



# Prune Fund

Annual Report 2019/20



## Contents

- About Hort Innovation and the Prune Fund ..... 1
- About the year ..... 1
- 2019/20 Prune Fund snapshot ..... 2
- Did you know? ..... 2
- Just some of the things delivered for you during the year ..... 3
- Making investments in 2019/20 ..... 4
- Investment planning and performance ..... 5
- R&D project list 2019/20 ..... 6
- R&D report ..... 7
- Financial statement ..... 9
- Bonus activity: The Good Mood Food ..... 10

# About Hort Innovation and the Prune Fund

Hort Innovation is the grower-owned, not-for-profit research and development corporation for Australia’s horticulture sector. We work closely with industry to invest the prune R&D levy, together with Australian Government contributions, into key initiatives for growers, through the Hort Innovation Prune Fund. We’re extremely proud of the work we do to help drive productivity, profitability and demand for prune growers, and for the horticulture sector at large.

## About the year

**An intense and unpredictable year, 2019/20 certainly dealt challenges for the world, for Australian horticulture, and for Hort Innovation.** There was ongoing drought, a devastating bushfire season, intense floods, the biosecurity threat of fall armyworm and, of course, the global and ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

**We encourage you to download a copy of the overarching Hort Innovation Annual Report 2019/20** at [www.horticulture.com.au/annual-report-portal](http://www.horticulture.com.au/annual-report-portal) to better understand Hort Innovation’s responses to these events, and how the company was able to change its plans and priorities to best serve the sector.

**Through it all, though, activity in the Hort Innovation Prune Fund remained strong.** While some activities inevitably changed under COVID-19, it was still a solid year of investment, with some \$23,000 invested in R&D for the industry. Read on for an overview of what was delivered.

## 2019/20 Prune Fund snapshot



**\$23,000**

invested in R&D



**7**

active R&D investments



**\$33,000**

in levies collected

by the government and passed on to Hort Innovation  
for investment

## Did you know?



**11,637 tonnes**

Australia's prune production volumes have been variable over the past five years, with a peak of 11,637 tonnes in 2017/18



**96%**

New South Wales accounts for 96 per cent of Australia's prune production, taking place primarily around Griffith

These facts and more can be found in the Australian Horticulture Statistics Handbook, which is delivered by Hort Innovation each year. The handbook is packed with horticulture statistical information and analysis for some 75 categories, for use by individual industries and the wider sector. The 2018/19 edition was released in early 2020 and, for the first time, features an interactive dashboard format for desktop users. See [www.horticulture.com.au/horticulture-statistics-handbook](http://www.horticulture.com.au/horticulture-statistics-handbook).





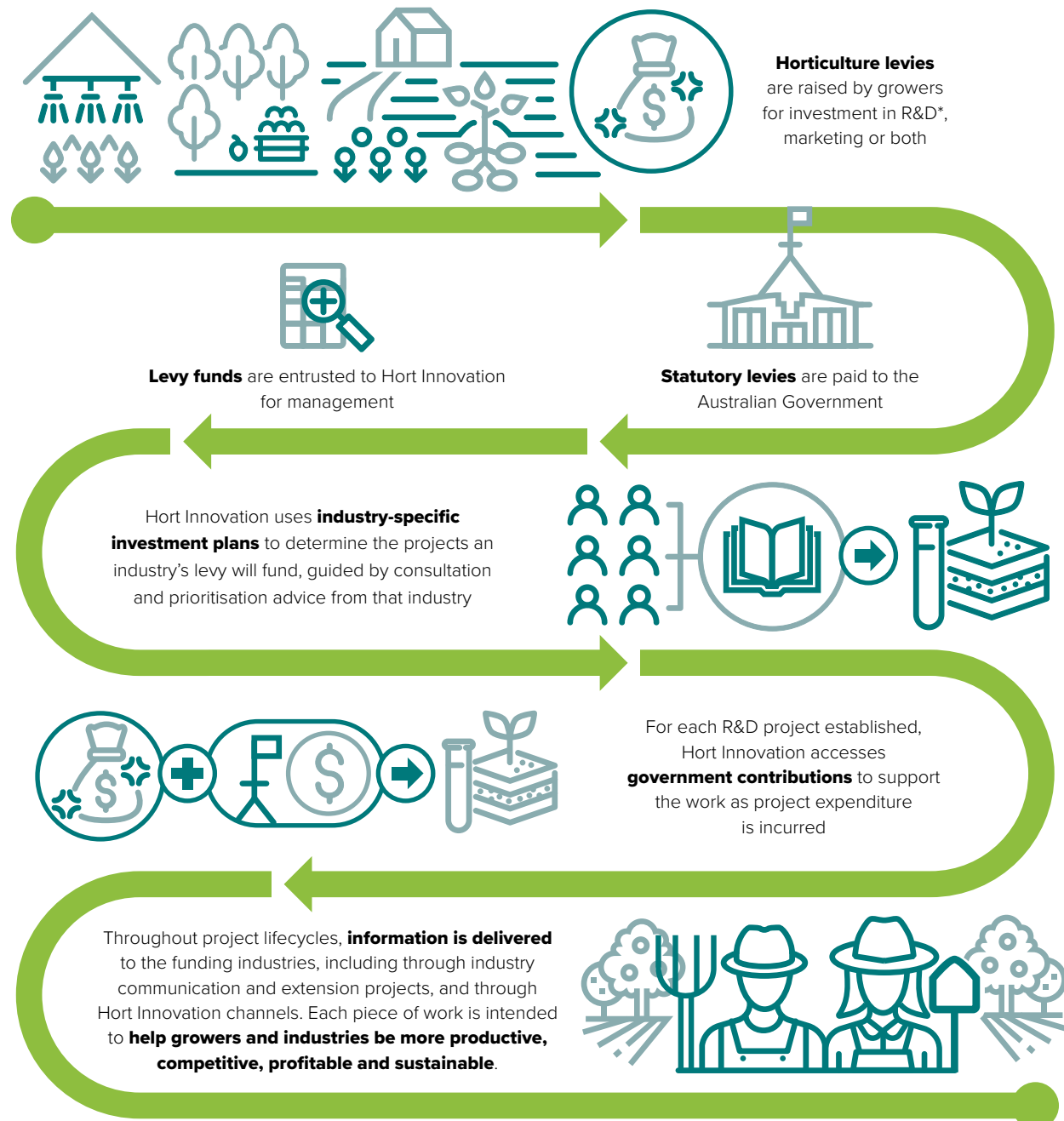
## Just some of the things delivered for you during the year:

- ✓ **An industry communication and extension program**, delivering articles for *The Vine* magazine, Ausprunes e-newsletters and events (see [p7](#))
- ✓ **Information and data to assist through COVID-19**, including the new *Hort Innovation Insights* podcast ([www.horticulture.com.au/webinars](http://www.horticulture.com.au/webinars)) and regular consumer attitude and behaviour information ([www.horticulture.com.au/impact-monitor](http://www.horticulture.com.au/impact-monitor))\*
- ✓ **Ongoing biosecurity initiatives**, allowing the prune industry to join forces with other industries to prepare for and protect against potential threats (see from [p7](#))
- ✓ **The Good Mood Food** across-horticulture marketing campaign to support industries through the effects of recent times ([www.horticulture.com.au/the-good-mood-food](http://www.horticulture.com.au/the-good-mood-food))\*
- ✓ **Investments in the Hort Frontiers strategic partnership initiative** to address longer-term and often complex issues and opportunities critical to the future of Australian horticulture – see [www.horticulture.com.au/hort-frontiers](http://www.horticulture.com.au/hort-frontiers)\*
- ✓ **Projects supported by grants** secured by Hort Innovation, ranging from cross-sector Rural R&D for Profit Initiatives to horticulture-specific work to aid in access to crop protection products – see the Hort Innovation Annual Report 2019/20 for more\*

\*These initiatives were delivered outside of the Hort Innovation Prune Fund and, in most instances, did not involve the industry levy

# Making investments in 2019/20

The below diagram shows how Hort Innovation makes strategic levy investments on behalf of horticulture industries. The prune R&D levy was invested this way during the year, guided by the Prune Strategic Investment Plan and advice from the industry’s investment advisory panel.



To learn more about funding specific to the Hort Innovation Prune Fund, visit [www.horticulture.com.au/prune](http://www.horticulture.com.au/prune). During the year, other sources of funding were also used to support activities for the benefit of Australian horticulture, including grant funding secured by Hort Innovation, co-investment dollars brokered through our Hort Frontiers initiative and centralised strategic levy reserves.

## Investment planning and performance

During 2019/20, Hort Innovation continued to track investment expenditure against the Prune Strategic Investment Plan, while looking towards new developments in 2021. Access an at-a-glance copy of the current investment plan at [www.bit.ly/prune-plan](http://www.bit.ly/prune-plan).

### A performance analysis is coming

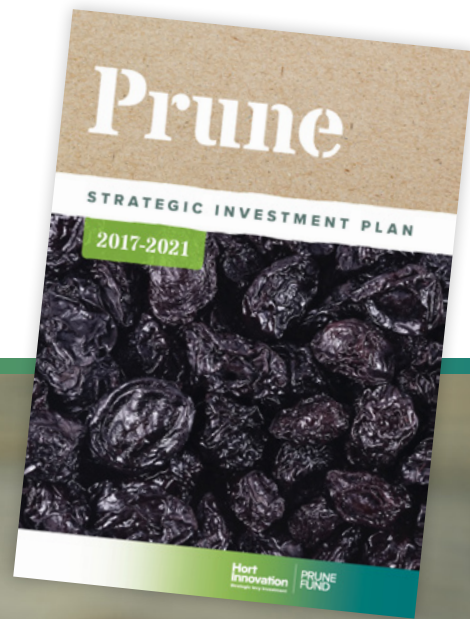
The industry's investment plan outlines key goals and outcomes for levy investment. With the plan due for renewal in 2021, Hort Innovation is undertaking a performance analysis to see how the industry has progressed against the current plan's ambitions. This will also help guide ongoing priorities for investment. Look for information to be published at [www.horticulture.com.au/prune](http://www.horticulture.com.au/prune) in 2021.

### See how your levy investments align to the industry's current plan

You can see how investment expenditure in the Hort Innovation Prune Fund aligns to the industry's current strategic investment plan with the interactive analysis information available from [www.bit.ly/prune-investment](http://www.bit.ly/prune-investment). The analysis shows the allocation of funding against each of the prune plan's outcomes, and gives an indication of the projects that are aligned to each outcome.

### New ways of obtaining advice and setting priorities

In 2020/21, Hort Innovation will be implementing new ways of obtaining advice and setting priorities for industry investments. Renewed industry investment plans, plus new yearly (or as needed) program plans and new ways of consulting more broadly will mean more efficient investment and better outcomes for industry. Watch this space.





## R&D project list 2019/20

### NEW INVESTMENTS IN 2019/20

DP19000 Prune industry communications and extension program

### ONGOING INVESTMENTS IN 2019/20

MT16005 Enhanced National Bee Pest Surveillance Program

MT17006 Improving preparedness of the Australian horticultural sector to the threat potentially posed by *Xylella fastidiosa* (a severe biosecurity risk)

MT17006 Xylella coordinator

MT18011 Ex-post impact assessment\*

\* This multi-industry project was a key monitoring and evaluation investment during 2019/20 – we encourage you to find the full details at [www.horticulture.com.au/mt18011](http://www.horticulture.com.au/mt18011)

### INVESTMENTS COMPLETED IN 2019/20

DP18000 Communications and extension for the prune industry

MT17005 Improving the biosecurity preparedness of Australian horticulture for the exotic spotted wing drosophila (*Drosophila suzukii*)



## R&D report

Take a closer look at some of the key investments in the Hort Innovation Prune Fund during 2019/20. You can also visit [www.horticulture.com.au/prune](http://www.horticulture.com.au/prune) at any time to access information on new, ongoing and completed projects, and to download any resources produced by levy investments, such as fact sheets and guides.

### **Prune industry communications and extension program (DP19000)**

**NEW IN 2019/20**

**Key research provider:** Ausprunes

Established in 2019 to continue the services of completed project **Communications and extension for the Australian prune industry (DP18000)**, this investment delivers communications to Australian prune growers and other industry stakeholders. By keeping the industry up to date on R&D, news, events and other critical information, its ultimate goal is to facilitate the uptake of R&D by the industry and support decision-making in prune businesses.

Like its predecessor, the new program has a number of communications activities, including but not limited to:

- » Production of prune industry articles for *The Vine* magazine, which is the joint magazine for the dried fruit and table grape industries (you can find online editions at [www.driedfruitsaustralia.org.au/news/the-vine](http://www.driedfruitsaustralia.org.au/news/the-vine))
- » Delivery of Ausprunes e-newsletters to industry contacts, which you can sign up for by contacting Ausprunes via [www.ausprunes.org.au/contact.php](http://www.ausprunes.org.au/contact.php)

- » Events including field days and a grower forum, with 2020's events delayed due to COVID-19, until social distancing protocols allow them to take place. Look for details to be circulated in Ausprunes channels as they become available.

### **Improving the biosecurity preparedness of Australian horticulture for the exotic spotted wing drosophila (*Drosophila suzukii*) (MT17005)**

**NOW COMPLETE**

**Key research provider:** Plant Health Australia

Running from 2018 to 2020, this multi-industry investment improved awareness of the risks posed by spotted wing drosophila, which attacks a range of soft-skinned fruit, as well as enhanced Australia's capacity to detect and respond to any incursions of the pest.

Most importantly, this project developed a framework for modelling spotted wing drosophila establishment and movement throughout Australian regions, allowing for a comprehensive preparedness plan to be developed for a swift response in the event of an incursion. The plan includes an extensive list of recommendations for industry, including relating to surveillance, control techniques, engagement and awareness, and diagnostics.

The project also worked to build knowledge and capacity around appropriate surveillance and management tools and strategies within the growing industries, government and among other relevant stakeholders. It produced a range of materials for growers, including identification information, a fact sheet on spotted wing drosophila hosts, and a webinar detailing preparedness for the pest.

Full details and links to the project's resources – and final research report – can be found at [www.bit.ly/mt17005](http://www.bit.ly/mt17005).







## Enhanced National Bee Pest Surveillance Program (MT16005)

### HORT FRONTIERS

**Key research provider:** Plant Health Australia

This investment is delivering a nationally coordinated bee pest surveillance program to help safeguard honey bee and pollinator-dependent industries in Australia. It builds on previous industry work, and includes upgrading sentinel hive arrays, strengthening relationships with surveillance operators, the introduction of new elements such as Asian hornet screening and more. The surveillance is designed to enable the early detection of high-priority pest incursions that can impact on honey bees, providing the best opportunity for successful pest eradication.

The prune industry is one of several contributors to the work, and the program is part of the Hort Frontiers Pollination Fund ([www.horticulture.com.au/hort-frontiers](http://www.horticulture.com.au/hort-frontiers)).

## *Xylella coordinator* (MT17006)

**Key research provider:** Wine Australia

*Xylella fastidiosa* is an exotic and potentially devastating bacteria that impedes the movement of rising sap in plants. While it hasn't yet appeared in Australia it has proven catastrophic overseas and, were it to enter the country, it could threaten more than 350 commercial, ornamental and native plant species.

This multi-industry and multi-sector investment supports the role and activities of a national coordinator as part of a three

year program to improve Australia's readiness for any potential incursion of the disease. This is a joint initiative between Hort Innovation and Wine Australia, through the Plant Biosecurity Research Initiative (PBRI). The PBRI is a collaboration between Australia's seven plant-focused Rural RDCs, Plant Health Australia, the Department of Agriculture and other contributors, to coordinate plant biosecurity RD&E funding and efforts. You can learn more at [www.pbri.com.au](http://www.pbri.com.au).

## Improving preparedness of the Australian horticultural sector to the threat potentially posed by *Xylella fastidiosa* (a severe biosecurity risk) (MT17006)

**Key research provider:** The Victorian Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions

Adding to the PBRI's xylella work as described in the previous project overview, this multi-industry investment will allow Australia to adopt world's best practice methods for detecting and identifying strains of the *Xylella fastidiosa* bacteria, should it come to our shores. As well as developing state-of-the-art diagnostic tools, technologies and protocols to screen plant material entering the country and to support active surveillance programs, it will provide associated training to technical staff in diagnostic laboratories.

The project's work will ultimately allow for quick and effective detection of what is considered to be the number one plant biosecurity threat to Australia and New Zealand, to facilitate a swift and sure response.

# Financial statement

## Financial operating statement 2019/20

	R&D (\$)	TOTAL (\$)
	2019/20 July – June	2019/20 July – June
<b>OPENING BALANCE</b>	<b>(3,562)</b>	<b>(3,562)</b>
Levies from growers (net of collection costs)	32,718	32,718
Australian Government money	34,221	34,221
Other income*	238	238
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>67,178</b>	<b>67,178</b>
Project funding	23,213	23,213
Consultation with and advice from growers	411	411
Service delivery – base	1,287	1,287
Service delivery – shared	1,849	1,849
Service delivery – fund specific	6,250	6,250
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>33,010</b>	<b>33,010</b>
Levy contribution to across-industry activity	–	–
<b>CLOSING BALANCE</b>	<b>30,606</b>	<b>30,606</b>
Levy collection costs	1,503	1,503

\* Interest, royalties





### **BONUS ACTIVITY: THE GOOD MOOD FOOD**

In 2019/20, Hort Innovation created The Good Mood Food campaign to deliver an immediate and enduring behaviour-change message to motivate more Australians to eat more fruit, vegetables and nuts.

With the central message that these Aussie horticulture products are natural mood boosters, the campaign was developed to support the sector through the impacts of recent challenges including bushfires, drought, floods and of course COVID-19 – the effects of which continue to be felt in consumer spending and purchasing behaviour.

Initially running between May and November 2020, The Good Mood Food has been seen across the country on TV; in newspapers; on radio and music streaming services; online (including on YouTube and TV catch-up services); on social media; and via retail partnerships and advertising screens near supermarkets.

In July, 56 per cent of surveyed consumers said The Good Mood Food had positively influenced their shopping habits, and by the end of campaign's run, 98 per cent of all Australians were expected to be reached.

Learn more at [www.horticulture.com.au/the-good-mood-food](http://www.horticulture.com.au/the-good-mood-food).

Horticulture Innovation Australia Limited (Hort Innovation) makes no representations and expressly disclaims all warranties (to the extent permitted by law) about the accuracy, completeness, or currency of information in the *Prune Fund Annual Report 2019/20*. Reliance on any information provided by Hort Innovation is entirely at your own risk. Hort Innovation is not responsible for, and will not be liable for, any loss, damage, claim, expense, cost (including legal costs) or other liability arising in any way, including from any Hort Innovation or other person's negligence or otherwise from your use or non-use of the *Prune Fund Annual Report 2019/20*, or from reliance on information contained in the material or that Hort Innovation provides to you by any other means.

© 2020 Horticulture Innovation Australia Limited.

**The projects in this report have been funded by Hort Innovation using sources including the prune levy, Australian Government contributions and, in some instances, co-contributions from a variety of sources.**

# Hort Innovation

Horticulture Innovation Australia Limited  
ACN 602 100 149

Level 7, 141 Walker Street  
North Sydney NSW 2060 Australia

02 8295 2300 | [communications@horticulture.com.au](mailto:communications@horticulture.com.au)

**[www.horticulture.com.au](http://www.horticulture.com.au)**