Papaya AUSTRALIA

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Navigating industry shifts to achieve sustainable growth

GROWER CASE STUDY: Paul Fagg

Paul Fagg with staff at Skybury.

Across his 20-year career, Paul Fagg transitioned from a papaya picker to being a key figure in the marketing team of Skybury, one of Australia's largest papaya producers. Three years ago, he embraced new roles as first Marketing, and then HR Manager at the Jetbest Group, a national wholesaler and food service business.

Skybury, a three-generation family-owned farm spanning 600 acres at Paddy's Green just outside Mareeba, Queensland specialises in red papaya and coffee. With over 120 team members, Skybury manages a daily output of up to 70 pallets, catering to both national retailers and local customers through a partnership with Jetbest.

IN THIS ISSUE

LEVY INVOLVEMENT

Paul Fagg's engagement with the Strategic Investment Advisory Panel (SIAP) commenced in 2016 when he served as an observer. By 2018, he was formally accepted as a member of the SIAP, a role he still serves in.

"My primary motivation was to provide insights and support into marketing. Priorities for the SIAP traditionally emphasised growers (supply side issues), but I believed in a holistic approach, considering both supply and demand," Paul said.

"In my view, 'a rising tide floats all boats'. Addressing both demand and supply benefits the entire industry. I've particularly focused on boosting engagement in the food services sector, taking on advisory and evaluation roles to achieve this and having more meaningful engagement with Hort Innovation on how levy income is best spent.

"During my time on the SIAP, I've been able to leverage my marketing knowledge to enhance levy-funded projects, ensuring alignment with industry objectives.

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This magazine is funded by Hort Innovation using the papaya R&D levy and contributions from the Australian Government.

Hort Innovation is the grower-owned, not-for-profit research and development corporation for Australian horticulture.

See your levy at work!

Get an update on all new, current and recently completed levy funded activity on the Hort Innovation Papaya Fund page at ***www.horticulture.com.au/papaya***.

You can access easy-to-read project updates, a snapshot of the Papaya Fund, research reports and resources, key industry contacts and more. Don't miss the Hort Innovation 'Growers' section to keep informed on your levy investments, upcoming events, scholarship opportunities and other handy info!

Stay in the loop with your levy by becoming a member of Hort Innovation, the grower-owned, not-for-profit research and development corporation for Australian horticulture. Paying a levy doesn't automatically make you a member but signing up is free at ***www.horticulture.com.au/membership***.

From the Chair

GERARD KATH

As we approach the end of 2023, the weather is gradually warming and the air is becoming drier, leading to the arrival of fruit!

It's expected that from October through to December, we can anticipate a significant harvest. This winter has been relatively mild, providing favourable conditions for crop production. However, we must be cautious in not reaching an excessive weekly peak in volume, as this would inevitably lead to dwindling prices and narrower profit margins.

Fluctuations in supply and demand are commonplace in our industry, but the great unknown factor this time is how consumer demand will behave. We continually hear about the escalating cost of living crisis in Australia, and one can only assume that this will translate into reduced consumer demand and subsequently, lower prices.

Surprisingly, there is little evidence of deteriorating prices thus far. In fact, over the past two to three months, prices have soared to unusually high levels. Several factors may account for this unexpected trend, including:

- Industry has diligently worked to increase both the volume and quality of fruit over the past few years, expanding our consumer base.
- Our marketing strategies and heightened awareness of fruit quality have convinced more consumers to view papaya as an essential purchase rather than a discretionary one.
- The economic landscape may be starkly divided, with some enjoying disposable income while others must diligently budget to cover the essentials.

> *"It remains imperative that we continuously strive to increase the standard and consistency of fruit volume and quality to uphold and expand our demand base."*

There might be hidden factors contributing to these developments that escape our current perception (I am open to enlightenment). Regardless, it remains imperative that we continuously strive to increase the standard and consistency of fruit volume and quality to uphold and expand our demand base.

Now, let's talk genetics and the breeding program. This project is slated for completion early next year, and the results have been mixed so far. Some lines show promise, while others require further field testing. You can read more on this later in the current edition.

The overarching question for our entire industry as we approach the conclusion of this project is: what's next? Genetic improvement is not a straightforward quick fix, especially when we've already set a high benchmark with RB1 and other lines, and the parameters for the future differ significantly from what they were a decade ago when the current program was initiated.

While still in its research phase, our industry should continue to pursue genetic improvement because any crop that doesn't seek progress is bound to regress. In the year ahead, it's likely that growers will have several opportunities to voice their opinions and contribute to shaping the direction of future breeding programs.

I encourage all growers and industry observers to engage in these discussions to collectively drive forward our genetic advancements. Until next issue.

Best regards,
Gerard Kath

(Continued from page 1)

Navigating industry shifts to achieve sustainable growth

"With a whole-industry perspective, I've actively engaged in diverse projects, across both the Papaya Fund and cross-category projects, such as Hort Innovation project, Foodservice foundational market insights project, which examined how nine fruit categories could better engage with the food service sector.

"The main outcome from this project was highlighting ways papaya can open up new market opportunities beyond the traditional retail sector.

"We have also seen a shift in connecting the grower with the consumer. Telling the grower's story raises awareness and demand in the mind of the consumer."

INDUSTRY TRENDS AND CHANGES

Over Paul's 20-year career, he has seen significant shifts in the industry.

"Traditionally, papaya suppliers operated in distinct summer and winter phases. However, a united effort has now secured year-round consistency of supply, prioritising reliability and availability," Paul said.

"Recent times have seen substantial investments by larger growers, with a firm focus on avoiding supply fluctuations to ensure stability in the market.

"Another notable change is the surge in popularity of red papaya. A decade ago, the industry primarily focused on yellow pawpaw, but today, red papaya accounts for a substantial 85% of Australia's production, marking a fundamental and enduring shift, providing exciting opportunities for the future of our industry."

ADVICE FOR FUTURE GROWERS

Throughout his career, Paul learned that change is a constant, which was especially evident during the COVID-19 era.

"Australian agriculture continues to evolve, driven by changing market conditions, environmental influences, consumer demands, and more. Our industry is no different, demanding adaptability for its ongoing sustainability," he said.

"Collaborating with partners and keeping an open mind is invaluable. Working to understand and meet consumer preferences is paramount – with meeting their expectations and demand essential for successful sales.

"For those starting out in the industry, I'd advise against the misconception of papaya as an easy, quick-return crop.

"Seasoned growers know its challenges, so be sure to reach out to experienced growers for guidance. Their knowledge and lessons will arm you with the correct care and farming practises that need to be adopted to produce a successful papaya crop."

> *"Collaborating with partners and keeping an open mind is invaluable. Working to understand and meet consumer preferences is paramount – with meeting their expectations and demand essential for successful sales."*

GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES

The Australian papaya industry offers significant growth potential, given its current 12.6% household penetration rate.

"To capitalise on this, we must focus on increasing demand and securing a reliable supply chain, for the benefit of the entire industry, as well as new markets and value add products," Paul said.

"Tracking household consumer preference, purchases, and per capita consumption is crucial for growth, and growers play a pivotal role in this. I'd like to see our industry investing more in supply consistency and maintaining the delivery of a consistent, high-quality product. Collaboration among growers is key to unlocking the industry's potential.

"But growth doesn't stop at fresh consumption. There's a promising future in freeze-drying and health foods, offering benefits like extended shelf life, flavour and nutritional content retention, and versatile product applications."

Paul said that despite market, cost of production and environmental challenges, a key factor papaya has on its side is the fact that most of it is Australian grown.

"This helps to not only guarantee freshness and quality but promotes buying fruit locally which is more sustainable given the reduced travel from farm to plate. This also helps support Australian owned businesses, which speaks directly to an ever-growing health-conscious and eco-conscious consumer base.

"We must fully harness and leverage this unique selling point to drive our industry to even greater heights.

"With dedication and a holistic approach, we can navigate changing trends, embrace new opportunities, and together, cultivate a thriving future for this remarkable industry," Paul said.

INDUSTRY NEWS

NEW BIOSECURITY THREAT: PAPAYA MEALYBUG

Papaya mealybug (*Paracoccus marginatus*) has been detected in the Darwin area of the Northern Territory, with the initial case officially confirmed in July 2023.

Papaya mealybug is an exotic pest in Australia and has been classified as non-eradicable. While it is a significant threat to papaya in Asia, the Pacific Islands, and Hawaii, its impact is typically mitigated in its native Central America by natural enemies. The identification of this pest in Australia raises a serious concern for the commercial production of papaya, as it lacks its usual natural predators in this region.

Papaya mealybug has a wide host range, recorded in 25 plant families including hibiscus, avocado, citrus, cotton, tomato, eggplants, beans, peas, sweet potato, mango, cherry, and pomegranates.

Papaya plants face severe infestations primarily on the veins of older leaves and all parts of young leaves and fruit. The honeydew excretion leads to the development of sooty mold, covering leaves, stems, and fruit. In extreme cases, heavy infestations can result in the death of papaya trees within a few months.

A non-commerical papaya plant infected with a papaya mealybug in Darwin

IDENTIFY TROPICAL PESTS WITH PHA'S UTE GUIDE

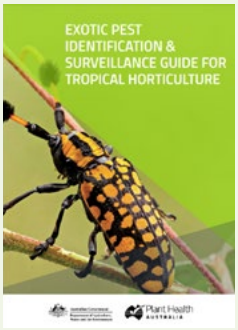
The risk of exotic pests and diseases entering and establishing in Australia is greater than ever with increased worldwide travel and trade, the geographical spread of pests, and the intensification of agricultural production.

The presence of several high priority exotic pests in countries in close proximity to papaya growing regions in northern Australia also increases the risk through spread by natural and assisted pathways.

This initiative is part of the Australian Government's *Agricultural Competitiveness White Paper,* the government's plan for stronger farmers and a stronger economy.

Dr Lucy Tran-Nguyen, PHA's General Manager: Partnerships and Innovation and project lead, said Northern Australia has a diverse range of plants, a sparse population, an extensive coastline and isolated growing regions. It's also close to neighbouring countries with high exotic pest populations. These combine to create specific biosecurity challenges.

To help improve biosecurity surveillance for tropical industries, Plant Health Australia (PHA), the national coordinator of the government-industry partnership for plant biosecurity in Australia, developed the *Exotic Pest Identification and Surveillance Guide for Tropical Horticulture.*



"The Exotic Pest Guide, funded by the Australian Government, also known as the 'Tropical Ute Guide', has been designed to fit in a ute's glovebox for easy identification on the go," said Dr Tran-Nguyen.

"Inspecting crops for signs of new pests is one way to protect Australia's plant industries from exotic pests, as early detection and reporting improves the chances of successfully containing or eradicating new pests.

"Papaya is one of the crops specifically covered, in addition to avocados, bananas, citrus, lychees, mangoes, melons, passionfruit, pineapples and tropical vegetables."

The guide is divided into two sections:

1. **The biosecurity and surveillance** section describes key aspects of on-farm biosecurity, how to undertake pest surveillance in the field and packing sheds, handling pest samples and reporting unusual finds.

   In case something unusual is spotted, there is information about what to do with samples of insect pests and diseased plant material, and how to report the find.
2. **The identification of key exotic pests** section provides information on the high priority exotic pests for several of the horticultural crops grown in northern Australia. The guide has been developed to increase awareness of these pests and provide information on what to do if a suspected pest is found, and the pest identification pages provide images of the pest or disease symptoms.

PHA also developed a *Biosecurity Plan for the Papaya Industry* to provide a mechanism for industry, government and other relevant stakeholders to assess current biosecurity practices and future biosecurity needs.

The document outlines key threats to the industry, risk mitigation plans, identification and categorisation of exotic pests and contingency plans. For a copy, please contact PHA on 02 6215 7700 or email ***biosecurity@phau.com.au***.

Visit the PHA website ***https://www.planthealthaustralia.com.au/industries/papaya/*** for more industry related biosecurity information and to download a copy of the *Exotic Pest Identification and Surveillance Guide for Pests of Tropical Horticulture* (***https://www.planthealthaustralia.com.au/biosecurity/surveillance/exotic-pest-identification-and-surveillance-guide-for-tropical-horticulture/***).

For the latest plant biosecurity news, ***subscribe*** to Tendrils and follow us on ***Facebook***, ***X (Twitter)***, ***LinkedIn***, and ***Instagram*** for the latest in plant biosecurity news.


Papaya mealybug infestation on fruit (Credit: Northern Territory Government)

In Darwin, the parasitic wasp (*Acerophagus papaya*) was discovered alongside some of these infestations. This parasitoid has been intentionally introduced into multiple countries dealing with papaya mealybug issues and has shown effectiveness in controlling the pest.

If you suspect papaya mealybug on your property report it to **Biosecurity Queensland** on **13 25 23 or** contact the **Exotic Plant Pest Hotline** on **1800 084 881**.

For more information on the pest, head to: ***https://ausveg.com.au/app/uploads/2022/07/Papayamealybug_FactSheet.pdf***

BIOSECURITY VEHICLE KIT

Movement between orchards, nurseries and other agricultural regions can quickly spread pests on clothing, footwear, and equipment. Skin and even hair can carry fungal spores or bacteria between properties.

Introducing a disease like Papaya Ringspot Virus *Potyvirus Strain P*, could cause devastating losses to the Australian papaya industry and farmers.

One of the easiest ways to protect your property and the papaya industry from pests and diseases is to use a biosecurity vehicle kit. The kit lets you clean down and implement hygiene measures while on the go.

A biosecurity vehicle kit should be carried and used by anyone working on-farm, such as agronomists, extension officers, farm staff, and seasonal workers and contractors.

The contents of a biosecurity kit can vary from farm to farm. Kits provide provisions to protect clothing against contamination and keep footwear and small equipment free of pests and pathogens.

The essential items should include products to clean hands, shoes, small equipment such as soil moisture probes, and vehicle interiors.

ESSENTIAL ITEMS INCLUDE:

- hard brush and pan to clean out the floor of the vehicle and to remove any soil from the foot pedals and shoes, clothes, equipment and vehicle tyres
- disposable gloves
- handwash or hand sanitiser
- spray bottle containing cleaning agents such as a detergent, BioCleanse, dilute bleach solution, or 70% methylated spirits in 30% water

Biosecurity vehicle kit

- paper towel
- hessian bag/mat
- plastic bags for holding dirty clothes, shoes or equipment
- plastic tub with lid or old esky (to carry items listed above and to use as a foot bath).

Factsheets on high-priority exotic pests for papaya can also be included as a ready reference – these are available on Plant Health Australia's (PHA) website here: ***https://www.planthealthaustralia.com.au/industries/papaya/***

The kit should include contact details for state agriculture departments to report suspected exotic pests and diseases. Smartphones have access to a camera, notetaking and GPS capabilities to take photos of suspect signs and pests and mark the location, with the information recorded being easily shared.

Visit the Farm Biosecurity website (***https://www.planthealthaustralia.com.au/national-programs/farm-biosecurity-program/***) for more information on securing your farm against pests and diseases. If you spot anything unusual, call the **Exotic Plant Pest Hotline** on **1800 084 881**.

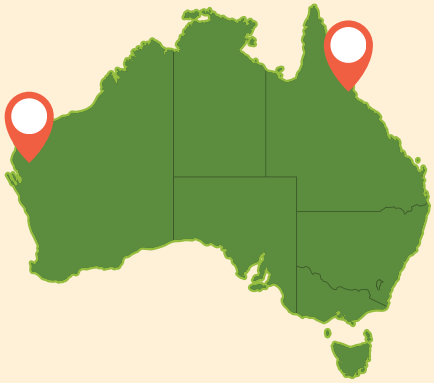
REGIONAL ROUND-UP

What's happening in the regions?

CARNARVON, WESTERN AUSTRALIA – CARNARVON GROWERS ASSOCIATION

Papaya planting is robust, indicating a promising year ahead with an anticipated bountiful harvest in the coming three months.

While the plantation is well-maintained, the upcoming harsh summer conditions, marked by high temperatures and dry winds, may affect papaya tree growth and appearance.



SOUTH JOHNSTONE, QUEENSLAND – BOOLABAH FARMS

As the year progresses, we have not yet found a chance to dry out. The prolonged wet season showers combined with periods of sunny weather, has allowed for a great start to the newly planted blocks.

Despite what we have been finding in the rain gauge, post-harvest disease pressure has been minimal, and morale has been high. Fruit supply has been steady coming out of what was a relatively mild winter.

Spider mite continues to rear its head but has been mostly under control. Using a combination of preventative and curative methods as needed seems to be working so far.

LEVY FUNDED PROJECT UPDATES

BREEDING PROGRAM

Semi-commercial trials of advanced red and yellow papaya breeding lines plus F1 red papaya hybrids are now underway on several farms in the Coastal and Tablelands regions of Tropical North Queensland.

The trials are part of the *National Papaya Breeding and Evaluation Program (PP18000)*, led by Griffith University and funded through the Hort Innovation Papaya Fund.

The key desirable agronomic and productivity traits of breeding lines, including three reds (Sunlight 1 and Sunlight 2 and Sunlight 3), two yellows (Moonlight 1 and Moonlight 2) of novel ten (10), and F1 red papaya hybrids (RH1 to RH10), are under assessment.

Project lead, papaya breeder and Research Fellow from Griffith University, Dr Fawad Ali, said the three new red papaya lines are to be named 'Sunlight 1' and 'Sunlight 2' for the Coastal region and 'Sunlight 3' for the Tablelands region, all with significant trait genetic gains over the current standard red commercial variety 'RB1'.

"Sunlight 1 and Sunlight 2 that were bred for the coast set fruit -16% to -19% lower to the ground, with a 15% to 20% thicker trunk circumference and more marketable fruit (30% to 35%) than 'RB1' on the coastal region," Dr Ali said.

"Sunlight 3 was bred for the Tablelands and also set fruit lower to the ground (-36%) with a thicker trunk circumference (28%) and more marketable fruit (31%) than 'RB1'.

"F1 red papaya hybrids RH9 and RH10 set fruit (-11% to -45%) lower to the ground, also with increased thicker trunk circumferences (10% to 39%), and more marketable fruit (31% to 60%) than 'RB1'.

"The two yellow papaya elite genotypes, Moonlight 1 and Moonlight 2, set fruit lower to the ground (-29% to -52%) with a 12% to 30% thicker trunk, producing more marketable fruit (20% to 31%) than '1B'."

Phylogenetic analysis demonstrated genetic relatedness among the parental advanced breeding lines and F1 hybrid material. Two main clades were observed that separated genotypes into red and yellow genetic backgrounds.

The semi-commercial trial site at the Tablelands (Rocky Top Farms) [(Left; Papaya Breeder and Geneticist Dr Fawad Ali, Research Fellow at Griffith University and (Right; Director & CEO, Mr Chris Maisel-Rocky Top Farms)]

The semi-commercial trial site at the Coast (Jo Zappala Farms)

The diversity created among the F1 hybrids and relationships to parental germplasm was also observed. The heterozygosity (Ho) of the F1 red papaya hybrids (0.15 to 0.32) was often higher than their parents (0.01 to 0.09), showing the significant considerable effect of heterosis breeding.

Fruit harvesting from the semi-commercial trials has started and is expected to be completed by November 2023 and will be used for seed bulking.

Stay tuned for the exciting results from these trials, further indicating trait gain stability and a call for commercialisation partnership via tender with Griffith University and Hort Innovation.

For more information on the *National Papaya Breeding and Evaluation Program (PP18000)*, please get in touch with Professor Rebecca Ford at: ***rebecca.ford@griffith.edu.au***.

The 'National Papaya Breeding and Evaluation Program' (PP18000) project is funded by Hort Innovation using papaya industry levies and funds from the Australian Government.

NEW PRODUCE PULSE REPORT: AT A GLANCE

Hort Innovation has recently released a new Produce Pulse Report, highlighting the key learnings and consumer insights from the last 12 months.

The Produce Pulse Report stands as a vital source of foundational data, focusing on two of the most interesting aspects of demand: usage and perception. It's not just about what we eat, it's about how we feel about what we eat.

Key papaya insights from the report include:

- 51% of papaya buyers were very satisfied with the papaya they bought. Only 12% of Australian households bought papaya over the 12 months to March 2023 (***https://www.harvesttohome.net.au/fruitmushroomnuts/latest-highlights/papaya-papaw***)
- 24% of Australians think papaya is easy to cook and enjoy
- 13% of Australian fruit and vegetable buyers describe papaya as fruit they love to eat
- 26% link papaya with Australia
- 79% of Papaya buyers think the papaya they bought was worth what they paid.

Curious to learn more? Access the full report, at: ***https://www.horticulture.com.au/growers/help-your-business-grow/research-reports-publications-fact-sheets-and-more/mt21202/***

This project is funded by Hort Innovation using multi-industry strategic levies and contributions from the Australian Government.

PAPAYA PEST AND DISEASE WORKSHOP HELD IN INNISFAIL

The Papaya Pest and Disease Workshop was held on Thursday, 19 October 2023, as part of the *'Papaya Industry Extension and Communications Project' (PP20000).*

The goal was to bring together growers, stakeholders, and chemical company representatives, in order to help growers make informed decisions about chemical sprays and raise awareness about sustainable pest and disease management initiatives.

The Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries (DAF) project team hosted a workshop at the South Johnstone Research Facility, attended by 37 growers and agronomists. Representatives from Bayer, Corteva, Syngenta, and Sumitomo shared information about chemical options available for papaya growers, and how they can get the most out of their products through registrations and permits. Nufarm and UPL also delivered similar presentations on behalf of their companies.

Afterwards, DAF personnel and Natural Solutions, a company supplying predatory insects, gave presentations. They discussed ongoing levy funded projects in various horticultural crops and presented options for growers interested in using beneficial insects as a tool to control pests.

Emily Pattison, DAF Horticulturalist and project coordinator, said some very interesting information came from the talks.

"There was a consistent message from the chemical company reps about being mindful of the amount of chemical going on at a per hectare level," Emily said.

"A lot of the work was based on 1000L/ha of spray volume, which is much higher than what the average papaya grower uses. In some cases, the permit states that 1000L/ha must be used, but if a grower is only using 500L/ha, then only half the amount of active ingredient is going out as compared to what was intended.

"There was also a lot of interest in some of the Integrated Pest Management (IPM) work which was presented, particularly for fruit spotting bug and mites. While a lot of this is currently being done in other crops, the interest that was gauged by this event hopefully means we will be able to expand this work into papaya soon."

The feedback received after the workshop was excellent. Growers gave it a rating of 8.9 out of 10, indicating that it was highly worthwhile. Additionally, 100% of the participants stated that they learned something new during the event.

Attendees at the Papaya Pest and Disease Workshop held in Innisfail (Credit: Northern Territory Government)

This event was run as part of the 'Papaya Industry Extension and Communications Project' (PP20000) which is funded by Hort Innovation, using papaya levy funds, co-investment from the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries and contributions from the Australian Government.

2023 Annual papaya communications and extension survey

WE WANT TO HEAR YOUR FEEDBACK!

Influence the future of levy extension and communications activities by filling out a short online survey developed through the *Papaya Industry Extension and Communications Program (PP20000).*

Your anonymous and confidential feedback will help inform priority topics and activities covered under the program.

It only takes a few minutes. Fill the survey out here: ***https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/QY9QJ6X***

The 'Papaya industry extension and communications program' (PP20000) project is funded by Hort Innovation using papaya industry levies and funds from the Australian Government.

New papaya production figures available

Papaya Australia has released the fourth set of production figures from North Queensland's main papaya growing areas under the *'Papaya market supply data capture and analysis'* (PP20003) project.

From July 2022 to October 2023, the total number of papaya and paw paw consignment pallets sent from North Queensland was 33,408, with 28,548 (85%) of these being of the red variety and 4,860 (15%) yellow. Most pallets were sent across Queensland (15,978), followed by New South Wales (10,785), Victoria (5,782), and South Australia (863).

The aim of this project is to assist papaya growers in making better production and marketing decisions during the growing season as well as in the long run.

Production figures are tallied to give a production overview of the tablelands and coastal areas. To obtain the data, transport companies report the total pallets sent to the main eastern seaboard markets, estimating the weekly production volume in tonnes, with the assumption that pallet weight represents approximately 800kg of fruit.

The 'Papaya market supply data capture and analysis' (PP20003) project is funded by Hort Innovation using papaya industry levies and funds from the Australian Government.

PAPAYA/PAW PAW CONSIGNMENTS – PALLETS SENT FROM NORTH QUEENSLAND
PERIOD: JULY 2022 TO OCTOBER 2023

	Red Coast	Red Tablelands	REDS TOTAL	Yellow Coast	Yellow Tablelands	YELLOWS TOTAL	OVERALL TOTAL
QLD	2369	10529	**12898**	1223	1857	**3080**	**15978**
NSW	4608	4585	**9193**	744	848	**1592**	**10785**
VIC	3758	1839	**5597**	57	128	**185**	**5782**
SA	16	844	**860**	3	0	**3**	**863**
TOTALS	**10751**	**17797**	**28548**	**2027**	**2833**	**4860**	**33408**

HORT INNOVATION UPDATES

Social media and marketing update

Papaya's time to shine

Papaya took centre stage at a special event held in Sydney, bringing together food and health influencers, along with media professionals and industry representatives, to highlight the fruit's nutritional benefits and versatile uses.

Hort Innovation, in collaboration with Bite Communications, hosted the event at the well-known Potts Point venue, The Butler. During the event, registered dietitian Caitlin Reid led a discussion on the most recent papaya nutrition research report.

Caitlin highlighted papaya's myriad nutritional properties – from immunity and mood boosting to gut and eye health and glowing skin.

"Papaya is available all year round and is packed with essential nutrients which can be enjoyed in both savoury and sweet dishes," said Caitlin.

"Spicy papaya seeds are nutrient rich and can be added fresh to salads or dried and ground just like peppercorns."

Media and influencers were given an insight into production of the delicious fruit by growers Mark and Paige MacLaughlin of Skybury Farms in Queensland.

Dietitian Caitlin Reid led a discussion around the latest papaya nutrition research report.

Mark spoke to how papaya is grown, its delicious and unique taste and the many ways papaya can be enjoyed.

At the event, 30 people enjoyed a delicious and healthy breakfast featuring various papaya-inspired dishes, such as papaya and banana smoothies, bircher granola cups with coconut yoghurt and papaya, guacamole on sourdough with papaya and mint salsa, and bagels with papaya toppings.

This event, funded by the papaya marketing levy, sparked real interest in the fruit, led to many questions, and opened new opportunities to promote awareness of papaya and its many benefits and uses.

The facts that matter

For the average Australian, a 150 gram serve of papaya provides all their daily vitamin C needs, almost a third of their vitamin A needs and more than a quarter of folate needs.

Those essential facts and more are contained in the *Australian Papaya – 2023 Nutrition Report* that was published recently.

Authored by dietician Caitlin Reid, the papaya marketing levy-funded report highlights 11 reasons why we should all eat papaya, from improved heart health and reduced risk of coronary heart disease, to how its combination of antioxidants can help fight inflammation in the body and supporting immune health.

Find out more in the report, available at: ***https://australianpapaya.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/Papaya_Health_Report_Digital.pdf***

These marketing activities have been funded by Hort Innovation through the papaya marketing levy.

Media and influencers were given an insight into production of papaya by growers Mark and Paige MacLaughlin of Skybury Farms in Queensland.

Papaya Fund Annual Report now available

Hort Innovation has released its 2022/23 Annual Report and accompanying 2022/23 Fund Annual Report for the 37 horticulture industries it looks after.

This report provides a snapshot of the activities and achievements that drove value and outcomes for the nation's horticulture sector during 2022/23.

Top-level data from the Papaya Fund Annual Report shows that:

- $173,976 invested in R&D
- $115,488 invested in marketing
- $375,819 in levies were collected by the Government and passed on to Hort Innovation for investment.

Head to ***www.horticulture.com.au/annual-report-portal*** to download the report and take a closer look at what has been achieved for the horticulture sector over the past year.