SPRING 26 | VOL 65

# mango matters




QUEENSLAND ROADSHOWS PROVIDES GROWERS WITH A VOICE
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MANGO ORCHARD BIOSECURITY PLAN
*P/19*

## SUPPLY CHAIN ENGAGEMENT UPDATE:
CONNECTING WITH GROWERS ACROSS THE REGIONS

*P/8*

AUSTRALIAN MANGOES

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*Front Cover: Teresa Pham, Thanh Pham and Danny Duong. NT Golden Produce.*


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# Chairman's Report

**Ben Martin**
Chairman, AMIA

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Access to an effective and efficient workforce is critical to our industry. The changes that the Federal Government has pushed through have far-reaching consequences for mango growers. While the PALM scheme is very valuable for some growers, it's not suitable for many others. Both individually and through our membership of the National Farmers' Federation (NFF), we have been highlighting the likely impact on our industry's ability to harvest, especially if a cap on the number of visas is applied. The changes being implemented highlight a clear lack of understanding of how our economy works and the fact that the government is not embarrassed by these ill-informed decisions is a sad reflection on them.

Over the last few months, we have had multiple meetings with DAFF and VHT operators regarding the decision by the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries of Japan (MAFF) to continue to require a MAFF inspector to provide oversight of VHT treatments during the season. While acknowledging and respecting Japan's right to impose these conditions, the costs involved, as well as the long lead time required to arrange a MAFF inspector's visit, limit the export potential to the Japanese market. We will work with DAFF and VHT operators with the aim of removing the need to have a MAFF inspector on-site.

Over the last 18 months, we have been working with Hort Innovation to apply for multiple APVMA grants to fund efficacy/residue trials to develop enough data to apply for registration. The grant conditions include a range of strict parameters that limit which products we apply for. While we have applied for funds for a number of actives, including several insecticides and fungicides, we have only been successful in gaining funding for two products. One grant is for the use of naphthaleneacetic acid (NAA), and one grant is for the use of Forchlorfenuron. Both are used for fruit retention in mangoes. Planning for trials with both products is underway.

Planning is advancing for our next conference, which will be held in Brisbane in May next year. The conference is being developed for all sectors of our industry, with a focus on growers. This conference will also include the 2nd Mango Research Symposium, which was a highlight of our last conference. We would appreciate your input into the program, please reach out if you have ideas about topics and issues that should be included in the program. The conference is a great opportunity to meet with other growers from across Australia, as well as researchers, marketers and representatives from businesses across our supply chain.

It has been good to see the number of growers attending our annual pre-season roadshows. These events are important, as they provide us with an opportunity to present issues and more importantly, get your feedback.

At the time of writing this report, the season has been underway for some time, but has had a slow start, with early volumes out of the Northern Territory initially lighter than the previous season. Flowering and fruit set in Queensland have been solid, with harvest commencing through October.

We are all deeply saddened by the recent passing of QDPI researcher, Peter Leach. Peter's work in disinfestation research, with a focus on VHT, has made a huge impact on our industry. Peter was highly respected, not only in Australia, but internationally. As the long-term leader of this research and the Director of the FASTA program, Peter made an immeasurable contribution to our industry. Our sympathies are with his family, friends and colleagues.





***"AMIA, in association with other horticultural industries and through the NFF will continue to push the importance of the WHM visa scheme and a more reasoned approached to the granting of visas."***

– TREVOR DUNMALL

# CEO's Report

**Trevor Dunmall**
CEO, AMIA

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The federal government's changes to the Working Holiday Maker (WHM) visa process are a very disappointing decision and reflect a lack of understanding of the value these working holiday makers have, not only to Australian horticulture, but to other important industries. The idea of capping the number of WHM visas available will not only have an impact in years two and three, but will discourage these people even coming to Australia in the first place. We have already had reports that this is occurring. We are all aware of the critical nature of mango harvesting and the need to have a strong workforce available during peak picking and packing time.

AMIA, in association with other horticultural industries and through the National Farmers Federation (NFF) will continue to push the importance of the WHM visa scheme and push for a more reasoned approached to the granting of visas.

Recently, I met with Mike Reid, Queensland's Chief Plant Health Manager, to discuss biosecurity preparedness, with a particular focus on the annual trapping and eradication activities targeting exotic fruit flies on the Torres Strait Islands, jointly undertaken by the Northern Australia Quarantine Strategy (NAQS) and Biosecurity Queensland. This program remains a priority for government and industry. Another important issue discussed was the ability of growers to trade in the event of an exotic pest incursion. I have had similar discussions with Sally Heaton, Northern Territory Chief Plant Health Officer. While progress in this area is slow, there is acknowledgement of the importance and a willingness to work together to address these issues.

During September and October, we will have held four Mango Orchard Biosecurity Workshops in association with our Pre-season Roadshows. The aim of the workshops is to provide growers who don't have a current orchard biosecurity plan, to create, implement and maintain an orchard biosecurity plan.

We are planning to hold more biosecurity workshops over the next six months. A digital version of the Mango Orchard Biosecurity Plan is now available on our industry website. Read more on page 19.

The frequency of media reporting on the use of agrichemicals in agriculture appears to be increasing. While many of the reports have a questionable basis of fact, irrespective of the validity of the reports, we as an industry must take this issue very seriously. The APVMA, which regulates the use of agrichemicals in Australia, is a highly respected organisation that bases its decisions on scientific evidence. While we will continue to use the crop protection products currently available, in the long term we need to look beyond existing crop protection practices. Achieving this will require significant long-term research, tapping into advances in science and technology both in Australia and overseas.

In late July, I was fortunate to participate in a four-city tour of China. The trip, coordinated by Jeff Scott (CEO at Australian Table Grape Association) was funded by Austrade through its Trade Diversification Network and the Accessing New Markets Initiative (ANMI), read more on page 21. The China market has great opportunities, but also great challenges. China is the world's second largest producer of mangoes and imports mangoes from a number of other countries, often from lower cost producing countries. The current phytosanitary protocol for Australian growers and exporters is also very challenging.

We anticipate in the future there will be more tours to international markets and we would like to see mango growers and marketers participate. We are keen to develop a register so when these opportunities arise, we can notify you directly.

# AROUND THE REGIONS



## Northern Territory & Northern Western Australia



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In Kununurra, the current season is not looking to bring high volumes. There does not appear to be a lot of visible fruit on the trees, with fruit distribution very patchy across the region. There are a few trees bearing good amounts of fruit, but many are not bearing heavily. Overall, the crop for the region may be down by around 40–50%.

Fruit from the earlier flowering events has filled out nicely and is nearly ready for harvest. However, fruit from the later flowering events appears to have dropped off significantly. Growers are looking to start picking around mid-October.

Weather-wise, it is warming up considerably now (at the time of writing, early October). During the dry season, conditions were very mild and favourable for flowering, but flowering was less consistent than expected, and fruit set was also patchy. Some trees are currently flushing as well.

The lack of packing facilities in the region remains a challenge, although the lower production volumes this season may help to ease some of this pressure. Securing labour continues to be a challenge as well.



**Leo Skliros**
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The Darwin region has kicked off the 2026 season with a very patchy start, with some great looking fruit being harvested. Supply out of Darwin is slowing by the end of October, with a possible revisit in mid-November which will be dictated by weather and pricing viability.

Not great to be caught up in politics, but here we are again. The viability of Australian farmers and small businesses is caught up in the bid for votes. A lot of backward thinking. If housing in large cities is an issue, then give incentives to live outside these areas, reduce approval times, and find cheaper building materials. Less tourism and students will create less Australian jobs opportunities and income, not more!

All the best for the rest of the season, and let's hope common sense shows up somewhere.



## Southern Western Australia



**David Morcombe**
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Spring in the southwest has seen the usual variations in weather. The trees flowered early this year and we are still waiting to see how fruit set will turn out. Night-time temperatures remain on the low side and the later flowering trees are likely to be better off. Strong winds have been impacting spray schedules.

In Carnarvon, there is considerable variation in crop development. It looks as though it may be a lighter year, as the trees are still recovering from the extreme weather experienced at the end of last summer. An extreme heatwave impacted late varieties and the region was also impacted by two cyclones. It appears that, over time, extreme weather events are becoming more common.

We hope that growers in the north are seeing good returns as the season ramps up.

***"It looks as though it may be a lighter year, as the trees are still recovering from the extreme weather experienced at the end of last summer. An extreme heatwave impacted late varieties and the region was also impacted by two cyclones."***

– DAVID MORCOMBE

*"It is exciting that the 14th Australian Mango Conference and 2nd Australian Mango Research Symposium have been announced and will be held in Brisbane from 10-13 May 2027."*

– SCOTT PERSHOUSE



## Far North Queensland & North Queensland



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Another mango season is rolling in fast. We are just starting to see quantities of NT fruit starting to build in the markets, but supply has been relatively low to date. After what has seemed to have been a very big flowering event in the region, we are starting to see fruit drop and fruit set at the moment. As per last season, we also had a strong flowering with good growing conditions, but we did not end up with a high-volume crop. We will all be waiting patiently to see where we end up this year. It is also pretty evident that we have had split flowerings with some early and the bulk of flowering later. This may result in some earlier than normal fruit to market for the coming season.

Overall, weather conditions to date have been milder than normal and is good for growing conditions. Most growers will be looking at fruit crop estimates and harvest planning in the next 3 weeks or so.

As growers, we seem to be facing new issues every year and now with The Federal Government looking at restricting the number of seasonal workers, we face another challenge. Hopefully, all growers are well on the way to looking at staffing requirements and planning as best we can. I would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone a safe and successful season.



**John Nucifora**
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Another season is upon us, mango flowering has been very strong in the Mareeba/Dimbulah region. However, we have had a prolonged period of cooler weather and we don't know the impact on fruit set yet.

A few weeks ago, we had the mango pre-season roadshow in Dimbulah. It was a great success. I'd like to personally thank Adelaide for organising such a successful roadshow, keeping everything on topic. Growers were hungry for the information and willing to participate. I'd also like to thank all the growers that attended and encourage more growers to attend in the future, as the roadshows are part of our business and full of key information. Thank you to the sponsors, businesses and wholesalers. I'd also like to thank Trevor Dunmall, AMIA CEO, for keeping us all on track and for his dedication to us and the mango industry.

With the government announcing cuts to WHM visas, it is very concerning on whether we will have enough workers to get our crops picked and packed and off to market in time. With all of the costs increasing dramatically, I am deeply concerned about the profitability for our growers.

I wish everyone a successful season.



## Southern Queensland & New South Wales



**Scott Pershouse**
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Flowering across the region has progressed steadily this season, with consistent fruit set and development resulting from three distinct flowering events. Considering the above conditions, most growers are anticipating crops to be on time or slightly later than usual due to cooler weather anomalies over the growing season.

Fortunately, pest and disease pressure has stayed relatively low, aided by the extended dry spells; however, fruit drop is anticipated to be larger than normal.

Growers continue to face mounting cost of production pressures. The rising cost of diesel is having a noticeable impact across day-to-day operations, careful planning and cost control will be more important than ever.

Mark your calendars for the Mango Orchard Biosecurity Workshops and Pre season Roadshows, to be held at the Burnett Riverside Hotel, Bundaberg, on Wednesday 28 October and at the Rockhampton Leagues Club, Rockhampton, on Thursday 29 October.

The new Mango Orchard Biosecurity Plan gives growers a clearer and more practical framework for preparing and managing biosecurity risks on farm. The plan breaks down every day orchard biosecurity tasks into simple, workable steps. More information on page 19.

Through recent advocacy by AMIA and the National Farmers' Federation (NFF), the Department of Home Affairs has agreed to prioritise urgent Working Holiday Maker (WHM) visa applications for farm work. Any tightening of labour supply will compound operational challenges.

It is exciting that the 14th Australian Mango Conference and 2nd Australian Mango Research Symposium have been announced and will be held in Brisbane from 10-13 May 2027. This year's roadshows will allow growers to provide feedback on this upcoming event as well as provide some feedback on the future of the Industry Development project.

Wishing all growers a smooth lead up to harvest and a successful season.

# Supply Chain Engagement Update

Ella Steele, Jenna McManus and Sam Gray (NT Quality Hay)



Saramat (Tou) Ruchkaew from Tous Garden

*Jenna McManus, Australian Mangoes Supply Chain Engagement Manager.*

The past few months have taken me from mango orchards and grower roadshows in Darwin, Katherine and Kununurra to retailer discussions across Australia and New Zealand, all with a shared focus on building excitement, visibility and support for Australian mangoes.

Along the way, we've captured new grower stories, collaborated with industry and progressed a strong mix of retail, export and consumer activity. Here's a look at what we've been working on and what's ahead.

## Connecting with growers across the regions

The Australian Mangoes pre-season roadshows provided an opportunity to connect directly with growers and industry stakeholders.

A key date on the season calendar, each session covered updates on marketing, social media and supply chain engagement plans, while creating space for growers to ask questions, share feedback and discuss what's ahead. It was so great to meet everyone and share stories, a laugh and a beverage.



Saramat (Tou) Ruchkaew (Tous Garden) and Leo Skliros (Skliros Produce)



NT Golden Produce




Jenna McManus, Ella Steele and Kris Bailey (Acacia Hills Farm)

## Taking consumers behind the scenes

A dedicated content trip to Darwin in August provided the opportunity to capture social media content showcasing the people, places and production behind Australia's mango industry.

A big thank you to Leo, Tou, Teresa, Sam, Kris and Greg who welcomed us onto their farms and generously shared their time, knowledge and passion for the industry. Their support made it possible to capture an authentic mix of orchard and packing shed activity, different varieties, fruit development and the day-to-day work behind mango season.

This content is now beginning to roll out across Australian Mangoes' social channels and will continue throughout the season. You can expect to see some familiar faces sharing what they love about growing mangoes, trend-driven songs and a whole lot of education. The increased focus on organic social media was strongly supported by the Mango Marketing Strategic Investment Advisory Panel. It provides another way for the marketing program to work harder for growers by keeping mangoes in consumers' feeds, especially given Australians spend almost three hours a day scrolling, while showcasing the people, produce and stories behind them.

Make sure you're following @AussieMangoes and please like, comment and repost to help spread the word.

## Building momentum in retail

Engagement with Australian retail partners has continued, with discussions focused on store engagement and opportunities to support strong execution throughout the season.

A range of initiatives is in the works with major and independent retail partners, including Costco and Woolworths, spanning team engagement, educational resources, digital activity and consumer-facing experiences. While plans continue to be finalised, the focus remains on practical opportunities that respond to retailer needs and support the value of the category.

## Sharing the joy of Australian mangoes in New Zealand

One of the most exciting developments for the season is the expanded New Zealand export promotion campaign.

Australian Mangoes will feature in activity with both Woolworths New Zealand and Foodstuffs, helping build visibility during the key Christmas trading period. The activity is expected to combine in-store and digital touchpoints, connecting with shoppers throughout their path to purchase.

Together, these activities represent a valuable opportunity to strengthen recognition of Australian mangoes in New Zealand and support greater consideration and purchase during a key seasonal window.

## What's coming next

With activity now moving from planning into delivery, the focus will be on working closely with industry and retail partners to make the most of the opportunities ahead.

There is plenty to look forward to, from seeing new grower stories reach consumers to bringing retail and export activity to life across Australia and New Zealand.

# 2026–27 Mango Marketing Program Update




*Lucy Stock, Associate Marketing Manager, Hort Innovation*

## Strategic focus for 2026–27

The endorsed plan takes a multi-channel approach, with a strong emphasis on awareness-led activity supported by retail and export initiatives. Key areas of focus include:

- Scaling awareness through new creative development and campaign rollout

Developed in consultation with the Mango Marketing Strategic Investment Advisory Panel and informed by grower input, retail insights, consumer research and previous season performance, the 2026-2027 mango marketing program is focused on growing in-season demand by encouraging Australian households to buy mangoes more often throughout the season.

The program builds from a clear opportunity: mangoes are loved by consumers, but many purchases are unplanned and seasonal, with light buyers purchasing only a few times across the season. This year's activity is designed to keep mangoes top of mind, make them unmissable at retail, and position Australian Mangoes as an accessible everyday joy rather than an occasional summer indulgence.



*Your mango marketing representatives.*

The 2026-2027 mango marketing program is built around three key areas of focus:

- Keep mangoes top of mind all season long
- Be unmissable in retail over the mango season
- Share the joy of Aussie Mangoes beyond our shores, with activity focused in New Zealand




## Keep mangoes top of mind all season long

The hero campaign for the season is 'It's Mango Time', a fun and vibrant platform that celebrates mangoes as the perfect reward for everyday wins, from clearing your inbox to finishing work early, beating the traffic or simply making room for dessert.

The campaign has been designed to get mangoes noticed early in the season, and throughout, prompting more frequent purchase, particularly among light buyers. It uses bold orange mango imagery and simple action-oriented messaging to remind consumers that big or small, every win is worth celebrating with an Australian Mango.

Paid media activity will run across the season using high-reach, high-impact channels that support consumer awareness and prompt purchase along the path to purchase. This includes retail out-of-home panels in close proximity to supermarkets, social media activity across Australian Mangoes channels, and radio to build reminders to purchase and reinforce the idea of mangoes as an everyday reward.

Radio will play an important role in the campaign both as a paid media channel and through a broader partnership. As a channel, radio will use short, memorable scripts built around the 'It's Mango Time' line, linking mangoes to everyday reward moments across the morning, afternoon and evening. The radio partnership on Triple M will help extend this idea through talent-led and program-integrated activity, giving the campaign another way to reach grocery buyers and keep mangoes front of mind during key shopping periods.

Creative executions will be tailored across the season and by daypart, with messages that speak to morning, afternoon and evening reward moments, as well as timely seasonal opportunities such as Christmas and the fact mangoes can be enjoyed rain, hail or shine, irrespective of the weather.

## Be unmissable in retail over the mango season

With most mango shoppers purchasing on impulse, retail visibility continues to be a critical part of the marketing program. The season plan will support mangoes at the point of purchase through a mix of in-store visibility, retail out-of-home activity, online retail media and retailer engagement.

Jenna McManus, the dedicated Supply Chain Engagement Manager, will continue to support stronger alignment between industry, marketing and retailer programs. This role will help share timely information across the supply chain, build relationships with retailers and support improved visibility and collaboration across both Australian and New Zealand retail activity.

Retailer resources will also be refreshed to help communicate key information clearly and consistently, including variety information, seasonal timing and practical content to support strong in-store execution and positive shopper experiences.

## Social media and consumer engagement

The Australian Mangoes social media program will help connect consumers with the people, places and occasions behind the season. Activity will include grower-led storytelling, seasonal content, recipe inspiration, creator partnerships and an always-on presence across key social channels.

Creator partnerships will focus on lifestyle, food, family and fitness audiences, helping to build seasonal excitement, share simple usage ideas and bring the broader 'It's Mango Time' platform to life in a way that feels relevant and engaging for consumers.

## Share the joy of Aussie Mangoes beyond our shores

Export marketing activity this season will focus on New Zealand, with retail media designed to increase visibility for Australian Mangoes and support stronger conversion among online and in-store shoppers.

New Zealand retail media campaigns are planned from early November through mid-December, featuring floor decals, in-store signage and online shopping display tiles, to help prompt purchase during a key seasonal window.

## Looking ahead

The focus for the season ahead is simple: keep Australian Mangoes visible, memorable and easy to choose. By combining bold creative, strong retail presence, social storytelling and targeted export activity, the program aims to turn consumer love for mangoes into more frequent purchase across the season.

## CALENDAR OF ACTIVITIES

| | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Celebrate the iconic joy that is mangoes** | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| It's Mango Time campaign, including retail out of home panels, social and radio | | | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | | | | | |
| Season announcement launch: Mango Auction | | | ■ | ■ | | | | | | | | |
| Social media content & rollout | | | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | | | | |
| **Be unmissable in retail over the mango season** | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| In store visibility: Point of sale / Retail out of home | | | | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | | | | |
| Supply Chain Engagement Manager | | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ |
| **Share the joy of Aussie mangoes beyond our shores** | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| New Zealand Retail Media | | | | | ■ | ■ | | | | | | |

*The Australian Mangoes marketing program is funded by Hort Innovation, using the mango marketing levy. Hort Innovation is the grower-owned, not-for-profit research and development corporation for Australian horticulture.*

**For further information please contact:** Lucy Stock
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# Queensland Roadshows Provides Growers With a Voice



Bowen/Burdekin roadshow in Home Hill.

In mid-September, Australian Mangoes held its annual Queensland pre-season roadshows in Mareeba/Dimbulah and Bowen/Burdekin. The events provided growers with an opportunity to hear the latest industry updates and have their say on priorities for the season ahead.

A key update was the continuation of the crop forecasting and dispatch reporting, which aims to provide more useful and accessible information across the supply chain. This includes the weekly Mango Season Outlook, published through My Mango and the more detailed Mango Forecast & Dispatch Report sent to participating growers and packhouses weekly. Grower participation remains critical, with the information collected representing around 75%–85% of national production.



*Australian Mangoes CEO, Trevor Dunmall providing insights on recent activities.*



*Bowen Burdekin growers from Euri Gold Farms and Long Mile Mangoes.*

Growers were also reminded of the range of communication channels available throughout the year. *My Mango* e-newsletter provides timely weekly updates during the season, *The Slice* e-newsletter keeps growers connected during the off-season and our quarterly magazine *Mango Matters* provides an in-depth look at industry news, research and marketing.

Belinda Van Shaik, Head of Marketing at Hort Innovation, delivered valuable updates on new marketing initiatives for the upcoming season (read more on page 10). She also provided an update on retail engagement activities led by Jenna McManus, Supply Chain Engagement Manager at Australian Mangoes, which included influencer activations aimed at maintaining strong consumer awareness.

The roadshows not only provide growers with information but also a forum to share their views. Growers took part in a feedback session focused on the future of industry development and identifying the information, services and support they consider priorities. This feedback will help shape the upcoming 14th Australian Mango Conference, to be held in Brisbane from 10–13 May 2027. Growers were encouraged to contribute ideas for conference topics, speakers and practical sessions, ensuring the program reflects the issues that matter most to the industry. The conference will also incorporate the 2nd Australian Mango Research Symposium.

Strong grower participation at both roadshows reinforced their value as a two-way forum, providing industry with an opportunity to share updates while giving growers a direct voice in shaping the future of the Australian mango industry.

A special thanks to our sponsors, Syngenta, Tropico and Bayer.



Geoff Dickinson with Lorraine Stopford and Ray Courtice.




Researcher and new grower to the Burdekin region, Marcelo Amaral and his partner.



AMIA board director, John Nucifora.




Sarah Strutt, Hort Innovation. Introducing the new Horticulture Investment Roadmap dashboard.

## MANGO ORCHARD BIOSECURITY WORKSHOPS & PRE-SEASON ROADSHOWS

**Bundaberg**
**28 October**

**Rockhampton**
**29 October**

**14:00 | Workshop**
**16:00 | Roadshow**

SCAN FOR MORE





## INDUSTRIES FAREWELL HORT INNOVATION SERVICES MANAGER SARAH STRUTT

After nearly 5 years, Hort Innovation Services Manager, Sarah Strutt is hanging up her boots and going into semi-retirement. Sarah has worked with mangoes, papaya and lychees during her time with Hort Innovation linking industry with information from a levy payer perspective as well as maintaining strong grower and stakeholder relations.

'I have really enjoyed my time in this role as well as the people I have encountered. I hope to continue to run into many of you across Queensland and the Northern Territory.' Sarah said last month at the Bowen/Burdekin roadshow in Home Hill.

Sarah will spend a week with in-coming Cairns based, Ellen Cox who will take over Sarah's role from 12th October.

Australian Mangoes extends a warm welcome to Ellen and looks forward to continuing a strong and collaborative relationship with Hort Innovation.

AUSTRALIAN MANGOES

2027 14th Australian MANGO Conference

10-13 May 2027
Brisbane Convention
& Exhibition Centre

INVITATION TO PRESENT

# RESEARCH, EXTENSION & NEW TECHNOLOGIES

The **2nd Australian Mango Research Symposium** will be delivered in association with the **14th Australian Mango Conference**, held at the **Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre** on May 10 to 13, 2027.

The Symposium aims to showcase the latest advances in Australian mango research, strengthen collaboration between researchers and industry, and identify future research priorities for the sector.

## WE WANT YOUR IDEAS

Individuals and groups are invited to submit preliminary intended topics/titles for:

- Oral presentation
- Poster presentations
- Emerging research and technology topics

2ND EDITION AUSTRALIAN MANGO RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

Scan the QR code, click here or contact Trevor Dunmall ceo@mangoes.net.au

# YOUR 4 THINGS LEVIES TO KNOW

*Sarah Strutt, Industry Service Manager, Hort Innovation*

## 1. A strategy focused on grower outcomes

Hort Innovation's Strategy 2031 sets an ambition to grow the value of Australian horticulture exports to $7 billion by 2031 while continuing to invest in productivity, profitability, innovation, market access and grower capability. The strategy was shaped by more than 1,000 grower and industry engagements and reflects the priorities industry told us matter most.

**Find out more:** Watch Brett Fifield's Strategy 2031 overview video in Growing Innovation.

## 2. The mango Investment Roadmap is now live

The new Mango Investment Roadmap (2026-2031) was developed with input from growers, industry representatives, AMIA and the Mango SIAP. It identifies the industry's highest priorities for future investment, including biosecurity, crop protection, farm productivity, export growth, data and insights, extension and adoption, and domestic demand generation. Every project funded needs to sit under one of these areas, as it keeps investment focussed on what matters most, transparency on where you're levy is at work and it will be reviewed every year.

**Find out more:** Visit the Mango Investment Roadmap Dashboard to see your industry's priorities and the projects supported through levy investment.

## 3. A clearer view of where levy funds are invested

The new Horticulture Investment Roadmaps provides a guide to the future of levy investments and the opportunities and challenges that matter most to growers. It helps ensure every dollar is invested where it can deliver the greatest value for growers and the long-term benefit for Australian horticulture. Common priorities across horticulture include productivity, capability, biosecurity, domestic demand and export growth. The new interactive dashboard will make it easier to see industry priorities, funded projects and how investments align with grower priorities.



## 4. Introducing Ellen

As some of you know, I am retiring from full time work this month and in the process of 'passing the baton' to Ellen Cox. It's been great working with the mango industry; thanks for all your support and best wishes for the current season and many great ones beyond.

Ellen recently joined Hort Innovation as the new Industry Services Manager for mangoes. Ellen brings experience working with sugarcane and cattle producers across North Queensland, on environmental markets and regional development initiatives, including carbon and reef credit projects. Based in Cairns, Ellen comes from a family of avid backyard mango enthusiasts and is looking forward to getting to know growers and working with your industry.

**For more information contact:** Ellen Cox, Industry Service Manager. E: ellen.cox@horticulture.com.au M: 0408 421 505




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FPSC FRESH PRODUCE SAFETY CENTRE

# Super El Niño & Food Safety

## Practical steps growers and packhouses can take to protect their produce

The Fresh Produce Safety Centre (FPSC) has developed a range of practical resources to help growers and packers identify food safety hazards and manage risks associated with the potential impacts of a Super El Niño event.

These resources are designed to support businesses before, during and after challenging weather events, helping protect both produce quality and food safety.

These weather events can create a range of food safety challenges. Changes in water quality, wildlife and pest pressures, increased rainfall and flooding, drought risk, higher temperatures and reduced safe working windows can all affect the safety of fresh produce.

The FPSC, in collaboration with stakeholders, has developed a new Drought Guide to help growers prepare for drought conditions and adopt good practices during and after droughts to protect fresh produce food safety.

These resources provide practical guidance for identifying potential hazards, assessing risks and putting appropriate controls in place across growing, harvesting, packing and handling operations.

Drought Guide

Fundamental Guidelines for Fresh Produce Food Safety

Food Safety Essentials

Quick Guides for Fresh Produce Food Safety

### What to do next

- Develop and implement an Incident Management Plan (IMP) with increased focus on droughts, bushfires and floods based on the Food Safety Essentials Guides.
- Review and update food safety risk assessments, with focus on water, alternative water sources, people and hygiene.
- Implement controls and good practices to manage, minimise or eliminate food safety hazards.
- Monitor the effectiveness of controls and report on implementation.
- Communicate relevant changes and risks with workers, customers, suppliers and other stakeholders.

*Source:*
*The Fresh Produce Safety Centre fpsc-anz.com*

# Agrichemical Update

**| October 2026 |**

*Information for this article has been sourced from the August 2026 Ag-Chem Update, prepared by DTS Regulatory Consultants through the project MT24008 – Regulatory Support & Response Co-ordination. This multi-industry project has been funded by Hort Innovation, using industry research and development levies and contributions from the Australian Government.*

## Ethephon minor use permit extended

The Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) has extended the following permit:

| Permit ID | Description | Date Issued | Expiry Date | Permit holder |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| PER91560 version 2 | Ethephon / Mangoes / Dry Season Vegetative Flushes | 19-Nov-2021 | 31-Aug-2031 | Hort Innovation |

We continue to keep you updated on any changes to chemicals and permits, in our newsletter, magazine and on our dedicated website page. Our chemical posters continue to be updated as needed and permit details are also available on our Agrichemicals website page.

## Paraquat and diquat final decisions

On 23 June 2026, the APVMA published final regulatory decisions for paraquat and diquat. Both chemicals remain available for use, but substantial label changes involving removal of many crop uses and new restrictions will apply. For further details, see 'APVMA final decisions on paraquat and diquat explained'. It is also important to note that:

- Backpack and other handheld spraying uses will be phased out.
- Enclosed mixing and loading systems will be required for all uses.
- Personal protective equipment and worker protection requirements will be strengthened.
- Growers must follow the label on the product they have. Existing products with old labels can be used until 22 June 2028.
- Growers should plan equipment and label changes early.

## Fipronil review

The APVMA workplan now forecasts the proposed decision for agricultural fipronil products in March 2027, with consultation completion in June 2027 and a final decision in December 2027. This is later than previously anticipated. Industries should continue retaining pollinator-risk, environmental and critical-use evidence relevant to the review.

A reminder that the fipronil minor use permit for termite control in the NT has expired; a permit renewal application has been submitted and is still pending review and approval by the APVMA. Updates on permit status will be provided as it becomes available. The fipronil permit for QLD and WA is separate and remains current.

## Malathion (fruit fly control)

The APVMA has advised that the minor use permit for malathion for fruit fly control will need to undergo an environmental risk assessment. As a result, the permit which expired on 31 July 2026 will not be reissued until the environmental assessment is completed, which could occur up to six months after the permit expiry. This delay is particularly disappointing given the renewal application was submitted in January. This matter has been raised with the APVMA, and we will provide further updates once more information becomes available.

## Upcoming product reviews

New reviews on dimethoate and omethoate are not expected to start until well into 2027, followed in 2028 by methomyl. Reviews on fungicides chlorothalonil and dithiocarbamates (mancozeb, metiram, thiram) are not due to start until 2029. Growers are encouraged to consider what options or replacements may be necessary as early as possible and start identifying if their use of these chemicals is less than the maximum label rates.

## Why this matters in horticulture

For growers, the biggest issues are likely to be:

- potential loss or heavy restrictions of important crop protection chemical uses,
- tighter use directions or buffer requirements,
- more attention to off-target drift and sensitive crops,
- potential residue and export trade impacts,
- and, for some products, increased scrutiny around bees, aquatic life and soil persistence.

## Practical next step

If your business relies on any of the chemistries under planned review, it would be sensible to review your spray programs, resistance plans, residue risk, and trade exposure now, rather than waiting for APVMA action. Products may remain available for some time, but the regulatory direction is clearly toward reassessment and possible loss or label change.

Scan for more agrichemical resources.





# The biggest job requires the best solutions

To thrive as a mango grower, you have to enjoy solving problems. Whether it's managing orchards, improving fruit quality, or navigating seasonal pressures, every decision matters.

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## RESOURCE HIGHLIGHT:

# Mango Orchard Biosecurity Plan

As part of the Queensland Government's **Queensland Biosecurity Boost Grants Program**, Australian Mangoes has developed a **Mango Orchard Biosecurity Plan**.

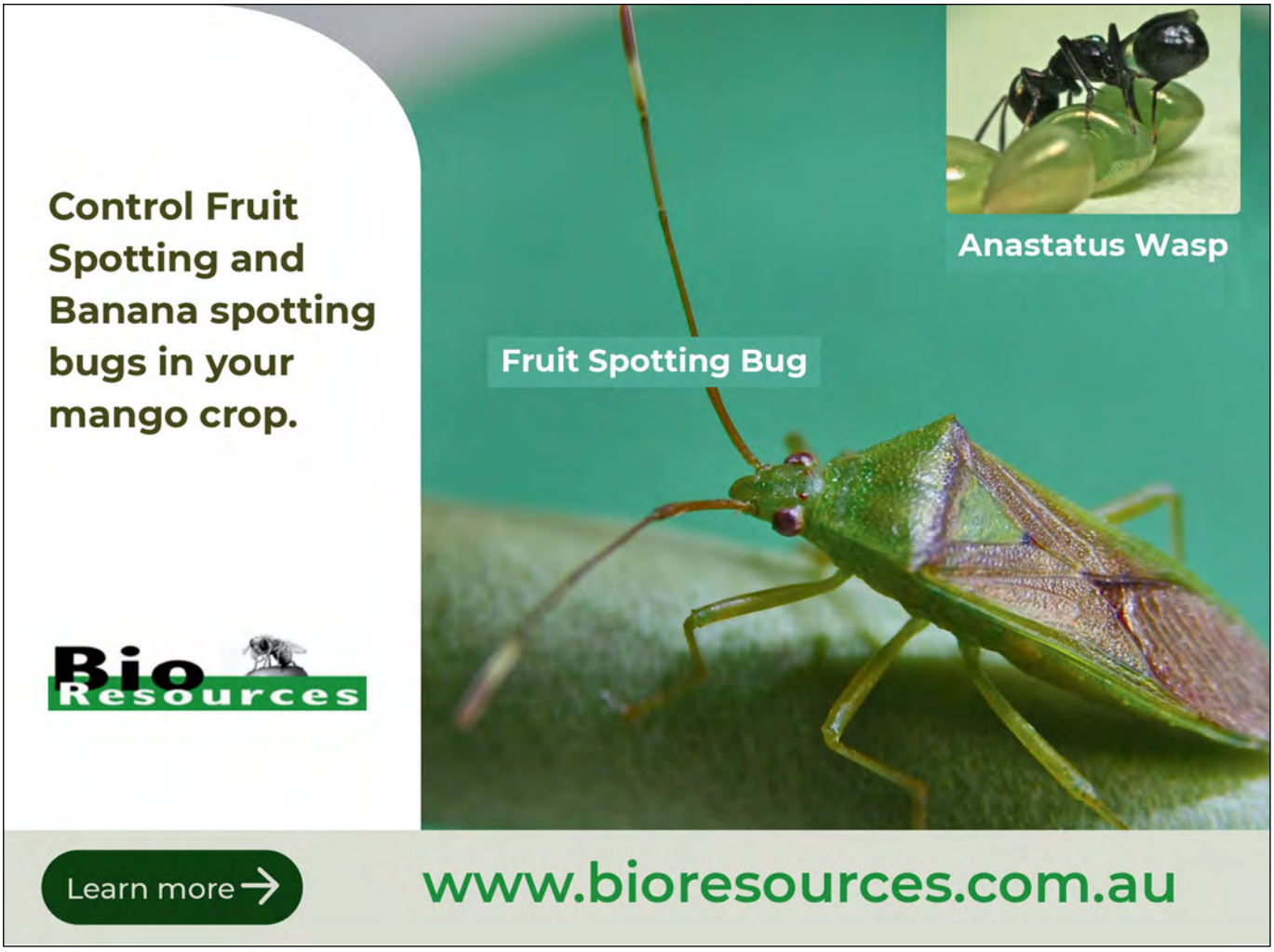
This new guide is designed to help mango growers navigate the in-orchard biosecurity tasks and activities required to meet their biosecurity obligations. Implementing the recommended biosecurity practices as part of your day-to-day operations can improve outcomes should an incursion occur on or near your farm.

An interactive version is now available online, featuring practical guides and digital checklists to help you create, implement and maintain your orchard biosecurity plan.




*Acknowledgement: The Mango Orchard Biosecurity Plan is proudly supported by the Queensland Government's Queensland Biosecurity Boost Grants Program.*

DELIVERING FOR QUEENSLAND | Queensland Government






*Trevor Dunmall, AMIA CEO at the Australian Mangoes stand*

# Representing Mangoes at Asia Fruit Logistica

The team from Australian Mangoes attended Asia Fruit Logistica from 2 - 4 September 2026 at AsiaWorld-Expo in Hong Kong, joining one of Asia's leading international fresh produce trade shows. The event brings together growers, exporters, importers, retailers, distributors and technology providers from around the world to explore new products, share industry insights and develop business opportunities.

Our attendance focused on strengthening our industry's presence in targeted export markets with the long-term aim of rebuilding export volumes which have struggled to recover since Covid-19.



*Celine Jordens & Jay Hwang (Sunforest, Korea) discussing the H-100C Mango meter*

The team represented the Australian mango industry, raising awareness of Australian mangoes with a focus on varieties and seasonality. Our presence is aimed at reinforcing the knowledge of our mangoes with importers and retailers, and assisting in connecting Australian growers and exporters to interested buyers.

In addition, the team connected with technology businesses to explore potential collaborations and opportunities to trial innovative technologies on Australian mango varieties, supporting future improvements in industry productivity, quality and supply-chain efficiency.

Asia Fruit Logistica also provided a valuable opportunity to network with other Australian horticultural peak industry bodies attending the event, encouraging knowledge-sharing and collaboration across the sector.

Throughout the event, we distributed the Australian Mangoes Exporter Directory and Australian Mangoes Export Brochure which includes details about Australian mangoes and exporter contact details.

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# Australian Mangoes on Four City Trade Tour in China

The Australian Table Grape Association (ATGA) is the lead peak industry body for horticulture in Austrade's Trade Diversification Network. ATGA leads a consortium of nine Australian horticulture peak industry bodies. From the 26th July to the 1st August 2026 Jeff Scott, ATGA CEO led a delegation of 23 Australian horticulture representatives, drawn from nine fruit industries to four Chinese cities: Kunming, Chongqing, Changsha and Qingdao.

The cities were chosen as they are regionally important but both geographically and economically distinct. Each of these cities is a major city within their region with Chongqing being the largest city in China, with a population of 32 million.

This tour focused on the gaining knowledge on the opportunities and what is needed to be able to export to these markets. The tour included visits to the wholesale markets in each city as well as a number of large fruit retailers.

Additionally, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed jointly by the Australian peak industry bodies present with CFNA and the Haiguanxing market in Kunming. (CFNA is the China Chamber of Commerce of Import & Export of Foodstuffs, Native Produce & Animal By-Products and represents Chinese import and export companies). The MoU, while symbolic represents a commitment to work together in the future to develop stronger industry and business relationships. This is the first coordinated multi-industry agreement of its kind for Australian horticulture in China.

Among the important observations of the tour included:

- demand for Australian fruit is real but not being serviced in these cities
- almost all imported fruit reaching these cities is bought through Guangzhou or Shanghai
- Australia cannot compete on price against Chinese domestic production, so the opening is building and strengthening direct relationships, counter-seasonality availability and trusted provenance,
- provenance now at risk, with fruit falsely labelled as Australian (especially citrus) observed in all four cities.
- merchandising and packaging of premium fruit is of a very a high standard.



*Luke Dillon (FT Farming) in Dingxing Markets, Qingdao.*

The quality of mangoes available in China varied but on the whole the quality was high, there were good volumes of quality fruit in retail stores. Most mangoes in retail were grown in southern China, with some imported product. While merchandising and packing were of a very high standard for the high-quality fruit, mangoes packed in polystyrene boxes were prevalent in some markets.




*4 pack of mangoes in retail - Sam's Club, Chongqing*

Noticeably in several markets, mangoes are being marketed as Australian Mangoes, product of China. Speaking with wholesalers, the Australian variety that is now grown in some provinces in southern China are popular.

Social media and online ordering and delivery is popular and a serious segment of the market in these cities.

Importantly, during and following this tour we engaged with importers and retailers on their perspective on the use of irradiation as a phytosanitary process on imported produce. Following the tour we also have had discussions with Australian government representatives and there appears a greater willingness to highlight the use of irradiation as a safe and effective end point treatment. Currently China does not accept irradiation as a phytosanitary treatment on imported fresh produce.

The tour confirmed that regional cities such as the ones visited are becoming significant consumption and distribution centres with strong purchasing power. The tour also strengthened the relationship with CFNA.

I need to acknowledge the work of Jeff Scott who over many years has worked to improve the Australian Table Grape industries export performance. The table grape industry currently exports 60% to 70% of production with China and Indonesia two of its major export markets.

Jeff pulled together the industries, growers and exporters to be part of this tour and through his and Jessie White's (ATGA) efforts the tour went smoothly. Also, the work by the Austrade team in preparation for the tour and being available throughout the tour was greatly appreciated by all delegates.



*Stephen Dever (Manbulloo) with team members from Austrade and Greenery, a major fruit retailer in Changsha.*

AMIA is keen to be involved in future overseas tours, looking at both production and markets. There may be several opportunities coming up over the next 12 to 18 months. When these opportunities arise it's important that growers and marketers are involved. If you would like us to record your contact details for future opportunities, please let us know so we can contact you directly if future tours are being organised.

***Austrade has established a new Trade Diversification Network (TDN) to deliver the Accessing New Markets Initiative (ANMI). The network consists of 40 national peak industry bodies – representing Australian exporters.***

***Through the TDN, the Australian Government and industry are uniting to support exporters to diversify and grow into new markets, leveraging the combined capabilities and expertise of government and industry. Austrade is collaborating with national peak industry bodies to ensure ANMI support is fit-for-purpose and aligned with the needs of their members.***



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# Market Access Certification Update

*Hamish Templer, Plant Biosecurity Policy Officer, NT DAF Plant Biosecurity Branch*

The following is an update to provide growers and packers with an update on market access certification arrangements.

The last several seasons have seen significant changes to interstate market access pathways following the removal of post-harvest dimethoate use. The removal of this long-standing treatment created challenges for industry and regulators alike, requiring the development and implementation of alternative certification systems that continue to provide confidence that Queensland fruit fly (QFF) risks are effectively managed.

Market access certification is a sensitive and important area. Importing jurisdictions must be satisfied that the systems and procedures underpinning certification are robust, scientifically sound and capable of reliably mitigating the risk of pest movement. As a result, the development and acceptance of alternative assurance arrangements has taken considerable collaboration between industry, state and territory governments, and the national biosecurity system.

## Western Australia

Western Australia continues to accept ICA-69 certification for four mango varieties only:

- Kensington Pride (KP)
- Calypso®
- R2E2
- Honey Gold®

ICA-69 is a systems-based certification pathway that combines pre-harvest fruit fly management (cover sprays), harvesting of hard mature condition Class 1 fruit, inspections at harvest and packing, and secure handling and transport requirements to provide assurance that consignments present a negligible risk of carrying Queensland fruit fly.

Western Australia also continues to require mango seed weevil inspection cuts as part of its import requirements.

The existing MSW-01 bilateral accreditation is currently being superseded by ICA-70. This nationally recognised certification arrangement offers a range of benefits to industry, including a substantial reduction in inspection cut numbers while maintaining confidence in the effectiveness of the system.

For growers using alternative treatment pathways, Western Australia also continues to accept both vapour heat treatment and irradiation treatment.

## South Australia

South Australia continues to accept all mango varieties under CTM-01 certification and has recently updated the SA Plant Quarantine Standard import conditions to recognise ICA-69 certification.

Due to implementation timeframes, the Northern Territory will only have ICA-69 Version 1 available for the 2026-27 season.

Queensland's later season commencement has allowed ICA-69 Version 2 to be implemented this season. Northern Territory businesses can expect ICA-69 Version 2 to become available from next season.

South Australia also accepts irradiation treatment but does not accept vapour heat treatment as a market access option.

## Other Markets

Exports to New South Wales, Victoria and Queensland remain available to Northern Territory growers.

Following the removal of methyl bromide fumigation as a market access option for mangoes, access to Tasmania is now only available through irradiation treatment.

Growers and packers are reminded that additional import conditions may apply depending on the destination and circumstances of a consignment. If you are uncertain about market access requirements, contact the relevant receiving jurisdiction or your local biosecurity authority before dispatching produce.

## Looking ahead

While we are focused on getting fruit to market this season, it is also important to prepare for future threats. By planning ahead, we can reduce disruption and protect our industry's ability to trade.

The NT Government will continue working with AMIA on preparedness activities and welcomes grower input through AMIA to help ensure these plans are practical and fit for purpose. We are always happy to assist you in navigating certification requirements. For market access or general biosecurity enquiries, please contact:

**NT Plant Biosecurity Branch**

T: 08 8999 2118

E: plantbiosecurity@nt.gov.au

Queensland growers can direct their enquiries to:

**Queensland Department of Primary Industries**

**Kent Hutchinson, Principal Biosecurity Officer**

T: 0455 540 966
E: qld.plantquarantine@dpi.qld.gov.au



*Orchard discussions examined practical approaches to mango crop and canopy management.*

# Learning from China: New Perspectives on Mango Flowering and Orchard Management

*Professor Chengyuan (Stephen) Xu, Research Institute for Northern Agriculture, Charles Darwin University*

## Insights from an academic exchange to Hainan, an island province of China.

A recent academic exchange to Hainan, an island province of China. provided an opportunity to investigate production practices used in Chinese mango orchards and whether they could be implemented in the Australian mango industry. A key focus of the discussions related to whether new approaches were available to manipulate mango flowering and support earlier production.




*The academic exchange connected northern Australia with Hainan Province (highlighted), a mango-growing region in China.*





### Managing shoot growth and promoting flowering

One of the most relevant areas of discussion was the management of vegetative growth and flowering. Chinese technical guidance examined during the visit described the use of plant growth regulators to suppress excessive shoot elongation and promote more uniform flowering.

The approach presented combined canopy and shoot-growth management with carefully timed flower-promotion treatments. The Chinese guideline referred to soil application of paclobutrazol, with application rates adjusted according to canopy diameter, cultivar flowering characteristics, tree vigour and age. It also described foliar treatments based on potassium nitrate or monopotassium phosphate, together with ethephon and other components, applied when the first inflorescences begin to emerge.

These observations indicate that mango flowering manipulation in China is not based on a single treatment. Instead, it is approached as an integrated program involving control of vegetative growth, assessment of tree condition, treatment timing and repeated monitoring.

For Australian growers, the underlying management principles may warrant structured research under Australian conditions, particularly where earlier or more synchronised flowering could improve harvest timing and market opportunities.

## Practical orchard management

The exchange also highlighted several practical management techniques used in mango orchards. These included the use of protective fruit bags, close monitoring of developing fruit and management of the orchard floor.

Fruit bagging was clearly visible across the orchard sites visited. Bags of different colours appeared to be used around individual fruit during development. The practice demonstrated the effectiveness and level of attention given to protecting fruit and managing external appearance during production.

Another notable feature was the use of low-growing leguminous groundcovers between and beneath orchard rows. A trial with a range of groundcover species was observed. Some successfully formed continuous green coverage along access rows with low maintenance requirement.

Such groundcover systems could potentially contribute to soil protection and orchard-floor management, and increase soil nitrogen, but species selection would be critical in northern Australian orchards. Any candidate would need to be evaluated for competition with mango trees, water use, seasonal persistence, ease of management and its potential to host pests or diseases. These are proposed research considerations rather than conclusions from the visit.



*Close inspection of individually bagged mango fruit during the orchard visit.*



*An example of dense, low-growing orchard groundcover observed during the exchange.*



*Maintained green groundcover between established mango orchard rows.*

## Where to from here?

The exchange identified several areas that may justify further discussion and research in Australia:

- evaluating techniques for earlier and more synchronised mango flowering under northern Australian conditions;
- examining how cultivar, tree vigour and climate influence responses to flowering-management treatments;
- assessing suitable low-growing legume groundcovers for tropical Australian orchards; and
- evaluating the agronomic and commercial value of fruit bagging.

The visit did not provide ready-made solutions for Australian production. It did, however, offer useful examples of how another mango-producing country approaches flowering, orchard-floor management and fruit protection. The next step is to determine which of these ideas have sufficient relevance to be tested scientifically and economically in Australian orchards.

***Important note: References to agricultural chemicals or plant growth regulators describe practices or technical guidance encountered during the exchange. They are not recommendations for use in Australia. Growers must use only products registered or permitted for the relevant crop and follow all label and regulatory requirements.***

***This academic exchange was funded by the National Foundation for Australia-China Relations.***

# What's Happening in Frontiers?

*Maxie Juang, Program Impact Manager at Frontiers*

**Hort Innovation Frontiers accelerates research and development through Innovation Partnerships, the Hort Innovation Venture Fund and Australian-Grown Innovation, backing local and global innovators to solve major horticulture challenges and deliver practical value for growers.**

**Frontiers is growing, but the real measure of progress is whether investment has an impact on growers.**

In FY26, Frontiers brought together 45 delivery partners across 78 active projects, representing $460 million in total investment. Investment has nearly doubled in the past four years, private sector participation has tripled, and projects secured $72 million in co-investment.

With one-quarter of projects flagged for commercialisation and a new intellectual property policy in place, Frontiers is strengthening the path from research and early ideas to solutions that can be tested, adopted and used on-farm.

Here is a snapshot of the latest activity and why it matters to growers.

## Building Australian ideas around real industry needs

Australian-Grown Innovation, or AGI, helps Australian innovators test and build solutions around genuine horticulture needs. Grower involvement helps ensure ideas work under real commercial conditions.

### AGI Incubate: putting early ideas to the test

AGI Incubate supported three cohorts involving 42 innovators and growers. The program helps innovators test assumptions, understand customer needs, and refine early ideas before committing significant development time or funding.

Examples include Rare Dragon Fruit, which reduced its proposed minimum viable product budget from about $120,000 to $24,000 after grower and stakeholder feedback reshaped the idea into a shared Resilience Hub. Melons Australia narrowed a broad melon-waste concept into a more focused commercial opportunity after identifying processing pathways and food processor interest, while Plant Nutrition Australia refined its target market and limited-release approach for its Crop Nutrition Compass.

### AGI Build: moving solutions closer to market

AGI Build supported two completed cohorts involving 20 innovators and growers, with a third cohort of 11 innovators and growers now participating. The program helps promising solutions move from early concepts or prototypes toward testing, demonstration, and commercial adoption.

SMART Melon raised $100,000, secured commercial on-farm trials, and validated its handheld melon maturity and quality device through field testing in Ayr. North Queensland Farmers completed a successful mango-drying trial to explore higher-value uses for surplus produce, while Australian Farm Robotics progressed its automated banana de-handing system toward on-site commercial validation with major operators.

### The third AGI Build cohort

**Current AGI Build cohort:** The third AGI Build cohort includes 11 companies developing solutions across production, processing, biosecurity, sustainability and market access.

Participants include Airponix Seed Australia, ExtensionAg, Gondwana Macadamias, Haskaps of Tas, LP One, Macquarie University, Plant Nutrition Australia, Platform Zero, Queensland Fruit and Vegetable Growers, Rare Dragon Fruit and South Melbourne Market.

### AGI alumni connect across tropical industries

**AGI alumni representation:** Krystal Caton from Lush Lychees shared how the AGI program helped turn an idea into action. She described learning to test whether a problem really existed, whether customers cared enough about solving it, and whether an opportunity was worth pursuing before investing significant time or money. Her example showed how a simple idea in the packing shed or orchard, such as finding better uses for second-grade fruit, could become a new product pathway when growers were supported to test, learn and adapt early.

**Why it matters:** Grower-led innovation rarely starts fully formed. Krystal's message showed the value of AGI was greater than funding or mentoring, it was a practical way to move from "what else could this become?" to low-risk testing, customer feedback and clearer decisions. For growers and industry representatives, the clear message was to join the program before an idea felt perfect.

**Interested in helping shape an emerging solution?** Explore Australian-Grown Innovation.

## Investments targeting everyday grower challenges

The Hort Innovation Venture Fund, or HIVF, invests in fast-growing businesses developing technologies that could improve productivity, resilience and sustainability across horticulture.

### TerraBlaster: faster soil information for fertiliser decisions

TerraBlaster is developing a towed system that measures soil properties as machinery moves through a paddock, converting data into detailed maps that could inform fertiliser application in real time.

The technology is relevant to potatoes, onions, carrots, brassicas, leafy vegetables, and other open-field crops.

**Why it matters:** More timely soil information could reduce unnecessary fertiliser use and support better decisions within short operating windows.

### Agovor: practical automation for horticulture

Agovor has developed a lightweight autonomous electric tractor for narrow and complex growing systems. Modular attachments can support mowing and spraying, with multiple machines coordinated through a cloud-based portal.

The technology has potential relevance across tree crops, vines, berries, and protected or narrow-row production systems.

**Why it matters:** Flexible automation could keep repetitive work moving during critical periods, ease labour pressure, and allow farm teams to focus on higher-skilled work.

***"Our eTractor, Dora, quickly proved herself on our farm, working autonomously and reliably in the tight, narrow tunnel houses we grow in. Nothing else would fit where Dora can"***

– CAM LEWIS, BERRY GROWER, OWNER AND OPERATOR OF LEWIS FARMS

## PlasmaLeap: producing nitrogen closer to growers

PlasmaLeap is developing technology that produces ammonia and nitrate fertilisers using air, water and electricity. The system is designed for on-farm use or regional nutrient hubs.

**Why it matters:** If commercialised at scale, local nitrogen production could improve nutrient security, reduce supply disruption risk, and support more predictable input planning.

## BioScout: detecting disease before symptoms appear

BioScout combines autonomous air sampling, artificial intelligence and predictive analytics to provide pathogen-specific disease risk information within six to 24 hours.

The technology has potential relevance across grapes, mushrooms, tree nuts, pome fruit, stone fruit, berries, citrus, tropical crops, avocado, vegetables and dried fruit.

**Why it matters:** Earlier disease information could support more targeted treatments, reduce unnecessary applications and help protect crops before symptoms are visible.

"BioScout technology is developing as a key line of defence against fungal diseases. Further investment will facilitate the extension of the BioScout network to new geographies, increasing grower knowledge of spore behaviour and management," - Jane Parker, Agricultural Development Manager at McCormick Foods Australia said.

**Explore the HIVF portfolio companies on the** Portfolio page.

## Research with value across horticulture

Innovation Partnerships supports multi-year R&D projects addressing challenges shared across crops, regions, and production systems.

## Frontiers R&D project highlights

**GC22012 — Managing resilient urban greenspaces in Australian cities**

A $3.2M, two-year project developing four best-practice guides on planning, designing and managing urban green spaces to withstand extreme heat, flood and fire. Case studies and scenario modelling from Western Melbourne and Western Sydney help planners and growers build climate-resilient sites benefiting all horticulture regions. Delivered in partnership with Western Sydney University.

**LP22001 — Research for impact**

A $600K, three-year cross-RDC initiative embedding "extension thinking" into RD&E project design, working across 12 projects with 150+ coaching sessions and forums. It improves how research reaches growers of every commodity, producing a "Maximising Impact" handbook with seven principles to boost adoption across all industries. Delivered in partnership with Enablers Of Change.

**AS21005 — A gene technology platform for disease resistance in horticultural tree crops (huanglongbing)**

An $8.7M, five-year project introducing an RNA-based "vaccination" platform that immunises trees, vines and bushes against disease without genetic modification. It protects crops across multiple horticulture sectors from devastating diseases, supporting field trials, regulatory approval, and grower education broadly. Delivered in partnership with Silvec Biologics Inc.

**Interested in a highlighted project?** Search its project code or filter via industries on the Hort Innovation website.

**Want to help shape what Frontiers backs next?** Explore current opportunities, project highlights and emerging solutions through Australian-Grown Innovation, the HIVF portfolio, or join the Frontiers Advisory Network to help shape the future of Australian horticulture.

Hort Innovation Frontiers

Please reach out to frontiers@horticulture.com.au for any queries.




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