible.

In presenting this award on behalf of the AUSVEG Board of Directors, Chairman John Brent thanked Mr Meurant for his significant contribution in the formation of the strategic partnership between AUSVEG and Elders. "Our relationship with Elders is a perfect example of how organisations across the supply chain can work with industry bodies such as AUSVEG, to give growers the opportunity to share in the collective expertise of the organisations," Mr Brent said. In accepting the award, Mr Meurant thanked his late father for inspiring him to become involved in the horticulture industry after his almost 50 year association with the QLD Department of Primary Industries, as it was known.

# Premier's Award

Presented on behalf of  
Queensland Premier Anna Bligh



## 2010 winner – David Anderson

On behalf of Queensland Premier Anna Bligh, a special Premier's Award was presented to former AUSVEG Chairman, Mr David Anderson. Mr Anderson is currently the Senior Logistics Officer for the Potato Marketing Corporation of Western Australia, an organisation responsible for growing and selling over 50,000 tonnes of fresh potatoes in the state. He was presented this award for his service to the industry in representing the interests of vegetable and potato growers over a number of years. Mr Anderson said it was a great honour to receive the award and thanked his family for their support.

# Grower of the Year Award

Sponsored by **syngenta**

## Finalists

- Mr Andrew De Dezsery  
**#1 Aquaponics, South Australia**
- Mr Daryl Lohrey  
**Lohrey Pastoral Co, Tasmania**
- Mr Frank Ruffo  
**Tripod Farmers Pty Ltd, Victoria**
- Gazzola Farms  
**Somerville, Victoria**
- Mr George Vorrasi  
**Hydro R Us, South Australia**
- Mr Jim Trandos  
**Trandos Farms, Western Australia**
- Ms Denise Harslett  
**Harslett Enterprises, Queensland**
- Mr Linton Brimblecombe  
**Moira Farming, Queensland**



## 2010 winner Jim Trandos, Wanneroo, WA

Mr Jim Trandos was honoured as Grower of the Year, for pioneering new production areas in Western Australia and implementing a range of innovative production and marketing techniques. Mr Trandos operates a number of farming operations, but the innovative techniques implemented on his isolated sweet corn and bean farm, south of Broome, played a key role in him winning the award for Grower of the Year.

Mr Trandos has also made a sizeable contribution to the vegetable industry over many years as a former Board member of AUSVEG and of state industry body vegetablesWA. In accepting the prestigious award, Mr Trandos said he was extremely proud to be an Australian vegetable grower and dedicated the award to his family.

# Young Grower of the Year Award

Sponsored by **Dow AgroSciences**

## Finalists

- Mr Andrew Bulmer  
**Bulmer's Fresh Farm Vegetables, Victoria**
- Mr Damien Rigali  
**Gourmet Fresh Farms, Western Australia**
- Mr Daniel Maher  
**Precision Production (Aust) Pty Ltd, Victoria**
- Mr William Allan  
**South Australia**
- Mr Edward Windley  
**Kengoon Farming, Queensland**



## 2010 winner Daniel Maher, Ballarat, VIC

Ballarat potato farmer, Mr Daniel Maher, won the coveted Young Grower of the Year Award. After doubling his production to 150 acres in just 12 months through innovative farming techniques, Mr Maher was a worthy winner. He spoke about the importance of keeping young growers in the industry as he accepted the award. "I'd like recognise other young growers in the industry, there isn't a lot of us, and we have a pretty big job ahead of us," he said.



# Researcher of the Year Award

Sponsored by  Bayer CropScience

## Finalists

- Dr Ian Porter  
**Department of Primary Industries, Victoria**
- Mr Rohan Prince  
**DAFWA, Western Australia**
- Mr Andrew De Deztery  
**#1 Aquaponics, South Australia**
- Mr Len Tesoriero  
**Industry and Investment, New South Wales**



## 2010 winner Len Tesoriero, Camden, NSW

Nominated for his significant contribution to the vegetable industry in conducting scientific research, Mr Tesoriero was presented with the Researcher of the Year Award. Mr Tesoriero has led many vegetable-specific R&D projects and has provided valuable input into countless other projects concerned with disease management in a large range of commodities.

He has contributed significantly to increasing knowledge of the Australian vegetable industry and is committed to the adoption of R&D outcomes on-farm, using both well known and novel techniques. Mr Tesoriero thanked the other finalists and his fellow researchers around Australia, along with the growers, who he said had allowed him to experience firsthand the challenges they face on a daily basis.

# Productivity Partner Award

Sponsored by 

## Finalists

- Mr Andrew De Deztery  
**#1 Aquaponics, South Australia**
- Syngenta Australia
- Mr Scott Campbell  
**DuPont**
- Mr Steven Ziebarth  
**Yara Australia, Queensland**
- Mr George Vorrasi  
**Hydro R Us, South Australia**



## 2010 winner Syngenta Australia

Syngenta Australia was awarded the Productivity Partner Award for its work with vegetablesWA to promote efficient chemical use through innovative workshops conducted with growers. Mr Sean Richardson, Portfolio Manager for Vegetables and Potatoes from Syngenta, accepted the award and thanked vegetablesWA for the nomination. Mr Richardson said this award was the culmination of the organisation's philosophy, to work with the products they bring to market to give growers more value from the sprays they purchase.

# Women in Horticulture Award

Sponsored by



## Finalists

- Ms Allison Jane Clark  
**Houston's Farm, Tasmania**
- Ms Denise Ellement  
**Ellement Produce, Western Australia**
- Ms Jane Lovell  
**TQA Australia, Tasmania**
- Ms Joyce Babin  
**Carnarvon, Western Australia**
- Mrs Maureen Dobra  
**The Loose Leaf Lettuce Company, Western Australia**
- Mrs Narelle West  
**West Farms, Queensland**
- Ms Val Murphy  
**Murphy Farms, Victoria**
- Ms Valerie Bonython  
**R.A & V.F. Bonython & Sons, South Australia**



## 2010 winner

### Narelle West, Kalbar, QLD

Mrs Narelle West was a popular winner of the Women in Horticulture Award. With over 30 years experience in the vegetable industry, Mrs West has not only played an integral part as Business Manager of her family farm, but also represented Growcom on the Queensland Rural Industry Training Council. The award also recognised her work in a Women in Horticulture project run last year, in which she took a leadership and mentoring role, encouraging other female growers to become involved. In accepting the award, Mrs West thanked her husband Kent for his support.

# Industry Recognition Award

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## Finalists

- Mr Andrew De Dezsery  
**#1 Aquaponics, South Australia**
- Mr Jim Turley  
**vegetablesWA, Western Australia**
- Mr John Gallagher  
**Former Chair of the Potato IACs, Western Australia**
- Mr Dan Trimboli  
**Enza Zaden Seed Company, New South Wales**
- Mr Frank Ruffo  
**Tripod Farmers Pty Ltd, Victoria**



## 2010 winner

### Jim Turley, West Perth, WA

Mr Jim Turley was honoured with the Industry Recognition Award for his outstanding commitment to the vegetable industry. Mr Turley has staunchly represented the interests of growers across Western Australia for many years and voiced their concerns to decision-makers. In accepting this award, Mr Turley joked that it was one of the very few times in his life that he was lost for words. He also praised the CEO's of the vegetable and potato industry state bodies, who he said had withstood criticism over the last few years and deserved recognition.



# Industry Impact Award

Sponsored by



## Finalists

- Mr Andrew De Dezsery  
**#1 Aquaponics, South Australia**
- Mr Gavin Foord  
**vegetablesWA, Western Australia**
- Gazzola Farms  
**Somerville, Victoria**



## 2010 winner

### Gazzola Farms, Somerville, VIC

Gazzola Farms was recognised with the Industry Impact Award for implementing the latest mechanical, cultural and agricultural practices available to the vegetable industry. Mr Luis Gazzola accepted the award on behalf of his three sons, Andrew, Colin and Paul, who now manage the business which supplies Australia's main wholesale markets year round. Mr Gazzola told the audience that he was honoured to accept the award and incredibly proud to see his sons carry on the family business. He also thanked his wife Gloria for being the backbone of the family, and congratulated all vegetable growers around Australia for meeting the challenges of growing fresh produce.

# Innovative Marketing Award

Sponsored by



## Finalists

- Ms Candy Michaelis  
**SA Grown Branding and Marketing Program, South Australia**
- Mr Joe D'anastasi  
**Glenorie Hydroponics, New South Wales**
- Mr Rick Butler  
**Butler Market Gardens, Victoria**
- Western Potatoes Pty Ltd  
**West Perth, Western Australia**
- Mr Andrew Philip  
**SP Exports, Queensland**



Award accepted by Colin Hudgson

## 2010 winner

### Andrew Philip, Childers, QLD

Mr Andrew Philip from SP Exports was awarded the Innovative Marketing Award for his innovation work with the drip-free tomato. The product won the Innovation Award at the 2008 Fruit Logistica for its great characteristics as the world's first full flesh and non-leaking tomato. It has since taken off across Australia, especially in large chain restaurants such as McDonalds, KFC and Hungry Jacks. Mr Philip was unfortunately absent on the night but speaking with *Vegetables Australia* since, said he was honoured to receive the award and proud of the impact the tomato variety had made in the Australian market.



# Young growers cross the Tasman

Nine lucky young Australian vegetable growers are packing their bags, about to embark on a study tour of New Zealand, beginning on 28 July.

Nine young growers will travel to the North Island of New Zealand for nine days as part of a Grower's Study Tour. The group will also attend the HortNZ Conference.

Participants will have the opportunity to meet with leading New Zealand growers and visit a wide variety of vegetable production facilities in a range of environments.

The tour will take in all of the major growing regions in New Zealand, including visits to properties in Pukekohe, Palmerston North and Napier, as well as opportunities to tour wholesale operations and farmers markets.

AUSVEG Director, Mr Paul Bogdanich, who led the 2009 grower tour to New Zealand, said the operations visited last year were first class and provided participants with an insight into how Kiwi growers

are collaborating to bring about significant benefits for their industry.

"One of the best aspects of the tour was seeing the collaboration between New Zealand growers, which is providing cost benefits and also making their operations more efficient," Mr Bogdanich said.

"Sharing resources, especially in relation to water security and even fertilisers, was something we in Australia could learn a lot from."

## HortNZ

Before participants return to Australia, they will attend the HortNZ Conference 2010 to be held in Auckland, from 4-5 August at the Sky City Convention Centre.

Leaders from New Zealand's farming, commercial, science and technology sectors will speak at the event which will

allow the young growers to gain important insights into how the New Zealand horticulture industry is placed and the challenges confronting vegetable growers across the Tasman. The tour will also provide an invaluable networking opportunity, allowing the growers to share their experiences and possibly find solutions to common problems.

Daniel Maher, a potato grower from Victoria, who was also a member of last year's tour, said the experience allowed him to listen to others who have confronted problems that he had faced in his own operation.

"I think all growers regardless of what they grow face similar problems, so you can learn from each other's mistakes," Mr Maher said.

"It was also great just to enjoy the company of others who know how tough it can be as a

young grower in Australia," he said.

Leading the tour will be AUSVEG Communications Officer, Erin Lyall, who said the entire industry would benefit from the leadership and knowledge gained by participants.

"The tour is a fantastic opportunity for young growers to expand their knowledge of the industry and build professional relationships," she said.

"Historically, growers who have attended these tours have benefited immensely and many have gone on to become industry leaders."

**i** For more information contact:  
Erin Lyall  
Communications Officer  
AUSVEG  
Email: <erin.lyall@ausveg.com.au>  
Phone: (03) 9822 0388

2009 New Zealand Young Growers' Tour





# McCain's launches School Veggie Patches program



McCain Foods last month announced the launch of the McCain School Veggie Patches program, which aims to teach primary school children about the origin and benefits of vegetables and encourage them to make healthy food choices by planting and growing vegetables in their own schoolyard.

The McCain School Veggie Patches program will see kids across Australia involved in vegetable production which can only be a good thing for the industry, as children become aware of different vegetable varieties and possibly increase their consumption.

Nicki Anderson, Marketing Director, McCain Foods Australia and New Zealand, said she was proud to announce the program, which marks a significant commitment to children's food education.

"We are passionate about educating children about the foods they eat and where they come from," Ms Anderson said.

"McCain School Veggie Patches aims to teach children about the benefits of healthy eating in a fun, outdoor environment. Involving children in the process of planting, growing and harvesting veggies is a great way to get them excited about eating veggies, and gives kids some of the building blocks for making healthy lifestyle choices."

Primary schools across Australia and New Zealand have received an information pack with instructions on how to register their school for McCain School Veggie Patches. Once a school has registered for the program, parents, businesses and community members can donate points to the school, by collecting the barcodes on all McCain frozen vegetable packs and McCain Purely Potato products.

Participating schools can redeem their points for

everything they need to build and maintain a veggie patch, including seeds, tools and equipment; such as gardening gloves, wheelbarrows, water tanks and compost bins.

The program represents a \$500,000 commitment from McCain Foods on garden equipment available to schools across Australia and New Zealand. Further information can be found online at: [www.mccainveggiepatches.com](http://www.mccainveggiepatches.com)

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# Learning to love

An Australian-first study is helping to increase children's likeness for vegetables and paving the way for increased consumption, writes Karen Shaw.

Statistics show that Australian children do not eat enough vegetables. But a recent project has found a way to help Aussie kids learn to love their veggies.

In a new study, children were offered a small quantity of a vegetable they didn't like, together with a small reward in the form of a sticker, for nine consecutive days. This repeated tasting not only improved their liking for the vegetable but also increased their consumption of it.

The study, which was commissioned by Horticulture Australia Limited (HAL) and funded by the National Vegetable Levy with matched funds provided by the Australian Government, was led by Nutritionist and Senior Research Scientist, Dr David Cox. Dr Cox said that the results are not surprising, but are significant.

"This study shows that if parents are armed with some simple strategies to encourage regular eating of a vegetable, this helps improve a child's liking of it," he said.

"The message is simple. Parents need to expose young children to a variety of vegetables. It doesn't have to be large servings, but what is important is to give kids different vegetable taste

vegetables. "If the child doesn't like it at first, keep trying," he said.

## Taste testing

The study aimed to test whether a simple taste exposure strategy,

child's liking for it.

Adelaide parents and their children, aged from four to seven, were selected to be involved. They were then divided into three groups. The first group of children tasted the vegetable and were presented with a sticker reward; the second group just tasted the vegetable and the third, the control group, involved children whose parents were only given information about healthy eating.

Parents were then asked to select six vegetables and rank them in order of taste preference. From this list a target vegetable was selected. Dr Cox explained that it was important for the parent to select a fairly neutral vegetable, not one that was hated.

There were 22 different vegetables selected as targets. Top of the list was carrot with 20 children opting to taste it. Next was cauliflower, then cucumber, broccoli, peas, capsicum and celery. Bottom was brussel sprouts with only one child electing to taste it.

Children were then asked to eat

“This study shows that if parents are armed with some simple strategies to encourage regular eating of a vegetable, this helps improve a child's liking for it.”

sensations, regularly.”

Dr Cox also encourages parents not to give up in the often endless battle to encourage their kids to eat

which involved parents presenting a child with a 10 cent sized piece of the same vegetable daily for two weeks, could change that



a small quantity of the vegetable for nine consecutive days, with most either raw, boiled or steamed.

Parents were also given specific strategies to encourage children to eat the vegetable. These included talking about the food, not forcing children to eat it, and keeping the study stress free. "The focus was really on getting the child to taste the same vegetable each day, not necessarily liking it," Dr Cox said.

### Real results

Results showed that after two weeks 58 per cent of the taste-and-reward group rated their target vegetable as yummy; 53 per cent of the taste-only reported the same result. But only 38 per cent of the control group reported any change. "Even after three months these results didn't alter," Dr Cox said. Australian dietary guidelines recommend that good eating practices should be established early in life to help avoid chronic

diseases in adulthood. Research also shows that food preferences and habits, formed in childhood, tend to be maintained in the long term.

"Families these days are often time poor, which means many people shop for convenience or eat out, and so fresh vegetables can be left off the list. Statistics show that many children only eat one serve of vegies a day, which is simply not enough," Dr Cox said.

"While parents try to give children different vegetables, they might only do it once or twice and then give up, particularly if the child refuses to eat what they are being served."

"And this is where the study comes in. It aimed to empower parents by giving them skills and strategies in what's called a repeated exposure method of trying a vegetable."

Dr Cox also said it was pleasing that the parents involved were positive about the process, and exposing their

children to more vegetables.

"For many parents the strategy of giving their children small quantities of a vegetable was new, and they felt it was a helpful technique. Others commented that keeping the process low key and stress free was also positive," he said.

Dr Cox is now keen to take the study further and undertake more research in the area.

"We know it works, it's a proven technique, but now it needs to be applied to a larger audience," he said.

Dr Cox said collaborating with national parenting organisations that have direct links to families, was on the radar.

"If children eat more vegetables then it's good all round—for the health of the nation and for the farmer who grows the produce," he said.

"Encouraging children to eat more vegetables will create higher demand for the product. And children are the next generation of consumers, so it's important they like

vegetables and teach their children to do the same."

### THE BOTTOM LINE

- An Australian-first study is identifying the effect of simple strategies to increase children's likeness for vegetables.
- A reward-for-tasting technique has been successful in increasing the acceptance of vegetables in the diets of Aussie kids.
- Positive feedback received from parents indicates that simple techniques are helpful in encouraging their children to eat different types of vegetables.

**i** For more information contact:  
 Dr David Cox  
 CSIRO Food and Nutritional Sciences  
 Phone: (08) 8303 8811  
 Email: <david.cox@csiro.au>  
 Or visit  
 www.ausveg.com.au  
 Project Number: VG08002



# From healthy soils to healthy people

After delivering the keynote address at the inaugural AUSVEG National Convention, Trade Show and Awards for Excellence, Major General Michael Jeffery spoke with *Vegetables Australia*.

One of the highlights of the inaugural AUSVEG National Convention, Trade Show and Awards for Excellence, was the keynote address delivered by the former Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia, Major General Michael Jeffery. The Major General addressed a packed audience consisting of growers, researchers and vegetable and potato industry members, in the speaker sessions that accompanied the AUSVEG National Convention's sprawling Trade Show.

He highlighted Australia's undesirable current health situation, including obesity and its ramifications, such as the increasing incidence of type 2 diabetes and kidney disease. "Obesity is a lifestyle disease

that now affects 60 per cent of Australian adults and 25 per cent of our children, which is the highest in the world," Major General Jeffery said.

The financial impact on the Australian economy of this health epidemic, were branded as unacceptable, and he encouraged the Australian vegetable industry to play a more significant role in the solution to these dietary and lifestyle issues.

"Investment in nutritious food is fundamental to good health and disease prevention," he said.

"The Australian vegetable growing industry is therefore critical in the production of quality food to improve the

health of the nation."

While this message was prominent throughout Major General Jeffery's address, the process to achieve this solution was his key message.

## Starting in soil

Restoring the natural health of our soils he described as essential in gaining access to healthy produce, which would ultimately lead to a healthier nation.

"Only healthy soils can provide plants with their essential nutrient requirements sustainably, and it is the processes that govern the supply of these nutrients from soils to plants that are





fundamental, not only to their growth, but also to the nutrient quality of our food," Major General Jeffery said.

Major General Jeffery also urged growers to explore new and innovative farming techniques and stressed the need to restore the carbon in our soils, which he believes have been harvested in an unsustainable way.

"A carbon enriched soil structure promotes good aeration, root growth, microbial, bacterial and fungal activity. While unhealthy soils, that is, those without sufficient carbon, inhibit the capacity for plants to make the essential sugars and nutrients necessary to make them healthy," Major General Jeffery said.

The Major General highlighted many other issues in his address, including the better use of rainfall, utilising natural sequence farming processes and confronting issues that surround climate change and food security, which he said were all critical to the

horticulture industry.

Despite the high number, and wide ranging issues affecting the industry, Major General Jeffery indicated that of greatest concern—and which impacted on all other factors—was the dire health of Australia's

### Speaking direct

After delivering his powerful speech, Major General Jeffery was kind enough to speak with *Vegetables Australia* and explore in detail some of his key messages.

“The Australian vegetable growing industry is critical in the production of quality food to improve the health of the nation.”

landscape.

"By regenerating our landscape we can improve the health of our soils and thereby the nutrient balance and densities in our food," Major General Jeffery said.

"Since the health of all of us is directly linked to the food we eat, then it is the responsibility of food growers to produce the best quality and most nutritious food possible. The Australian vegetable growing and processing industry must contribute directly to this restoration."

In relation to water use efficiency, Major General Jeffery said that some 50 per cent of rainfall is evaporated needlessly because of the degraded nature of our landscape.

"If we could deal with that evaporative problem by re-establishing the health of natural filtration processes of our soil, we could save huge quantities each year: 10 times the quantity of water in our dams and reservoirs, water that would already be in our soil," he said.

"The first point is to understand how water should naturally flow through the landscape. Understanding the hydrology of the soil is thus very important, and attempting to restore the water flow in much the same way as it flowed before colonisation is the first step."

Major General Jeffery said that a national approach to water management was required and that growers needed to repair all damaged areas affected by poor water management, including wetlands and riparian zones.

He also identified a number of different developments in horticulture that need to be adopted and possibly combined, to begin the process of restoring the natural health of our soils.

"It may be a multifaceted package, but the objective must be to regenerate the health of our soils, on the basis that healthy soils will result in healthier food and I would suggest therefore healthier people," he said.

The Major General was adamant that people need to open their eyes and start to make the changes that will lead to a sustainable future.

"And if we can get it right, we can set a good example to other countries making similar mistakes and by so doing make a tremendously important contribution to global well being," he said.

“Healthy soils for healthy foods and a healthy planet.”

Major General Michael Jeffery, AC, AO (Mil), CVO, MC, was Governor-General of Australia between 2003 and 2008 and Governor of Western Australia from 1993 to 2000. Prior to this, the Major General served in the Army and for his service in Vietnam was awarded the Military Cross and the South Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry. Following his retirement as Governor-General in 2008, he has taken a keen interest in rural issues, including through his Chairmanship of the Royal Flying Doctor Service.



# Getting

Andrew Bulmer is a young grower who is giving back to the industry. A busy farm Advisory Group and recently a father for the first time, he chats with *Vegetables Australia*

Like most growers, Andrew Bulmer is short on time and big on things to do. At our fifth attempt, we finally caught the young farm manager with some minutes to spare and enough time to give *Vegetables Australia* a sneak peak into his hectic schedule.

Operations Manager at Bulmers Farm Fresh Vegetables Pty Ltd, Mr Bulmer is a key member of the family owned and operated business, with his father and mother still at the helm and his brother also heavily involved.

Their property situated in Lindenow, just outside Bairnsdale in East Gippsland, was originally purchased by Mr Bulmer's great grandfather and

operated as a dairy farm.

Mr Bulmer's father turned to growing vegetables with the

iceberg lettuce for processing from October to

May, and growing crops such as

remainder of the year.

According to Mr Bulmer, in the busy summer season the business produces approximately 100 tonne of headed iceberg lettuces each week.

"Over the last 12 months we've doubled production to about 800 acres, which is due to us leasing some more land in the area," he said.

A key customer of the business is Golden State Foods, who supply fast food giants McDonalds, meaning biting into a Big Mac takes on a whole new meaning for Mr Bulmer.

Though he grew up on the family farm, Mr Bulmer admits he originally had no intention of following in his father's footsteps and after finishing school, he

“ I am passionate about what I do and the industry that I am a part of. Its great to be able to contribute and I encourage others to put their names up and become involved. ”

broccoli boom in the 1980s.

The family's core business now though, revolves around growing

broccoli, spinach, sweet corn, cauliflower, capsicum and other lettuce varieties throughout the



# Involved

manager, a member of the industry's Leadership and People Development *Australia* about rolling up his sleeves and getting involved, writes David O'Neill

headed off to Melbourne in search of a career.

"I worked in supermarkets mainly as a produce manager, deciding what fresh produce to buy, and actually at one stage contemplated becoming a chef," Mr Bulmer said.

## Returning home

After a few years, the family business was calling and he made the decision to return home and take up the position of Operations Manager on the farm.

Mr Bulmer explained the role as: "deciding what to plant and what to sell, managing the staff, talking to company reps and keeping up to date with industry developments."

Though most would be content with the demands of managing such a large scale operation, Mr Bulmer's enthusiasm has led to significant industry involvement.

One of the first examples of his commitment to the vegetable industry, was participation in an AUSVEG led young grower's tour to New Zealand in 2009. Mr Bulmer believes the tours are an incredibly valuable experience for growers and is keen to encourage others to take part.

"You learn so much from them. Networking with other growers is a fantastic opportunity, and it's great to explore how they do things in another

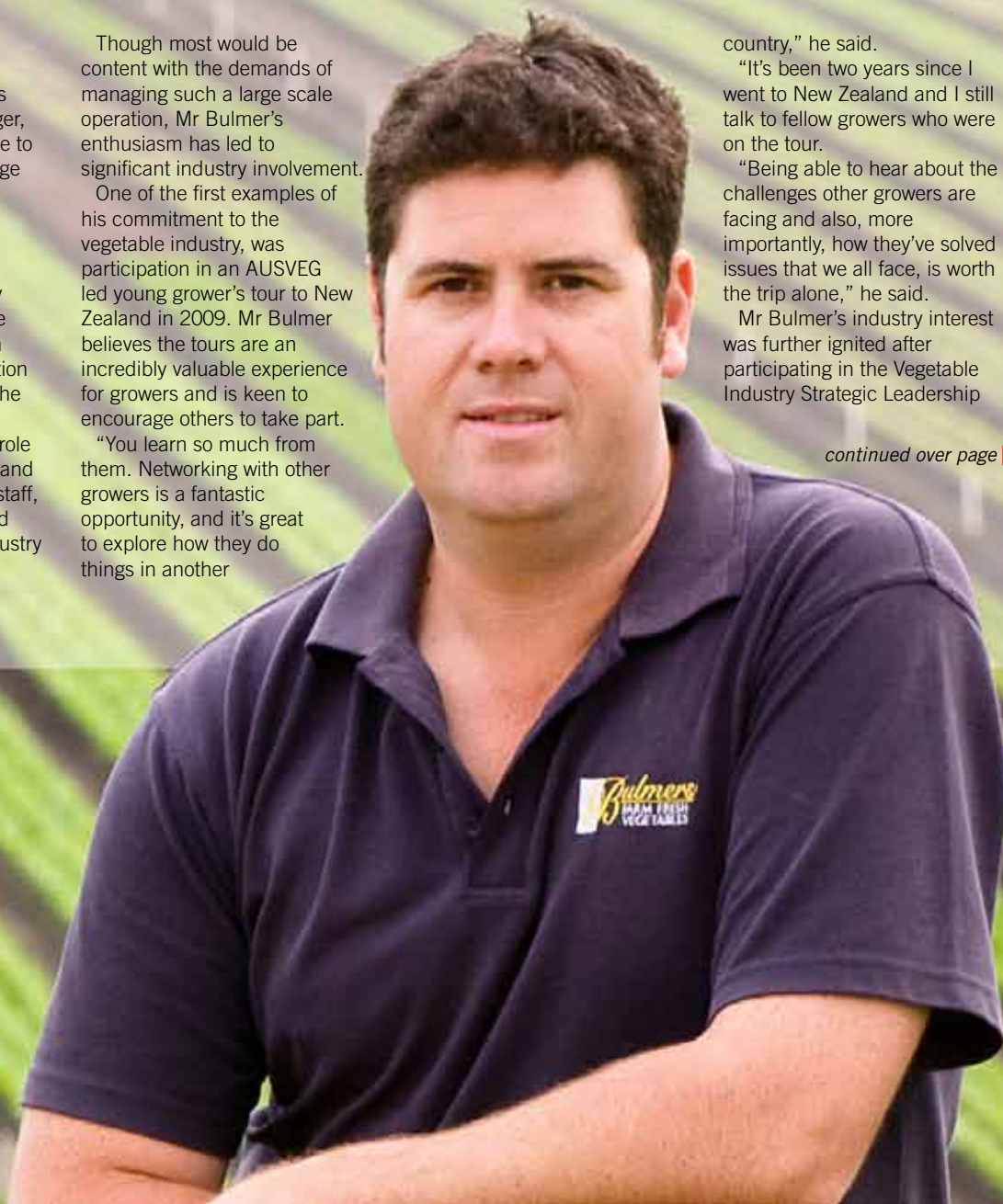
country," he said.

"It's been two years since I went to New Zealand and I still talk to fellow growers who were on the tour.

"Being able to hear about the challenges other growers are facing and also, more importantly, how they've solved issues that we all face, is worth the trip alone," he said.

Mr Bulmer's industry interest was further ignited after participating in the Vegetable Industry Strategic Leadership

*continued over page* ▶





Course in 2009, which he credits for extending his knowledge on the role and function of the Vegetable Industry Advisory Committee (IAC).

The course focuses on developing skills that participants can apply at three levels: personal, business and national industry. Growers are also encouraged to develop and implement plans associated with these three key areas.

### Gaining experience

The experience gained from the course has culminated in Mr Bulmer joining the Leadership and People Development Advisory Group.

The group advises the IAC on research and development funding for various projects concerned with this area of the industry.

“Once I completed the course, I decided that with what learned knowledge I did have in the area, I could contribute to this particular advisory group,” he said.

According to Mr Bulmer, his eagerness to participate in industry groups and courses

stemmed from a desire to learn more about the industry he works in.

“I wanted to know more about the industry as a whole, who the key players were, and what went on at the higher level,” he said.

“I am passionate about what I do and the industry that I am a part of. It’s great to be able to contribute and I encourage others to put their names up and become involved.”

Mr Bulmer said all growers,

regardless of the different commodities they produced, faced similar problems.

“The major problems are the same for all growers: the lack of water, the rising cost of labour and the constant battle against the conditions are challenges we all face day to day,” he said.

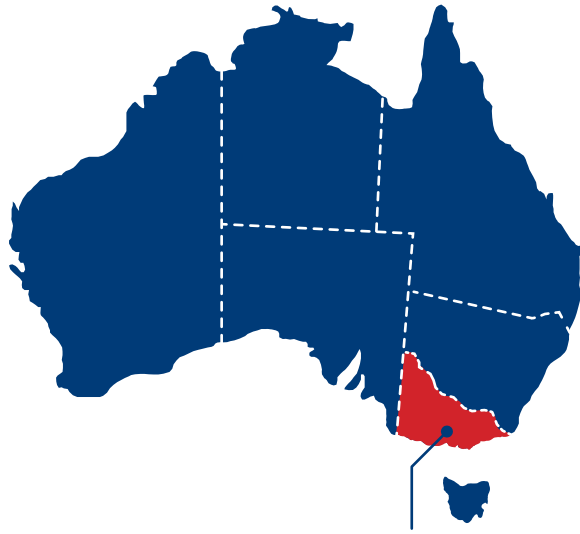
“Input costs are massive and constantly seem to be on the rise, which is making it harder for growers to make a living.”

After the birth of his first child in June, things have become even more hectic for the young grower. Luckily by the time the sleepless nights arrived, the busy summer season was finished.

“We couldn’t have had her arriving in the middle of summer, we’re far too busy”, he joked.

“If you’re fortunate enough to be able to plan for these things, then good luck to you.”

Mr Bulmer is clearly a grower who relishes rolling up his sleeves and confronting every challenge head on. A man who is and will continue to give back to the industry he’s most passionate about.



**Bulmers Farm Fresh Vegetables Pty Ltd,**  
situated in Lindenow, East Gippsland





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# Young leader in the pack...

It's not easy to encourage young people into the vegetable industry. But after experiencing life in the city and taking a year off, 21-year-old Queenslanders Brodie Wolfendon decided that life on the farm might not be that bad after all, writes Andrew White.

**B**rodie Wolfendon is an enthusiastic 21-year-old who is looking to take up any opportunity that he can.

Working on his family's farm—now more than 30 years old—growing sweet potatoes just north of Rockhampton in Queensland, he represents the third generation in a family of growers.

Recently, as part of the industry's *Growing Leaders Program*, Mr Wolfendon participated in two leadership workshops—each three days in duration—held in Brisbane and

Melbourne, to build his skills and learn about the industry.

The program focuses on developing skills that participants can apply at three levels: personal, business and

national industry. Participants are also encouraged to develop and implement plans associated with these three areas.

But Mr Wolfendon hasn't always been so keen on

becoming involved in the industry.

"I wanted nothing to do with the farm to start with, but now I am out here, it's a lot better than I expected. I'm very interested in it now," he said.

"I didn't want anything to do with it, but Dad kept saying come out here and see what it's like."

Currently enjoying a role on-farm primarily in plant irrigation, Mr Wolfendon also helps out around the property as a farm-hand with spraying and other operations.

“ I think it's going to give me a head start on a lot of people because I'm getting training at such an early age. ”





AUSVEG Communications Officer Erin Lyall and Brodie Wolfendon at the Growing Leaders Dinner in Melbourne

"I had a year off after school working in town and then I came out here after that, and yeah, it's good work."

Mr Wolfendon said he is looking to take on more of the management side of things in the future, as his experience grows.

"My main role here at the moment, I'm more of an employee than anything else." "I'm looking at getting into more of a management position sometime in the future though." Mr Wolfendon heard about the *Growing Leaders Program* online.

"Dad received an email about the program asking if he, or anyone he knew would be interested in it. We decided that it would be a good chance to get some experience."

The *Growing Leaders Program* is designed for people wishing to take up leadership roles in the

vegetable industry.

Mr Wolfendon is one of 13 participants in this year's program.

"It was great to learn leaderships qualities and understand what makes a good leader. I haven't had any education in that side of things I guess. Networking and meeting people in the industry was a great experience," he said.

#### Presentation planned

Mr Wolfendon revealed that participants in the *Growing Leaders program* are planning to make a presentation to the Federal Minister for Agriculture, The Hon. Tony Burke. In the presentation they will propose a marketing campaign, with a 'vegetable week' as the main focus, Mr Wolfendon said.

The whole group are currently working on the proposal and this work will continue in the

third *Growing Leaders* session to be held in Canberra from Tuesday, 31 August.

"I have been thrown in the deep end as they say and it has been harder, having such a lack of knowledge to begin with," he said.

"But I think it's going to give me a head start on a lot of people because I'm getting training at such an early age."

Mr Wolfendon has also applied to attend the Young Grower's Tour to New Zealand which commences Wednesday, 28 July. Nine young Australian vegetable growers will be given the opportunity of a lifetime, travelling the North Island of New Zealand over nine days.

The tour group will also attend the Horticulture New Zealand Conference, with the visit also set to include tours to a wide variety of vegetable production facilities in a range of different environments.

"I'd like to see more of the larger scale operations, and gain an insight into how big farms are run," he said.

"We visited a nursery down in Melbourne, Boomaroo Nurseries, and that was really eye-opening for me to see something of that scale. I think to see more of that sort of thing, larger farms and packing sheds, it will be interesting." So does he see himself staying in the industry?

"I'm enjoying it, so I see myself in this industry for quite some time," he said.

The vegetable industry's People Development program works to ensure that a new

generation of leaders are active in the vegetable industry.

The HAL National Vegetable Industry Leadership Program, *Growing Leaders*, is funded through the National Vegetable Levy, with matched funds from the Australian Government. For more information about the *Growing Leaders Program*, or other leadership or people development opportunities, contact Dianne Fullelove from the Vegetable Industry Development Program.

#### THE BOTTOM LINE

- *Growing Leaders* is a three-part series of workshops designed for young leaders or leadership aspirants within the vegetable industry.
- The People Development program, as part of the Vegetable Industry Development program, aims to promote leadership within the vegetable industry through a range of courses and seminars, of which *Growing Leaders* is one.
- The Young Growers' Study Tour to New Zealand runs from 28 July to 5 August this year, with the tour cost substantially subsidised by the National Vegetable Levy.



For more information contact:

Dianne Fullelove

Email: <diannefullelove@optusnet.com.au>

Phone: (07) 3374 0453

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## Input invited into Vegetable Crop Protection R,D&E Plan

The Vegetable IPM Coordination Program (VG09191) aims to enable the development and delivery of solutions to current and future challenges the industry faces in Crop Protection. Initially approved for a 12-month term, it will develop information packages, such as for the management of Western Flower Thrips and Tomato Spotted Wilt Virus.

However, the longer term impact of this program may be felt, according to the team behind the project, through more efficient and effective investment of R&D levies, guided by a comprehensive plan. Growers regularly list insect and disease management as a top priority, given the risks these pose to their crops. Industry, through R&D levies, has invested millions of dollars over the past decade or so in programs to address risks from insects, diseases, weeds and other pests, and there is already regular communication and workshops to improve coordination, as well as reviews, such as those for pathology, IPM, nematodes, sucking pests and soil health.

While these often identify opportunities to accelerate both the research and the extension of results to industry, there is also a need to build on these reviews and workshops through better coordination. This pilot project includes the development of an overall Crop Protection R,D&E Plan. Although many complex issues need to be considered in developing this, the team behind the project contends that much of the framework is already in place, provided by past discussions, reports and experience. This will be improved with other advice received from growers and other stakeholders from along the supply chain.

The team members running the project are asking for contributions and feedback from anyone with an interest in the role of Crop Protection, in building the competitiveness of the vegetable industry, through productivity and meeting consumer requirements.

To provide feedback or obtain further information please contact team members Gerard McEvelly (0409 047 117) and Sandra McDougall (0427 401 466).

A website has also been established to receive input and enable online discussion between stakeholders:

Homepage: <http://groups.google.com.au/group/vegetable-crop-protection-planning-group>

Group email: [vegetable-crop-protection-planning-group@googlegroups.com](mailto:vegetable-crop-protection-planning-group@googlegroups.com)

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# Grower Study Tour to the USA 2010

13-24 October 2010

Nine lucky Australian vegetable growers will be given the opportunity of a lifetime to travel to the USA for 12 days as part of the Grower Study Tour, which will also include the chance to attend the PMA Fresh Summit USA.

Travelling through Florida, Delaware, Washington and California, participants will have the opportunity to meet with leading American growers and visit a wide variety of vegetable production facilities in a range of environments, including a visit to the DuPont Research and Development facility in Wilmington, Delaware.

The tour cost will be substantially subsidised by the National Vegetable Levy. Growers will be required to make a voluntary contribution of \$3,500 toward the cost of the tour. All air and land travel, single room accommodation and most meals will be included, as well as registration for the PMA Fresh Summit USA in Orlando, Florida.

For further information or to express your interest, please contact Elizabeth Cox, AUSVEG Communications Officer on (03) 9822 0388 or email [elizabeth.cox@ausveg.com.au](mailto:elizabeth.cox@ausveg.com.au).

**Places limited to just 9!**







# Making intellectual property work for you

Intellectual property rights might sound like a world away from the reality of vegetable growing, but it may be an untapped source that many growers should be harnessing for their own benefit.

Protecting your crop from disease, pests or weather damage is usually at the forefront of most growers' minds, but according to Kathryn Adams, from the Australian Centre for Intellectual Property in Agriculture (ACIPA), intellectual property rights should be as well.

Ms Adams is a Senior Research Fellow at the ACIPA, who has been working with Horticulture Australia Limited (HAL) over the last six years running workshops for growers, organising conferences, and writing reports on capturing the value of intellectual property for horticulture.

As a special guest speaker at the recent AUSVEG National Convention, Ms Adams gave a presentation on intellectual property rights, which included information about plant breeders rights (PBR), patents and trade practices.

Ms Adams said that one of the main reasons why she decided to present on intellectual

property rights was because of the concern expressed by some in the industry about the supermarkets and other large players taking ownership—or exclusive licenses—of PBR

important that growers know the rules about marketing protected varieties so they understand what can and cannot be done in the market-place.

“The grower view is often that

“ Sometimes it's hard to distinguish whether a plant is actually a mutation of a variety or whether it's just some common variety that has been around for a long time but nobody has grown it in that particular area. ”

protected varieties, and then appearing to limit the availability to growers. She said that it was

unless you are in that particular growers 'club' you may not get access to a particular protected

variety, so I thought the best way to tackle this would be to set out what the rules are and what the limiting factors are, and then people can make their own decisions about whether or not there is any sort of action that can be taken,” Ms Adams said.

“I particularly wanted to explain the rules regarding trade practices and plant breeders rights, so that people can make their own judgment about whether someone is stopping them from getting access to something that they may think they have a right to have.”

## **Making farmers aware**

Ms Adams said that one of the main issues affecting the wider use of intellectual property rights by farmers, was that many of them were not aware of what they can and cannot do with a PBR protected variety owned by someone else.

“Nearly every grower will use a protected variety at some point so it's in their interest to understand what the rules are



and how they can make it work for them," she said.

"The other thing is that when somebody talks about PBR a grower often thinks that the variety owner is going to bar them for having access, which isn't necessarily the case."

"Rather, because it is an exclusive right, the rules allow the owner of the variety to set the terms and conditions under which they will license others (including growers) to use the variety, so I think it's important for people to understand the total framework."

### Knowing your vegetables

Ms Adams said that if a grower does find a mutation or sport, the problem is that they are often unsure if it is a new variety which could potentially be protected by PBR.

Ms Adams also said that growers sometimes find a sport or develop a new variety themselves and they do not know how to go about protecting it, or the potential benefits of doing so.

"Sometimes it's hard to distinguish whether a plant is actually a mutation of a variety or whether it's just some common variety that has been around for a long time but nobody has grown it in that particular area," she said.

"Sometimes there can be embedded viruses which actually give characteristics that are different to the norm, so there are all sorts of reasons. The purpose of PBR is to actually demonstrate in trials that the new variety is different and it's uniform and it's stable in those characteristics, so that then gives an objective methodology for determining if it is really a new variety."

### Breeding and investment

Ms Adams said that she cannot stress enough the importance for growers in understanding intellectual property rights, because it encourages people to breed new varieties and also allows for more investment in breeding programs which then benefits growers.

"The original purpose of PBR was to give breeders a mechanism for controlling the use of a variety. If you don't have PBR the variety just goes out into the public domain and you don't have any way of getting any income back to reinvest in new breeding programs," said Ms Adams.

"With PBR the breeder gets an exclusive right for a period of about 20 years and then has a mechanism for charging a royalty, which allows others to use the new variety and the breeder can receive money for it and start their next breeding program."

No matter what you grow or where you are in Australia and regardless of the size of your operation, Ms Adams said that intellectual property rights are important for all growers.

"The really important thing is that you can make intellectual property work for you as a grower, whether it be a trademark or plant breeders rights or patents, and you have to understand what you've got and how your business can use it," she said.

**i** For more information please visit <http://www.acipa.edu.au/>  
You can view Kathryn Adams' presentation from the AUSVEG National Convention at [www.ausveg.com.au/convention](http://www.ausveg.com.au/convention)



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# Looking to the future

The vegetable industry is looking to the future, exploring the concept of a national grower registration scheme, a strategy that could provide value throughout the industry.

Industry leaders and highly respected growers agree that a national registration scheme could provide crucial advantages in terms of biosecurity and food safety, two issues which are critical to the vegetable industry.

Senior Horticulture Consultant, Jan Paul Van Moort, has been engaged by Horticulture Australia Limited (HAL) to undertake a scoping study, the first stage in developing a national grower registration scheme. A Manager with GHD Consultancy Firm, Mr Van Moort has had extensive experience in the horticulture industry, including working on the industry's three year performance review in 2008.

"The study was commissioned

by HAL to look at the potential of a grower registration scheme, and to look at how it should be structured and shaped in the vegetable industry," Mr Van Moort said.

## Looking elsewhere

Mr Van Moort and his team looked at case studies from other industries that have established similar concepts, such as the National Grains Register and the National Livestock Identification Scheme.

"The aim was to look at a raft of different methods and policies, to determine what would be best for the unique nature of the vegetable industry," Mr Van Moort said.

"We have now developed a set of principles for a national

scheme and in the coming weeks we will run focus groups in each state of Australia, to workshop these principles with the Government and industry. "Our recommendations include that for the scheme to be effective, it must be mandatory, jointly owned by industry and government, and based on property rather than location."

Mr Van Moort said the key drivers of the project were biosecurity and food safety, but it would also help the industry develop key strategies and policy.

"Because of the nature of the industry, it is poorly profiled and we don't know what is grown, where it's grown and when.

So registration will help the industry develop better policy

through increased knowledge," he said.

IAC Chairman, Jeff McSpedden, who is part of a steering committee that is overseeing the scoping study, said a registration scheme would protect the industry if questions about biosecurity arose from within the Government.

"Registration would mean that there was total traceability for produce, down to the individual grower and possibly even the block on which the vegetables were produced,"

Mr McSpedden said.

Mr McSpedden was also keen to point out, that although details of a possible registration scheme were still being discussed, if implemented, only limited grower information would be available.





“Grower information such as names, addresses, phone numbers, etc. would not be available to the public and no information regarding revenue or expenses would be accessible by the Government,” he said.

“The only grower information that would be available to the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry would be data on the volume of produce and the type of commodity grown.”

#### Input from states

Representatives from each state are being consulted in the process to determine the best structure for the scheme and how best to ensure acceptance from growers.

Vegetable Growers Association of Victoria (VGA) President, Luis Gazzola, said the seeds for this project had been sewn over a number of years and, if established, it would provide extensive benefits in a number of areas.

“For food safety and biosecurity purposes, it is essential that in our industry, we know how much we are producing and exactly where

produce is being grown,” he said.

“Without such a scheme we are limited in our ability to communicate with growers and control pest incursions.”

Mr Gazzola said the scheme would also require the many growers who are not currently complying with the National Vegetable Levy to become

“Registration would mean that there was total traceability for produce, down to the individual grower and possibly even the block on which the vegetables were produced.”

registered and contribute to Research and Development (R&D).

Grow SA CEO, Mike Redmond, is another who believes a grower registration scheme is imperative to the future of the industry. Mr Redmond said that the

biggest benefit would come in the form of an increase in professionalism.

“We have seen examples in the past where professional growers have had their produce mixed with produce from less professional growers. These type of cases would be eliminated with a registration scheme,” he said.

is in Australia,” he said.

Discussion will continue on the development of the scheme over the coming months, with industry and government engaged to sort through the many challenges that such a concept will need to overcome to be viable and be accepted by growers.

#### THE BOTTOM LINE

- A scoping study has been commissioned by HAL to look at the possibility of a grower registration scheme.
- Industry leaders have identified issues such as biosecurity and food safety, which will benefit if a registration scheme is implemented.
- Industry and government will now be engaged in the next stage of the process to discuss further the possible structure, and the challenges such a plan will need to overcome to be beneficial to the industry.

**i** For more information contact:  
Jan Paul Van Moort  
Manager GHD  
Email: <jp.vanmoort@ghd.com>  
Phone: (02) 9239 7100  
Project Number: VG09021



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# EnviroVeg gaining momentum

After significant interest in the EnviroVeg exhibit at the AUSVEG National Convention and Trade Show, and with a new Environment Committee Chairman and AUSVEG Environment Coordinator, the EnviroVeg program is quickly gaining momentum.

**E**nviroVeg is the vegetable industry's own environmental management program, developed specifically for vegetable growers. As a voluntary program, EnviroVeg assists growers to identify those farming practices that affect the environment and suggests alternatives that may be more beneficial to production, profitability and the surrounding environment.

### Manual

When growers join the EnviroVeg program, they are presented with a manual which outlines principles and practices required for maintaining or improving responsible environmental management on-farm.

The manual is a simple entry point for growers wishing to apply environmental management on their farm. There are nine elements or sections in the EnviroVeg manual. Many cover general

industry practices while others are specific to certain growing systems. As further modules are developed, they will be sent out to members for inclusion in their manual. Also, as practices or regulations change, the

### Self Assessment

The Self Assessment checklist sets out a series of questions to assist growers to identify what they are already doing in regards to environmental

to be undertaken.

As the program is designed to be a continual improvement cycle, growers are not expected to achieve a 'high' score for every practice. Some may also not be applicable to all businesses. The Self Assessments are to be undertaken on a yearly basis and growers are sent annual scorecards with feedback.

### Environmental Action Plan

Once the Self Assessment is complete, it can then be used as a guide in developing an action plan for future activities on the property. The actions may be simple modifications to existing infrastructure or may require the grower to obtain specialist advice or possibly attend a short course.

### EnviroVeg Environmental Assurance

Growers who wish to advance to

“ The EnviroVeg program will then enable growers to demonstrate to the community that they are actively engaged in environmentally responsible practices on their farm. ”

EnviroVeg program will be updated to reflect those changes, ensuring that growers are kept up-to-date with the latest developments.

management, and to plan what actions they need to implement to make further improvements. Self Assessment can help prioritise the actions that need





**EnviroVeg**  
your vegetable levy @ work

the next level of environmental accreditation, can undergo a third party audit of their farm. This will allow the property to gain EnviroVeg Environmental Assurance.

The benefits of gaining environmental assurance are the use of the EnviroVeg logo on products, signage on the farm gate and the opportunity to generate awareness in the wider community that the farm is considering their responsibilities in regards to the environment.

### Why should I join?

EnviroVeg is an industry-owned and developed environmental program specifically for vegetable growers and is free to all levy paying growers. The nine elements of the manual have been specifically developed to assist vegetable growers to manage their operations in a sustainable way. Often growers will find they are already implementing practices that have beneficial environmental impacts. The EnviroVeg program assists growers to identify these practices and further improve on them. The EnviroVeg program will then enable growers to demonstrate to the community that they are actively engaged in environmentally responsible practices on their

farm. In the areas identified as needing improvement, the EnviroVeg manual contains practical guidelines that can be integrated into farm management practices.

The material within the manual can be used to underpin the environmental modules of food safety programs such as Freshcare, SQF2000, HACCP and EurepGAP. Furthermore, these suggested practices may not only be environmentally beneficial, but may also increase productivity and profitability.

As a member of EnviroVeg, growers will also be notified of any subsidies, grants or funding that is available to growers wishing to make environmental improvements on farm. The EnviroVeg section on the AUSVEG website: [www.ausveg.com.au](http://www.ausveg.com.au), contains valuable information such as links to useful websites, upcoming events and related courses that are available.

The EnviroVeg webpage is regularly updated and will soon include an *individual grower portal* where growers will be able to complete the self assessment on-line and compare results with their previous assessments.

## EnviroVeg manual

There are nine modules covered in the EnviroVeg manual:

- Property and business management
- Soil and nutrition management
- Water and waterway management
- Pest management
- Chemical management
- Biodiversity management
- Waste management
- Air quality management
- Energy management

continued over page ►

## New Chairman for Environmental Committee

Jason Huggins has been elected the new Chairman of the AUSVEG Environmental Committee.



Mr Huggins assumes the role from Mr Jeff McSpedden, who was recently appointed as the Independent Chair of the Vegetable Industry Advisory Committee.

Mr Huggins is a third generation vegetable grower who operates an organic produce business situated near Cambooya on the Darling Downs, QLD. Mr Huggins is a certified organic grower of celery, silverbeet, cabbage, beetroots and onions, and has long been committed to sustainable farming.

Mr Huggins completed a Master of Rural Systems Management at the University of Queensland in 2003 and he has an interest in biological farming and environmental issues. He is also passionate about converting developed environmental sciences into

practical applications for growers.

Mr Huggins has been a member of the EnviroVeg program since 2003.

He cites the benefits of the EnviroVeg program as providing growers with the validation and recognition of environmentally responsible practices.

"EnviroVeg is a simple, easy to use, grower-based program. It requires very little time to complete and allows growers to annually benchmark and improve their business against an industry lead environmental program," he said.

Mr Huggins said that as the new Environment Committee Chairman, he would "continue the good work of the committee and continue to meet the environmental challenges facing growers now and in the future."

## Upcoming EnviroVeg Seminars

EnviroVeg is hitting the road to engage growers around Australia to encourage participation in the EnviroVeg program.

The next EnviroVeg Seminar will be held in Virginia, South Australia on Friday 23 July at GrowSA.

The seminar is free to all vegetable levy payers and will include presentations by Dr Ian Porter, a soil health expert from the Victorian Department of Primary

Industries, along with speakers from Elders and the Department of Immigration and Citizenship.

The seminar, which will run for three hours in the afternoon, will also include an informative presentation about the EnviroVeg program itself, bringing growers up to speed about the program and the

benefits that it can have on-farm.

Six seminars are planned for the remainder of 2010, with the second due to take place on Monday, 9 August in Bundaberg, with speakers and venues also to be announced soon.

**i** For more information  
Darcy Boyd  
AUSVEG  
Environment Coordinator  
Email <darcy.boyd@ausveg.com.au>  
Phone: (03) 9822 0388  
www.ausveg.com.au



# New Environment Coordinator

AUSVEG has appointed Darcy Boyd to the position of Environment Coordinator.



AUSVEG welcomed Mr Darcy Boyd to their team in the weeks before the National Convention. Mr Boyd spoke with a number of growers at the EnviroVeg exhibit at the event's Trade Show. He holds a

Bachelor of Environmental Science and a Bachelor of Business (Management) obtained from RMIT University in Victoria. Mr Boyd has also had experience with both the Australian Water Association

and Environment Protection Authority (EPA) Victoria. Based in Melbourne at the AUSVEG offices, Mr Boyd is eager to encourage more grower participation in the EnviroVeg program. "Coming on board just before the AUSVEG National Convention was a perfect beginning to this position and was a very valuable experience," he said.

"It was great to meet the members of the Environmental Committee, discuss the program with a number of growers and gain an understanding of the impact the EnviroVeg program hopes to have on the industry." As the Environment Coordinator he will oversee the EnviroVeg program. Mr Boyd said he is excited by the opportunity it presents. "The program has been developed as the industry's own environmental management program, which

places EnviroVeg in a position to best service the needs of industry members," he said.

The program provides information that is most relevant to growers, and can be tailored to reflect the regulations of local Natural Resource Management Regional Bodies.

With an increasing awareness of environmental issues in the community, Mr Boyd said there is great potential for marketing opportunities stemming from the EnviroVeg program. As well as providing a sign of responsible environmental stewardship to the local community, AUSVEG is currently exploring further enhancements to the program.

Mr Boyd said he looked forward to meeting with many more growers in the coming months and discussing the EnviroVeg program in more detail.



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# Another use for Lotus

Growers of the Asian vegetable, the Lotus Root, may be surprised to hear that another industry is utilising the benefits of the aquatic plant.

**A**quaculture is under increasing pressure to reduce nutrients in discharge water, especially in northern Queensland. A recent project addressed this issue by assessing the efficiency of lotus in reducing the amount of nutrients that are generated in a freshwater aquaculture system.

The project proved that lotus may be a low-cost option for maintaining and improving water quality, as well as providing an additional source of income.

The research centred on assessing the Lotus plant *Nelumbo nucifera* for wastewater bioremediation. Results show that lotus is efficient in reducing the amount of nutrients and suspended solids from discharge water.

The key findings from the research showed that planting lotus was able to reduce ammonia by up to 64 per cent, total suspended solids were up by 40 per cent and water used within the systems improved by 14 per cent.

At the Freshwater Fisheries and Aquaculture Centre, the non-plant treatment systems reduced the amount of ammonia by 46 per cent.

The findings showed that reduced extractions of environmental water and low return of nutrients will help maintain healthy water flows within natural water systems, and help maintain a water systems' natural biodiversity.

Having a practical and realistic water management system that removes excess nutrients and solids from water will benefit the aquaculture industry and other water users. The bioremediation

system planted with the lotus plants could potentially help reduce the amount of water used by up to 10 per cent.

Using lotus for bioremediation means that fish can be maintained at higher density levels, which would therefore reduce the area of the pond that needs to be netted.

The bioremediation systems that are incorporated into aquaculture facilities will reduce the nutrient wastewater, which will reduce the effects of nutrients downstream. Since the aquaculture industry has stricter discharge regulations, the implementation of a bioremediation system would ultimately improve all wastewater. This project showed

that lotus are efficient at reducing the nutrient loading and amount of sediment in wastewater.

Freshwater aquaculture producers in the tropics may directly benefit from this research due to increased efficiencies in stock management and husbandry, and improved production due to better water quality.

The lotus industry within Australia is mostly limited to the exotic food market. The tropical strain of lotus used in this project produces abundant leaves, flowers and pods suitable for the florist industry and it is possible a niche industry could develop from this research.

The project was funded from the Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation (RIRDC) Core Funds, which are provided by the Australian Government in collaboration with the Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation (DEEDI) and an industry partner Daintree River Barramundi Farm.

Information for this article was provided by the Asian Foods Newsletter which is commissioned by Horticulture Australia and jointly funded by RIRDC and the National Vegetable Levy, with matched funds from the Australian Government.



Lotus Plant

## THE BOTTOM LINE

- Lotus plant based water treatment systems could be of immense value to increase productivity and efficiencies in fish farming in the Australian tropics.
- The Lotus Root plant may provide an economically viable option to control pond nutrients.
- Freshwater aquaculture producers in the tropics will directly benefit from this research in the form of increased efficiencies in stock management and husbandry, and improved production due to better water quality.

**i** For more information contact:  
 Peter Graham  
 Queensland Department of  
 Employment, Economic  
 Development and Innovation  
 (DEEDI)  
 Email: <Peter.Graham@  
 deedi.qld.gov.au>



# Asian Vegetable Profile: Lotus Root

**Name:** Lotus Root (*Indian Lotus, Sacred Lotus, Bean of India*)

**Scientific name:**  
*Nelumbo nucifera*

**Background:**

Lotus root is the root portion of the lotus plant, commonly referred to as rhizomes. Native to Asia, the lotus root is a light orange colour with a white interior. The lotus flower has long been a divine symbol for Buddhists, as it's seen as a symbol of purity.

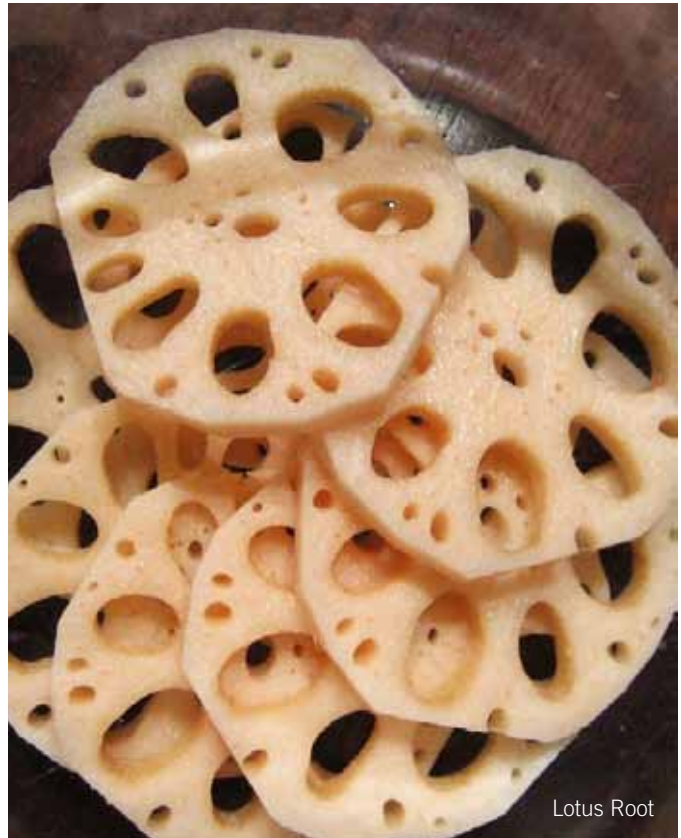
**Where and how does it grow?**

The lotus root grows in ponds or river bottoms with the lotus flowers, stems and leaves above the water, while the roots are planted in the soil below. The plant normally grows up to 150cm and approximately three meters wide. The distinct looking holes throughout the lotus root are created by several large air pockets that run the length of the root and provide the lotus root with buoyancy. The lotus roots grow together under the water, like a chain of

pod connected to each other. Lotus root has been raised in ponds in Southeast Asia for more than 3,000 years. Fresh lotus root is available all-year round. Its natural harvest cycle is from midsummer to late winter.

**Preparation and cooking**

The delicate lacy slices of lotus root keep their crunchy texture even after cooking, and are a perfect way to add texture and interest to a stir fry, soup, salad or stew. The lotus roots are crunchy with a slightly sweet but rather mild flavour, best served with other ingredients and sauces. Scrub or scrape the skin to ensure it is clean, then peel and finely slice before cooking. Lotus roots can be stored for up to two to three weeks in the refrigerator. Lotus roots are traditionally used in Chinese, Vietnamese and Japanese dishes. The roots are also used in traditional Asian herbal medicine.



Lotus Root

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# Disease susceptibility in lettuce

South Australian scientists have looked at the influence of variety and nitrogen on disease susceptibility in lettuce crops, writes Belinda Rawnsley, Barbara Hall and Lee Bartlett from the South Australian Research and Development Institute (SARDI).

Diseases such as Downy Mildew and Anthracnose can dramatically reduce yields and the marketability of lettuce crops. As part of a national collaborative project commissioned by Horticulture Australia Limited (HAL), trials were undertaken to assess the susceptibility of lettuce varieties to Downy Mildew and Anthracnose.

The effect of rate and form of nitrogen fertilisers on disease development in lettuce crops was also investigated.

Downy Mildew is a disease caused by a fungus like organism, *Bremia lactucae*, which infects living tissue and develops during wet weather. Symptoms include yellow patches on the upper leaf surface that eventually turn brown. Spores of downy mildew appear on the underside of the leaf as a white, fluffy growth.

Another common disease of lettuce is Anthracnose, caused by the fungus *Microdochium panattonianum*. This fungus

also develops in moist cool conditions. Symptoms include small spots which enlarge, and the centre can fall out leading to a “shot hole” appearance.

## Testing susceptibility

One of the major aims of the project was to assess the varietal susceptibility to Downy Mildew and Anthracnose. Around 21 lettuce varieties were assessed for their susceptibility to the diseases by spraying spores of Downy Mildew and Anthracnose onto lettuce plants in the greenhouse.

Only four of the 21 varieties (Fortune, Sureshot, Winter Select and Constanza) developed symptoms of Downy Mildew (Figure 1), with Constanza being the most susceptible. All other varieties tested were resistant to the disease.

All 21 varieties infected with Anthracnose developed leaf spots but disease severity varied greatly between the varieties. The highest level of disease

developed on the variety Explore (Figure 2).

## Nitrogen Effect

The next component of the project aimed to investigate nutrients, particularly nitrogen, and the influence of it on a plant's susceptibility to disease, by changing the structure and chemistry of the plant.

Nitrogen promotes vegetative growth and hence encourages a higher proportion of young tissue to mature, which is generally more susceptible to disease. High nitrogen can also breakdown plant cells and can reduce its natural defence system against infection.

Trials were conducted in the greenhouse to evaluate the effect of rate and form of nitrogen on the development of Downy Mildew and Anthracnose. The Nitrogen (N) sources were: potassium nitrate  $\text{KNO}_3$ , calcium nitrate  $\text{Ca}(\text{NO}_3)_2$  and ammonium sulphate  $(\text{NH}_4)_2$ , with water used as a control. Rates were

determined as low, moderate and high (1X, 5X, 25X) based on plant growth response.

Four varieties of Iceberg lettuce were inoculated with Downy Mildew: Fortune and Constanza (susceptible to the disease), Boomerang and Lily (resistant to the disease).

Lettuce varieties Kong, Explore, Seagull and Alpinas were inoculated with Anthracnose spores.

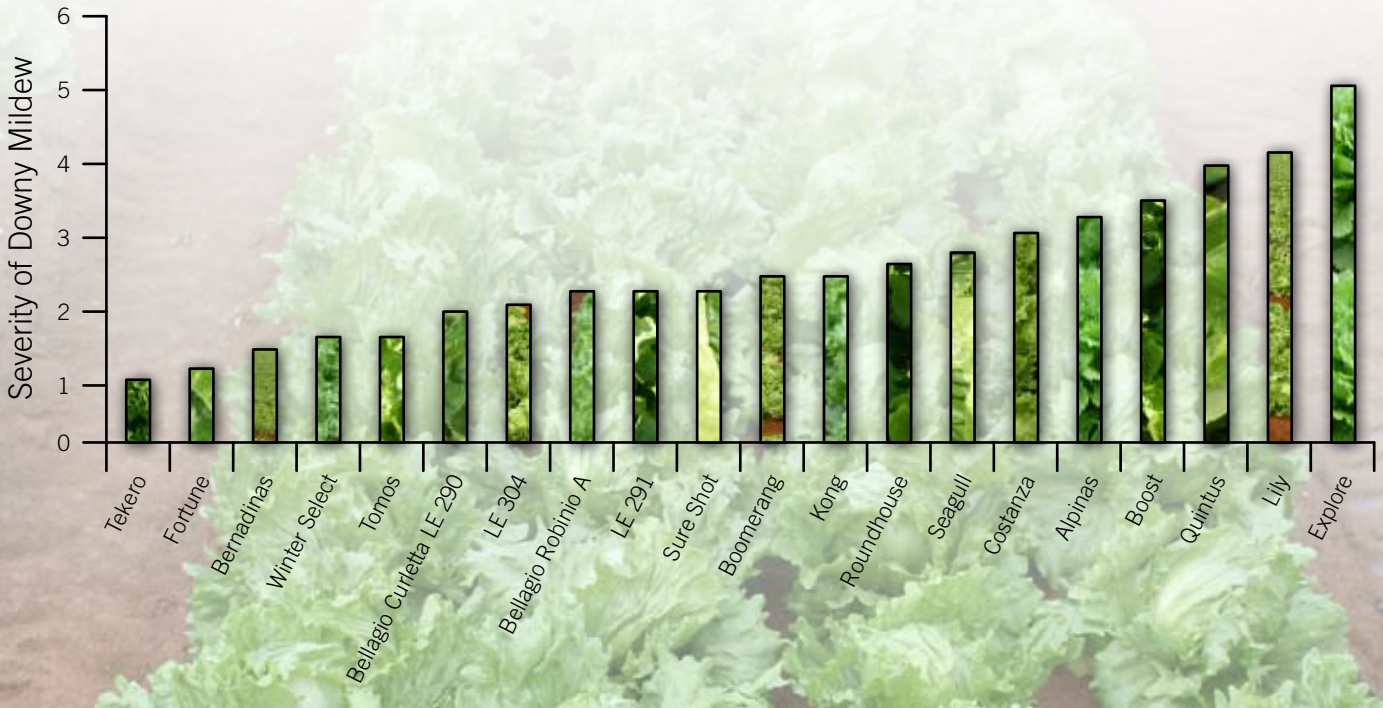
Symptoms of Downy Mildew were observed on Constanza and Fortune only. Potassium nitrate had the most profound effect on lettuce growth and disease incidence. High rates of potassium nitrate caused more infection than lower rates. Low rates of nitrogen fertiliser were insufficient for growth and high rates of nitrogen suppressed plant growth with no evidence of leaf burning. Anthracnose infection was variable across the different rates and sources of nitrogen fertilisers. High levels of disease occurred in optimal growth conditions.

Figure 1. Incidence of downy mildew on susceptible lettuce varieties. Other varieties tested were resistant to the disease.





Figure 2. Severity of anthracnose on lettuce varieties on a 0-6 scale where 0 = no disease, 6 = 90-100% leaf area affected.



# Summary

- The variety of lettuce crop can effect the susceptibility to Downy Mildew and Anthracnose
- High rates of potassium nitrate increased plant susceptibility to Downy Mildew.
- The incidence of Anthracnose was not affected by nitrogen fertilisers.
- The source of nitrogen is perhaps more important than the rate of nitrogen.
- A balanced nutrient schedule needs to be tailored for particular lettuce varieties.

High nitrogen may be required to promote vigorous growth in some varieties but can retard development in others.

This project was commissioned by Horticulture Australia Limited (HAL) and funded by the National Vegetable Levy with matched funds from the Australian Government. The author would like to thank Trevor Wicks & Angela Lush (SARDI), the project team from DPI VIC and the University of Queensland, growers for providing diseased plants, and seed companies: Rijk Zwaan, Seminis, South Pacific, Syngenta and Terranova, for their generous supply of seed.

## THE BOTTOM LINE

- South Australian scientists have looked at the influence of variety and nitrogen on disease susceptibility in lettuce crops.
- Only a small number of lettuce varieties were susceptible to Downy Mildew, while a number were susceptible to Anthracnose.
- The source of nitrogen used on different lettuce crops was determined more important than the rate on disease susceptibility.

**i** For more information contact:  
 Dr Belinda Rawnsley  
 Sustainable Systems  
 South Australian Research and Development Institute (SARDI)  
 Email: <belinda.rawnsley@sa.gov.au>  
 Phone: (08) 8303 9409

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# Hot Water Shower

A quick and effective method for treating capsicums, in the form of a hot water shower, could result in growers taking a simple approach to extending the shelf life and quality of the popular vegetable.

The Hot Water Shower Treatment is just one of the promising outcomes stemming from a project entitled *Evaluation of new shipping technologies for Australian vegetables*, which was facilitated by Horticulture Australia Limited (HAL), and funded by the National Vegetable Levy with matched funds provided by the Australian Government.

Research scientist Dr Jenny Ekman from Industry and Investment NSW, has led the evaluation of the new technique and is encouraged by the results. "It's a simple technique but most importantly, it is a very quick treatment which will allow growers to implement it into their existing packing processes," Dr Ekman said.

The project aimed to assess the effectiveness of treating capsicums with a simple hot water shower, and determine the benefits in relation to the shelf life, quality, resistance to disease and decay of the vegetable.

Dr Ekman explained that the

hot water shower was simply constructed using a hot water bath, a pump and a perforated header tank, and that the rear and sides of the unit were also covered to provide additional temperature insulation. The water temperature was controlled to within 0.1°C of a

blast, the capsicums were rotated half way through treatment, Dr Ekman said. After treatment, the capsicums were air dried for several minutes.

According to Dr Ekman the treatment had significant benefits in terms of reduced decay and improved

evaluated with no major difference found between them. However, all three heat treatments had less decay and maintained quality better than either the untreated fruit or the fruit showered with 20°C water," Dr Ekman said.

"The main benefits appeared to be a reduction of disease in the first four weeks of storage. When stored for longer than this the hot water shower seemed to lose its effects."

Similar results were also obtained when the treatment was used for cucumbers. These treatments reduced yellowing and softening, inhibited rot development, and increased the proportion of cucumbers which were still commercially viable after extended storage.

But according to Dr Ekman, the greatest outcome stemming from these trials has been the discovery that when treated by the hot shower water, green capsicums can maintain their quality even when stored at 2°C.

Dr Ekman said that, in the past, capsicums have needed to be stored at 7°C or above to prevent cold temperature damage.

“Cold storage disinfestation is one possible solution to controlling fruit fly, but it needs to be done at 3°C or below. With these results, there is now a viable option for the treatment of the pest in capsicums.”

set point with a digital temperature controller.

To ensure the entire surface was exposed to the hot water

maintenance of quality.

"Three different temperatures for the hot water treatment, 50°C, 52.5°C and 55°C were all



With this treatment they can be stored at lower temperatures, increasing flexibility in terms of shipping and storage.

"If you can store capsicums at a lower temperature, then you can store them for longer," Dr Ekman said.

"Typical shipping containers, household refrigerators and supermarket cold storage facilities are set at approximately 5°C. As this treatment helps protect capsicums from damage at 5°C, it could offer a range of advantages."

The ability to transport capsicums interstate and possibly into new export markets is one such benefit, but more importantly, according to Dr Ekman, is the options that become available in terms of fruit fly disinfestation.

"Cold storage disinfestation is one possible solution to controlling fruit fly, but it needs to be done at 3°C or below. With these results, there is now a viable option for the treatment of the pest in capsicums," she said.

On the basis of this discovery, Dr Ekman and her team will now conduct further trials on a broader scale, in the hope of developing a cold storage

protocol for capsicums and chillies.

"We have just been given approval to continue this research, which we believe could be of an enormous benefit to growers facing fruit fly control issues," she said.

### THE BOTTOM LINE

- A new technique, using a simple hot water shower has proven effective in the treatment of capsicums and cucumbers, which may lead to improved quality and extended shelf life.
- Results show that using the treatment, capsicums can be stored at temperature as low as 2°C.
- Further testing will centre on using the hot water shower treatment to help develop a cold storage protocol for fruit fly disinfestations.

**i** For more information contact:  
 Dr Jenny Ekman  
 Industry & Investment NSW  
 Email: <jenny.ekman@industry.nsw.gov.au>  
 Phone: (02) 4348 1942  
 Project Number: VG06045



Capsicums after 6 weeks, untreated



Capsicums after 6 weeks, treatment at 50°C

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# Around the states

## Western Australia



The West Australian vegetable industry has experienced a period of both ups and downs. In late March, much of our northern metropolitan growing area was hit by a once in a lifetime storm, causing millions of dollars of damage to crops across Carabooda, Wanneroo and West Gingin. The storm had a particular impact on the total production of lettuce, celery, tomatoes and a to a lesser extent cabbage. In

the immediate aftermath, local retail prices for these lines rose substantially for consumers. For example, lettuces jumped from an average of \$1.50 each to \$5.00.

By contrast, the innovative nature of the WA industry was highlighted at the recent AUSVEG National Conference. West Australians took out three National Awards, with Jim Trandos representing Trandos Farms, winning the Grower of the Year; vegetablesWA and Potato Growers Association Executive Officer, Jim Turley, taking the Industry Recognition Award; and previous vegetablesWA and AUSVEG Chairman, David Anderson, claiming a special Premiers

Award in recognition of his long service to the industry. Syngenta also won the Productivity Partner Award for their field work with vegetablesWA.

The media have since taken a particular interest in the Trandos family's operation, where they have pioneered the production of readily perishable vegetables in the Broome region of the Kimberleys, in addition to their successful enterprises in the Wanneroo and Gingin districts. The family's reason for developing the ex-cattle station Shallamar as a vegetable garden at Broome, was to meet year-round demand for their Sweet Corn and Bean lines.

In other good news, prospects for a re-opening of the

Taiwanese market for West Australian carrots, have improved following a recent visit from quarantine officials. Taiwan was a small but growing market for West Australian carrots until they changed their regulations surrounding *banana burrowing nematode*, despite no nematodes having ever been found in commercial carrot growing areas. The visit achieved progress towards developing a protocol under which exports might resume.

John Shannon  
Field/Extension Officer  
vegetablesWA  
Phone: 08 9481 0834.  
Email: fieldofficer@vegetableswa.com.au

## Queensland



### Reef Rescue program on track in horticulture

Horticulture grown in catchments within the Great Barrier Reef region is worth more than \$800 million a year, produced from around 1500 farming enterprises. The region is responsible for the majority of Australia's fresh tomato and winter vegetable production together with banana, tropical fruit, mandarin, macadamia and avocado crops.

It is a major primary industry in all Reef regions with the exception of the Fitzroy Basin which nevertheless has some small but significant "market window" production commodities such as sweet potato, pineapples, macadamia, lychees and mangoes. Growcom had the opportunity

to showcase the progress the Queensland horticulture industry is making towards meeting the federal government's water quality targets under the Reef Rescue program, in Cairns last month. Growcom has been the key delivery agent for the horticulture industry throughout the reef catchment in partnership with the local Natural Resource Management (NRM) groups.

Growcom's Land and Water Manager, Scott Wallace presented three case studies of projects undertaken by horticultural farmers in fertigation, nutrient management and chemical management under the Reef Rescue program.

Mr Wallace was speaking at the Reef Rescue Showcase in Cairns on 8-9 June, organised by the Queensland Farmers' Federation, regional NRM bodies and industry groups, to share data and research results.

Growcom as a foundation partner in the Reef Rescue

program has for two years delivered on-ground support to the horticulture industry within Great Barrier Reef catchments, with the aim of improving water quality to the reef.

This support has consisted of

- On farm risk assessments
- Technical support
- Project development
- Training provision.

We have been very pleased with the enthusiasm of growers to improve their farm management practice and believe that the high uptake level in Queensland horticulture shows that our industry is serious about reef water quality.

Through the Reef Rescue program, potential water quality risks on farms are being identified for amelioration.

To date Growcom staff have delivered 353 Farm Management system risk assessments on 291 horticulture farms as a compulsory part of the process in applying for funding under the scheme.

That represents 30 per cent of the growers targeted under the Reef Rescue program within the Great Barrier Reef catchment.

Once projects have been prioritised and developed, growers then apply for funding setting out the details of their preferred water quality project. The projects are assessed by local NRM groups in the various catchment regions.

On the basis of progress to date, overall targets in terms of total numbers of growers reaching practice change targets at the end of five years look realistic and achievable.

Horticulture will continue to make a good contribution, provided funding levels are maintained.

Alex Livingstone  
Chief Executive Officer  
Growcom  
Address: Floor 1,  
385 St Pauls Terrace  
Fortitude Valley QLD 4006  
Phone: 07 3620 3844  
Fax: 07 3620 3880



## Victoria



Winter provides not only a cool change in Victoria's climate but assists vegetable growers with some welcome rainfall. Victoria's climate provides vegetable growers with the opportunity of selecting an all year round range of production crops and the provision of an adequate water supply, though this hasn't been readily available over the past years in a number of growing areas of Victoria.

Though growers are often reluctant to leave their properties for an extended period of time, there is the alternative of a break from the farm to attend conferences or short courses. These are very beneficial and can increase a

growers knowledge in business leadership and development of market access.

Funding provided through the National Vegetable Levy, with matching funds from the Australian Government assist in covering some of the financial costs involved. Vegetable growers appear to be somewhat reluctant to take advantage of these opportunities which can be utilised by them, their family or their staff.

We need to be more pro-active and encourage, especially our younger generation, to take up these opportunities that are made available annually to the vegetable industry.

The AUSVEG National Convention held in Queensland in May provided a great opportunity for industry networking. The event brought together growers, industry suppliers and associates over a four days.

The program was well

balanced and provided industry suppliers with the opportunity to show their wares. Our congratulations to all the award recipients, especially the Victorian Gazzola Family for achieving double recognition.

From a different industry perspective, the PMA A-NZ Conference held in Melbourne provided a domestic and global window to marketing and distribution of fresh produce. A well organised event with an international flavour supported by its affiliation with Produce Marketing Association USA.

On the local Melbourne scene the 2010 National Vegetable Industry Leadership Program held its second growing leaders' session in Melbourne during June, with 13 participants from around Australia. After commencing the program in Brisbane during May, the final session will be held in Canberra in September. The focus of the program is to develop

leadership skills and outcomes for the vegetable industry and this was clearly evident from the participant's time in Melbourne.

Three industry workshops, with a topical agenda attracted growers in Lindenow, Cranbourne and Werribee. This enabled growers to be more aware of the 2010 horticultural awards, Vic Roads chain of responsibility laws for on and off farm equipment and managing climate change.

For the latest in vegetable information for Victoria take a look at our web site [www.vegetablesvictoria.com.au](http://www.vegetablesvictoria.com.au) or [www.vgavic.org.au](http://www.vgavic.org.au)

Tony Imeson  
Executive Officer  
VGA Victoria  
Ph: 03 9687 4707  
Fax 03 9687 4723.  
Email: [contact@vgavic.org.au](mailto:contact@vgavic.org.au)

## South Australia



The first Grow SA Grower Breakfast was held in Virginia this month with 36 participants enjoying the breakfast, speakers and networking opportunity. The major sponsor for this inaugural breakfast was Toolpak Engineering and the guest speaker was Mr Martin Bradbury, from Allied Water and Environmental. Martin presented a comprehensive overview of water filtration systems suitable for the industry with particular attention to reverse osmosis systems suitable for the hydroponics sector.

Monthly Grower breakfasts are planned from now on and will be held in all horticultural regions in SA, covering pertinent and "seasonal" speakers along with the opportunity to network and talk with Grow SA partners and sponsors. All growers attending will gain entry into a special draw for one fully funded trip to next year's AUSVEG Convention as a VIP guest of Grow SA.

Grow SA Ltd attended the recent AUSVEG Convention on

the Gold Coast as the only state based industry association represented in the extensive trade exhibit. Grow SA's presence was very well received by South Australian growers attending and a great deal of national interest was received with regard to the use of the "heart tick" trademark under the fruit and vegetable sub-license held by Grow SA Ltd. This sub-license provides a very cost effective entry to this valuable healthy eating trademark.

Grow SA extends its compliments to AUSVEG and to all the AUSVEG staff on this excellent and professionally run Convention. A Convention which in turn promoted a very professional, innovative and committed industry.

Mike Redmond  
Chief Executive Officer  
Grow SA Ltd  
Virginia Horticulture Centre  
Address: Old Port Wakefield Rd  
Virginia SA 0835  
Phone: 08 82829200  
Fax: 08 8380 8950

## New South Wales



The Association is busy making preparations for its Annual Conference, to be held from 20-22 July.

The Horticulture Committee will hold its AGM and Conference on 19 July and the theme this year is 'Sustaining Horticulture'. The focus will be on presentations addressing topics that will contribute to the future sustainability of horticulture in NSW and Australia. The Horticulture AGM and Conference is the major policy forming event for the Association's Horticulture members during the year and it brings together producers from across NSW to discuss current and emerging issues.

The Association is currently participating in the Product Safety and Integrity Committee (PSIC) Training and Licensing Working Group. This working group was established to assist the consultants/PSIC in developing a proposal for a new national regulatory framework.

The Association will also be attending a PSIC stakeholder

workshop in Canberra at the end of June.

Many vegetable growers in the Hawkesbury-Nepean catchment (Sydney Region) have been attending information seminars about the 'Hawkesbury-Nepean Water Metering Project', being delivered by the NSW Office of Water as part of the Australian Government funded Hawkesbury-Nepean River Recovery Program. The project aims to improve water management in the Hawkesbury-Nepean river system by installing water monitoring equipment for rural water licence holders in the catchment. Metering will provide information on pump performance and the volume of water extracted.

Peter Darley  
Chairman  
NSW Farmers' Association  
Horticulture Committee  
Level 25, 66 Goulburn Street  
Sydney, NSW 2000  
Phone: 02 8251 1804  
Fax: 02 8251 1750

*continued over page* ►

## Tasmania

**PRICE NEGOTIATIONS**

It is that time of year again when our grower negotiation committee's have the opportunity to put their case for what the price should be for the coming season. The TFGA collectively negotiate through an

authorisation with the ACCC. Currently, farmers are facing internal and external pressures with high input costs such as fuel, electricity and labour, and then the added demands of a high Australian dollar, which increases the pressure placed on them by cheaper imports which are allowed to enter Australia.

One of the biggest commodities that are negotiated each year for our members is potatoes. The potato industry was valued at over \$90 million

to Tasmanian agriculture in the 2007/08 financial year. The TFGA is negotiating with the largest potato processing company in the state and even with the tough market conditions, the high Australian dollar and the pressure of imports, they are showing their willingness to listen to growers. This is good news for growers.

The TFGA realise this is a very important round of negotiations for all vegetable commodities and with the assistance of the

negotiating committees, we will be fighting for the best price for our members.

Nick Steel  
Commodities Manager  
Tasmanian Farmers & Graziers Association  
Address: Cnr Cimitiere and Charles Streets  
Launceston, Tas 7250  
Phone: 03 6332 1800  
Fax: 03 6331 4344

# Calendar of events

## July 2010

28 July – 5 August

Young Growers' Study Tour New Zealand 2010

New Zealand

**For more information:**

Phone: Erin Lyall (03) 9822 0388

Email: erin.lyall@ausveg.com.au

## October 2010

13 – 24 October

Grower Study Tour to the USA 2010

USA

**For more information:**

Phone: Elizabeth Cox (03) 9822 0388

Email: elizabeth.cox@ausveg.com.au

## August 2010

4 – 5 August

Horticulture New Zealand Conference

Auckland, New Zealand

**For more information:**

Phone: Erin Lyall (03) 9822 0388

Email: erin.lyall@ausveg.com.au

## September 2010

8 – 10 September

Asia Fruit Logistica 2010

Hong Kong

**For more information:**

Website: [www.asiafruitlogistica.com](http://www.asiafruitlogistica.com)

## August 2010

31 August – 2 September

Growing Leaders Program 2010 – Third Residential

Canberra, ACT

**For more information:**

Phone: Jill Briggs at Rural Training Initiatives on 0409 455 710



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**www.toolpak.net**

**mobile 0417 815 736**