Papaya AUSTRALIA

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Two crops, one block:

Intercropping Papaya

After Tropical Cyclone Jasper and the wet season that followed wreaked havoc through Far North Queensland in 23/24, it forced some hard farm decisions.

For Joe and Monique Moreno of Paradise Orchards near Mareeba, their 35-year-old avocado block had to go. Replanting would mean a four-year wait for income. "That just wasn't an option," Monique said. "We were staring at a massive cashflow gap", she added. After back-to-back tough seasons, the couple knew they needed something different. Intercropping papaya wasn't simply about adding another crop, it was about building resilience.

Joe and Monique Moreno with their young orchard in December 2025. Mango planted on 9m spacing from existing avocado block with papaya planted either side.

IN THIS ISSUE

Paradise Orchards is a mixed avocado, mango and now papaya operation. At the time of writing, nerves and excitement are building as the team prepares for their first papaya harvest.

"My father-in-law had grown papaya here about 25 years ago, so we had some experience," Joe said. "We even had old picking trailers lying around ready to go, it was a no-brainer really. Quick turnaround from seed to harvest, it fits our system, and we could potentially double production off the same piece of land. We thought we'd give it a crack", he added.

> *"The mangoes seem to be loving the papaya program so far."*

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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!

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From the Chair

GERARD KATH

Welcome to another edition of the Papaya Press.

It has been encouraging to hear of the generally good comments regarding the last 3-4 editions. The general layout and content, particularly the grower profiles, are great. Thanks and congratulations to the team putting this together - Sherri, Ebony, Emily, David, Andrea and many others.

We are now well in the depth of an above average wet season. Production has been very challenging, maintaining fruit quality with the wet impacting, yield, flavour, fruit breakdown, tree losses, erosion, machine operations and working conditions.

I would suggest it is so far an above average wet in rainfall and in particular, a high number of rain days (lack of clear sunny days). So far there has been no major district wipeout so while production and fruit volumes have been affected lately, hopefully there should still be reasonable quantities coming for the remainder of the year. Best of luck until the end of March with the weather.

Industry Breeding Project

In disappointing news, the semi-commercial trial on the best lines produced from the breeding program will not proceed. The seed provided from the program was not viable. Three germination attempts were undertaken in November 2025, December 2025 and again in January 2026 (see photo). The last attempt included a procedure similar to embryo rescue, whereby the seed shell is manually opened to help the embryo germinate with nil effect.

The previous breeding project led by Griffith University started some 12-15 years ago and has experienced multiple staff changes over this time.

The main theme of the project was to source papaya genetics from all over the world then plant and evaluate these in North Queensland with the aim of introducing genetic characteristics that would improve the base lines that the industry was and still is using.

In this time, new inbred parent lines (6-7 generations) were produced with the aim of producing stable hybrids like how RB1 and 1B are being produced today. Unfortunately, these parent lines are dead, and no seed can be produced for trialling.

How does this happen? A few points to make:

1. Timeliness. It took well over 1½ years for Griffith University and HIA to sign off on the final report so that Papaya Australia could get started on planting the semi-commercial trials. Papaya Australia was continually following up but neither Papaya Australia or the SIAP have any standing in resolving any outstanding issues. It is still not clear what took so long, meanwhile the seed has a shelf life which expired during this time.

7 lines planted. 2 lines show good germination (these lines are Solo & Paris from Papaya Seeds)
5 line show nothing (seeds from Griffith Uni)

2. Accountability. Normally, if a project is not completed as agreed, then payments are withheld until it is. HIA needs to improve its review and approval process in this regard. Surely, we should be focused on R&D and marketing outcomes and deliverables, rather than the reporting. The breeding program went for some 12-15 years with a total investment (including in-kind contributions) of $2 M-$2.5 M with nothing to show for it.

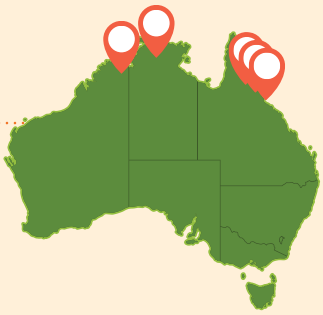
3. Industry Benefit and Adoption. Seed does have a shelf life. Papaya Seed Australia is in the process of doing a genetic variation trial. We had some seed approximately 9 years old which we were able to germinate to compare genetic variation with today's seed – this is a story for another time. My point here is that seed deteriorates over time, however, to have no viable seed from the breeding program within 2 years of the program ending is not acceptable. Industry deserves an explanation.

4. Outcome Focussed. All projects and investments need to be outcome driven. One option would be to change the SIAP's responsibilities. If a SIAP gets to recommend an investment, then they should also get to provide oversight and sign off on milestone achievements and final reports prior to payment. Currently, the SIAP only make recommendations to HIA for investments. I believe the investment managers in HIA need greater input from industry, either via the SIAP or the Project Reference Group (PRG) to be able to accurately gauge investment performance.

I hope some good will come out of this sad and sorry saga.

Best regards,
Gerard Kath
Chairman, Papaya Australia

REGIONAL ROUND-UP



GERARD KATH, TABLELANDS REGION, FAR NORTH QUEENSLAND

Tableland plantations are struggling with an above average wet this season. (1140ml as at 10th March 2026) Trees are down in production and fruit size is down. Tree losses are steady but likely to increase over time. Fruit rots, being anthracnose and phytophthora, are there to some degree when constant rainfall occurs for extended periods. Some erosion and machine bogging has occurred.

There are no major plantation wipeouts, just an increasing percentage of the problems listed above.

Fruit spotting bugs and spider mite control seem to be an increasing problem in the area. Chemical applications are increasing to try and counteract.

Plantings are continuing across all regions of the Tablelands in line with the last two years.

CHRIS AND DIANE ROBINSON – KUNUNARRA, WESTERN AUSTRALIA,

Volumes have generally been down over most of the wet season – especially since Christmas and prices correspondingly have been significantly higher. It's not a bad thing for us because it means you avoid a bit of the insect problems and wet season rot problems. But that also means that the prices are really high and you're sorry you're not putting more fruit out.

Quality has been pretty good – we've got a bit of fruit piercing moth damage in the last three or four weeks and a few wet season rots, but we haven't had any major storms of any concern. Everything has been cruising along quietly.

The rainfall has been a bit variable – some parts of the valley have had significant rain and out where we are, we're a bit too dry. We're watering at the moment. It's very storm-type weather and they fluctuate and vary a bit.

I haven't heard of anyone having major issues with things being too wet. I'm hopeful that we'll get another month of wet weather.

We haven't yet had any papaya mealy bug in the valley, but that's probably the next issue that we'd expect. Cockatoos are causing significant problems on one property, and we have just got out of our magpie goose problem – up until Christmas time we had fairly significant problems with them, but they've now gone off to Kakadu.

MATT PHEENEY, COOLALINGA NORTHERN TERRITORY REGION

It's been very wet - we've probably had 2 metres of rain in the last 4 months. It's just one of those years where rainfall is above average. It hasn't stopped raining since early November really, there's been a couple of patches here and there, but overall it's been a really wet, wet season.

The fruit it (holding up) alright, but we're starting to lose trees now. The roots have all rotted out in the last week or two and we've noticed more going down – 30 per cent in one area and 10 per cent over some of the other areas. But unfortunately, we can't control that.

In saying that we've got reasonable fruit now – I'm happy with it. We're out of a small low production period, we're back into normal production at the moment. We've still got mealy bugs – they have improved but they are still here. We just do what we can.

BRENT WILSON - TULLY REGION

Since December, weather conditions have presented significant challenges for papaya production. Monthly rainfall consistently exceeded 400mm, resulting in prolonged periods of saturated soils and very few dry days suitable for carrying out essential field operations. These conditions created an environment highly conducive to foliar fungal diseases. Despite this, disease incidence remained relatively stable, indicating that the management strategies in place were largely effective, even under adverse conditions.

The combination of hot, humid weather followed by sudden rainfall events contributed to fluctuations in fruit surface temperatures. Because papaya has inherently low thermotolerance, these rapid temperature changes can adversely affect fruit epidermal integrity, occasionally leading to minor quality issues. Nevertheless, fruit Brix levels consistently met market requirements, reflecting that internal fruit quality remained strong despite external stress factors.

Importantly, no significant fruit or flower drop was observed during this time, demonstrating the crop's resilience in the face of persistent environmental stress.

Pest pressure throughout this period remained generally below economic thresholds, requiring only minimal insecticide intervention.

Overall, despite the persistent high rainfall, limited field access, and temperature-related fruit stress, papaya production remained stable, with disease and pest pressure largely contained.

JOSH OLDANO - INNISFAIL REGION

Wet weather and the heat are testing conditions, but we've had a lot of nice fruit. Plenty of it. We've had some nice plant come through with some good numbers, and it's good to see the price finally turn its head up a bit.

The wet weather we are having is pretty much typical for this time of year, but its very sporadic. Where it hits you get plenty of it, and where it doesn't it's dry. We've lost the odd tree here and there, but nothing major at all. My only complaint would be the fruit bats – they're doing some damage as usual.

But it's business as usual for us and all looking positive for the start of 2026. It's on our radar that there's a lot of fruit around, so we're just riding out this period of weather out and see what Autum brings for us. Once we're out of March I'll be happy, bit of dry weather hopefully.

Biological best chance – Papaya Mealybug control

Living inside a live bug, developing, pupating, then eating its way out! This isn't a scene from the movie "Alien" but is happening in papaya orchards around the world, helping to control papaya mealybug.

Tough, waxy and generating large populations, papaya mealybug (Paracoccus marginatus) can be hard to control using conventional methods. Unlike many other insects, papaya mealybugs waxy outer covering makes insecticide penetration difficult. It's ability for rapid generational turnover also creates a real risk of chemical tolerance or resistance. To avoid these issues, an Integrated Pest Management approach including biological control agents has been proven globally as the best option to manage papaya mealybug.

Just like Australia, many papaya growing countries have had to face papaya mealybug. Places like Kenya, Sri Lanka and East Timor along with many others have integrated the specialist parasitoid wasp, Acerophagus papayae, into their papaya growing systems. Acerophagus papayae is a wasp, smaller than a grain of rice which lays its eggs into the papaya mealybug. The larvae eat the mealybug from the inside, causing it to mummify. The larvae then pupates into a wasp, eating its way out and repeating its life cycle at twice the speed of the papaya mealybug. To date, confirmation of Acerophagus papayae has only occurred in the Northern Territory. Wasps within the genus of Acerophagus have been detected in Townsville, however the confirmation of the species as Acerophagus papayae is still ongoing.

"We have already seen great biological control from parasitic wasps, Cryptolaemus lady beetles and lacewings in Townsville," said DPI entomologist Bruno Rocha Tamelini. Being able to identify Acerophagus papayae, separating it from other wasps species and the possibility of hyperparasitoids, (a parasitic insect which feed on other parasitoids), is important to ensure that this specialist parasitoid wasp of papaya mealybug can be effectively used as a management tool.

Continuing work by the PP23003 project team to identify Acerophagus papayae in Queensland, as well as the development of resources and methods to support its integration into papaya production systems is ongoing.

For more information contact David Bin, DPI Mareeba, david.bin@dpi.qld.gov.au

QDPI entomologist Bruno Rocha Tamelini at Townsville, collecting wasp samples in frangipani, a host of the mealybug.

(Continued from page 1)

Two crops, one block: Intercropping Papaya

Being mango farmers, mango was the logical choice. “Being an old avo block we know the phytophthora load is high, but you can’t kill a mango,” Joe laughed. “We ground the stumps down, planted mango between them and papaya on either side. We drilled the 16,000 holes by hand because of the old roots, but it meant we could use the existing mainlines. We’re monitoring soil health and phytophthora closely with our agronomist.” Planting in three stages proved valuable, particularly for lessons in weed control.

“By the last planting I went fully mulched. In hindsight I realised how important the timing of planting is for weeds too”, he added.

Pest pressure hasn’t significantly changed. “Fruit spotting bug is our main issue,” Joe said. “But I don’t think papaya has made it worse”, he added. Inputs have increased but so has output potential. “We are using more water and nutrition than a straight mango block, but we’re farming the land to twice its potential. The mangoes seem to be loving the papaya program so far”, he added.

For Monique, intercropping is also about workforce stability. “Papaya is hands-on. It needs more management,” she said. “But once we start harvesting, the goal is steady, year-round employment for a core team across all crops”, she said.

With the first harvest approaching, the couple remain realistic. “I’ll have to see how the numbers stack up to decide if we’d do it again,” Monique said.

Clear difference in weed suppression in un-mulched v mulched blocks.

For Joe, success isn’t just about yield. “Of course it must pay, but for me, it’s about getting good market feedback. We’re not about being the biggest, we want to be reliable and produce quality fruit”, he said.

Both Joe and Monique made it clear that trying something new isn’t something you tackle alone. “You need a good team around you,” Monique said. “Agronomists, finance support, QRIDA, DPI, FNQ Growers, Papaya Australia; there are great resources out there that we are grateful for, but growers don’t always tap into them”.

Joe’s advice for others considering intercropping - “Just have a go,” he said. “Do your research. Expect to make mistakes. And don’t be afraid to ask for help”. This mango and papaya system is the first of its kind in Australia and we look forward to watching it develop.

Mature papaya ready for harvest surrounding the growing mango.

Mark MacLaughlin with a 12-month-old block of papaya & coffee.

A short drive away at Skybury, intercropping of papaya and coffee has been refined for over 15 years. “Dad went to Brazil, saw double cropping working there and thought, if we’re already growing both, why aren’t we growing them together?”, Farm Manager Mark MacLaughlin said.

What began as a trial is now central to the business. “With papaya, we’re constantly in the blocks,” Mark said. “High input, high traffic, fast turnover. Coffee is the opposite — slower to establish, loves shade, lower input, longer term. We’ve made a system that accommodates both”.

Cashflow sparked the idea, but other benefits followed. After 15 years of intercropping, for Skybury the biggest wins are:

- Labour efficiency of inputs – herbicide, fertiliser and land prep passes service the two crops at once
- Ability to expand production without buying more land
- Improving rates of coffee establishment

In the Skybury system, papaya is planted first, followed soon after by coffee. “If you wait too long, the papaya roots dominate the mound and the coffee will struggle,” Mark explained. Coffee thrives under the papaya canopy. “Normally coffee takes three to five years to first harvest, but under papaya shade, we can be harvesting by year three, which allows us to get a papaya crop in the meantime”.

Papaya planted every 2.2m with two coffee plants for every papaya tree.

Mature coffee block approaching harvest, previously intercropped with papaya.

“Papaya drives the management program, and coffee responds well to it”, he said. Weeds remain a challenge early on. “Shade is the most effective weed control you can get,” he said. “Once the coffee canopy closes, understory pressure drops dramatically. It’s that early phase that’s toughest, when the plants are so fragile”. Intercropping hasn’t impacted pest and disease pressure. “Unfortunately, there’s no silver bullet, but we manage,” Mark said.

Managing logistics on a large farm adds another layer of complexity. “Our coffee harvest runs for about three weeks in winter,” Mark said. “If that clashed with peak summer papaya harvest, it just wouldn’t work”.

Intercropping has had its challenges, but years of experience and trial-and-error have shaped how decisions are made today. “Everything sounds good on paper,” Mark said. “But when you’re counting cents per box over large production, it has to stack up. The biggest surprise for me is how the two crops interact. If papaya performs poorly, the coffee will too,” he said. “High papaya mortality increases weed pressure and impacts coffee survival. We’ve forfeited whole blocks when the papaya performance didn’t justify keeping them”.

So, has it paid off? “Yes,” Mark said. “But not every block, every year.” They don’t intercrop the entire farm. “You need to balance land turnover so coffee can mature. But where we can, we do. When it works, it really works. You just have to nail the timing”.

Both businesses agree intercropping isn’t a shortcut, but a management strategy best suited to growers with strong systems and compatible timing. It won’t fit every farm, but for those willing to adapt, it could be worth considering.

With thanks to Skybury and Paradise Orchards for their insights.

Story by
Ebony Faichney Farmour

Farmour

Progress on predicting sensory preferences

JOSHUA LOMAX

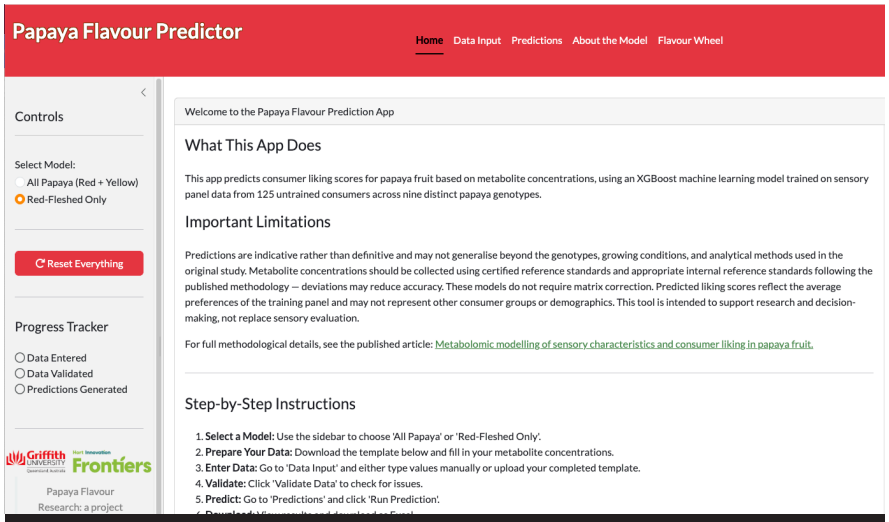
The Genetics of fruit sensory preferences project (AS19003), funded through the HortFrontiers fund, has delivered results to better understand consumer perception of papaya and pawpaw. Four years of papaya taste testing combined with fruit chemical analysis has yielded new ways to measure fruit flavour using instrumental methods. Now, the researchers at Griffith university are expanding on this new understanding of fruit flavour to investigate practical applications and genetic markers related to fruit quality.

Joshua Lomax has spent the last few years working on multiple research questions surrounding papaya fruit flavour and has submitted his thesis marking the end of his PhD journey. He shared that flavour compounds like Sulcatone (pear notes), Linalool oxide (lavender notes), and Gamma octalactone (coconut notes) in combination with sugars can be used to predict consumer liking in papaya and pawpaw. Josh aimed to use imaging technology to estimate the concentration of these compounds in the fruit. This non-destructive technology is already being used for screening applications in grapes to detect bortrytis, strawberries to predict shelf-life, and sugar concentration in kiwifruit. The main hurdle for this technology is to sift through subtle signals in the data to find strong predictors for the target fruit quality trait. We developed a reliable way to do this and successfully predicted sugars and a bitter-related compound with high accuracy. Further optimisation of our work could see imaging devices become a common approach to estimate fruit quality for papaya and pawpaw.

On the road to developing genetic markers for fruit quality, we are using a couple of different approaches. We successfully identified genes that were active in the post-harvest fruit which were key indicators of different flavour-related compounds. Interestingly, the fruit that we investigated were subject to cooler August temperatures on the tablelands and had lower concentrations of flavour compounds. Our results highlighted some of the cold-related stress response mechanisms in the fruit that likely limit the production of flavour compounds.

Leela Manoharan, a new PhD candidate at Griffith University, will take this research to the next step by incorporating a wealth of knowledge already generated by this project into a field study at the Walkamin Research Facility. Genetic indicators for various agronomic traits are being investigated using new genomic resources for papaya generated by Prof. Rajeev Varshney's team at Murdoch University, through the Hort Innovation funded project "Building an advanced genomics platform for Australian horticulture (AS21006)". Together, these approaches — from imaging technology and gene expression to field studies and genomic resources — are building an integrated pathway toward selecting future papaya varieties that deliver consistently better flavour to consumers.

To facilitate the inclusion of fruit flavour throughout this process, we have developed an online calculator that uses chemical concentrations to predict fruit liking scores. Which is now available at https://shinotate.pp18000.cloud.edu.au/shiny/PapayaFlavourCalculator/



Home page of Griffith developed "Papaya Flavour Predictor" calculator.

Griffith AS19003 fruit sensory team, Dr Ido Bar, PhD candidate Joshua Lomax & PhD candidate Leela Manoharan.

PhD candidate Leela Manoharan beginning work on next steps in papaya fruit flavours.

Spray Decision Guide

Comprehensive list of **in-field** pesticides and fungicides available to the papaya industry for pest and disease control. **Current as of February 2026**. This list is designed as a guide to help inform spray decisions by presenting a full list of options and is not to be solely relied on. Always read the label and/or permit before making a spray decision and follow label directions.

Active	Tradename (s)	Status	Target Pest/Disease	Notes
Abamectin	Sorcerer	Registered	Two-spotted mite	WHP = 7 days
Acetamapirid & Pyriproxyfen	Trivor	Permitted (PER89943)	Fruit-spotting bug Queensland fruit fly Mediterranean fruit fly Scale insects Mealybugs Leafhoppers Plant hoppers	WHP = 28 days Permit expires 30-Sep-2027 https://permits.apvma.gov.au/PER89943.PDF
***Bacillus amyloliquefaciens* strain QST713**	Serenade Opti	Registered	Antrachnose Stem end rot	WHP = N/A
***Bacillus amyloliquefaciens* strain QST713**	Serenade Prime	Registered	Antrachnose Stem end rot	WHP = N/A
Beta-Cyfluthrin	Bulldock	Permitted (PER13671)	Fruit-spotting bug	WHP = 3 days Permit expires 30-Nov-2027 https://permits.apvma.gov.au/PER13671.PDF
Bifenazate	Acramite	Registered	Two-spotted mite	WHP = 7 days
Chlorothalonil	Bravo/Barrack/Conan	Permitted (PER12592)	Black spot Brown spot	WHP = 3 days Permit expires 31-Jan-2030 https://permits.apvma.gov.au/PER12592.PDF
Copper (Cupric) Hydroxide	Champ/Kocide/Vitra	Permitted (PER14417)	Papaya fruit rot	WHP = 1 day Permit expires 30-Sep-2029 https://permits.apvma.gov.au/PER14417.PDF
Difenoconazole	Score/Bogard	Permitted (PER12592)	Black spot	WHP = 3 days Permit expires 31-Jan-2030 https://permits.apvma.gov.au/PER12592.PDF
Dimethoate		Permitted (PER13859)	Orchard cleanup - fruit fly host crops following harvest	WHP = N/A Permit expires 31-May-2030 https://permits.apvma.gov.au/PER13859.PDF
Etoxazole	Paramite	Permitted (PER14098)	Two-spotted mite	WHP = 7 days Permit expires 31-Mar-2028 https://permits.apvma.gov.au/PER14098.PDF
Fenbutatin Oxide	Vendex	Permitted (PER14097)	Two-spotted mite	WHP = 7 days Permit expires 31-Mar-2028 https://permits.apvma.gov.au/PER14097.PDF
Fludioxonil	Scholar	Permitted (PER89170)	Antrachnose Stem end rot	Apply as post-harvest dip or flood spray WHP = N/A Permit expires 28-Feb-2029 https://permits.apvma.gov.au/PER89170.PDF
Fluopyram + Trifloxystrobin	Luna Senation	Registered	Black spot Brown spot	WHP = 3 days
Flupyradifurone	Sivanto Prime	Registered	Fruit-spotting bug	WHP = 3 days
Isocycloseram	Vertento	Registered	Fruit-spotting bug	WHP = 7 days
Isocycloseram	Vertento	Permitted (PER96412)	Two-spotted mite	WHP = 7 days Permit expires 31-Jan-2031 https://permits.apvma.gov.au/PER96412.PDF
Mancozeb	Mancozeb/Dithane Rainshield	Registered	Black spot	WHP = 1 day
Metalaxyl	Ridomil/Zeemil	Permitted (PER14490)	Phytophthora root rot Pythium	WHP = N/A Permit expires 31-Mar-2027 https://permits.apvma.gov.au/PER14490.PDF
Phosphorus Acid	Agri-fos	Permitted (PER14490)	Phytophthora root rot Pythium	WHP = N/A Permit expires 31-Mar-2027 https://permits.apvma.gov.au/PER14490.PDF
Potassium Salts of Fatty Acids	Natrasoap/Hitman	Registered	Aphids Thrips Mealybugs Two-spotted mite Spider mite Whitefly	WHP = N/A
Prochloraz	Sportak	Registered	Antrachnose Stem end rot	Apply as post-harvest spray WHP = N/A
Propamocarb	Proplant	Permitted (PER91912)	Pythium	WHP = N/A Permit expires 31-Dec-2026 https://permits.apvma.gov.au/PER91912.PDF
Spinetoram	Success Neo	Registered	Caterpillars (various)	WHP = N/A
Spinosad	Entrust Organic	Registered	Caterpillars (various)	WHP = N/A
Spinosad	Naturalure	Registered	Mediterranean fruit fly Queensland fruit fly	Apply as concentrated bait spray WHP = N/A
Sulfoxaflor	Transform	Registered	Fruit-spotting bug Mealybugs	WHP = 3 days
Tebuconazole	Folicur	Registered	Black spot	WHP = 3 days
Triadimenol	Cougar/Dimenol	Registered	Powdery mildew	WHP = 7 days
Trichlorflon	Lepidex/Dipterex	Registered	Fruit-spotting bug	WHP = 7 days
Trichlorflon	Lepidex/Dipterex	Permitted (PER12450)	Queensland fruit fly Mediterranean fruit fly	WHP = 7 days Permit expires 31-Aug-2030 https://permits.apvma.gov.au/PER12450.PDF

Guide produced by PP23003: Supporting Innovation in the Australian papaya industry using papaya R&D levy funds

Hort Innovation PAPAYA FUND

Papaya Australia

Queensland Government

MEET THE INDUSTRY PERSON – Magdel Mellet

Magdel Mellet joined Hort Innovation in February 2025 as a Regulatory Affairs and Crop Protection Manager in the Trade and Biosecurity Team. Alongside Claud Warren, she manages the Hort Innovation crop protection portfolio. This involves submitting minor use permit applications and renewals, as well as the generation of pesticide residue, efficacy and crop safety data to support minor use permit applications and label extensions as appropriate for a number of horticultural crops.

Magdel is an experienced Regulatory Affairs Manager with many years of experience working for a global AgriChemical company which specialised in the agriculture and horticulture sectors.

She is delighted to work with the Papaya Industry to find crop protection solutions that allow growers to produce good quality papayas whilst achieving high yields.

The best way to enjoy papaya? According to Magdel, you can't beat bite size papaya pieces on its own or added to a fruit salad - perhaps with a little ice cream on the side.

Magdel Mellet is the Regulatory Affairs and Crop Protection Manager in the Trade and Biosecurity Team at Hort Innovation.

MARKETING UPDATE

Marketing Update by Horticulture Innovation Australia

PAPAYA MARKETING CAMPAIGN

WITH SAMPLING AND SOCIAL MEDIA DRIVING RESULTS!

The next burst of papaya marketing activity (delivered by Hort Innovation in collaboration with industry and funded by the marketing levy) will begin in April. There will be a key focus on increasing awareness of papaya and communicating its key benefits as well as driving trial, ensuring consumers that are new to the fruit are reached.

Planning for the next phase of the FY27-28 marketing program will also begin. The industry representatives will meet in March to align and discuss key priorities. This session will focus on sustaining the strong momentum achieved to date, with an emphasis on further building household penetration (the number of households that buy papaya) and strengthening retail performance.

Any decisions on future activity will be based on recent data and insights. Some key statistics are:

Household penetration increased from 10.5% to 13.6% year on year, reaching its highest level on record.

The category demand remains strong, with nearly 60% of papaya growth coming from new buyers entering the category, and 40% from existing buyers purchasing more

54% of consumers have purchased papayas recently, though many buy infrequently- reinforcing the importance of driving trial and repeat purchase

Key purchase drivers include health benefits (38%), being on special (26%) and household appeal (29%).

Top barriers remain price (33%), availability (31%), lack of knowledge (42%) around how to choose, prepare or use papaya.