

# Mango Matters

AUTUMN 2024 | VOLUME 55



## 2024 Australian Mango Conference and First Scientific Symposium

Australian Mango Export –  
Challenges and Opportunities

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Measuring Farm Success  
Per Hectare

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FASTA - Fresh and Secure  
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## Disaster Recovery

The impact of ex Tropical cyclone Jasper and disaster recovery

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### Want to contribute?

If you would like to submit pictures and story ideas to AMIA, or provide feedback, please contact the AMIA team via the details listed on this page.

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**AUSTRALIAN MANGOES**

**Hort Innovation** MANGO FUND

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# CEO'S REPORT

## Trevor Dunmall

Chief Executive Officer, AMIA  
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This is my first report since commencing with AMIA in mid-March. As having previously worked with the industry I greatly appreciate the opportunity to work with the industry again.

## COMPLIANCE BURDEN

The common issue many mango growers, and many fruit and vegetable growers face is the burden of complying with food safety and sustainability systems. Growers agree on the need for food safety and sound employee safety and welfare. While the costs involved are substantial, growers I meet highlight the time and stress the current audit processes impose on them. HARPS has recently undertaken a review and Freshcare is commencing a review. Currently there is work being undertaken looking to address some of these issues, while maintaining standards. While it is unlikely there will be any changes in the immediate future, there is enough concern through the fruit and vegetable industry that there may be improvements in the medium term.

## EX TROPICAL CYCLONE JASPER

Growing and marketing quality mangoes is challenging, even in normal times. The impact of ex-Tropical Cyclone Jasper has resulted in one of the worst harvest seasons on record for growers in the Mareeba/Dimbulah region. The ability to provide assistance to these affected growers through the efforts of our Industry Assistance Officer highlights the critical need for support in the aftermath of extreme weather events.

We need to acknowledge the swift and decisive actions of AMIA Chairman Ben Martin and Hort Innovation in assessing the need for assistance and securing funding for this short-term position. We also need to recognise the work of our Industry Development Officer Adelaide Belyea and Industry Assistance Officer Ebony Faichney during this time. Their contributions have been invaluable in supporting our growers through these difficult times.

## MANGO TWIG TIP DIEBACK

Symptoms of Mango Twig Tip Dieback (MTTD) have been seen in mango trees in the Darwin region for 6 to 7 years. Despite the Northern Territory Department of Industry, Tourism and Trade (NT DITT) undertaking significant research and identifying a wide range of plant pathogens present in orchards, the causal organism/s have not yet been determined. AMIA, working closely with NTDITT, NTMIA and NT Farmers will be hosting a workshop in July to bring together researchers, growers and agronomists to discuss MTTD and develop a collective view on the direction of future research.

## MANGO CONFERENCE

I was fortunate to come back into the industry just prior to the mango conference. This was the first conference since 2019. It was a great event and included the first scientific symposium which highlighted the wide range of significant research happening in the industry. The conference was a great opportunity to meet many growers, researchers and the many people working in businesses in our industry.

We were fortunate that Hort Innovation CEO Brett Fifield and several of his team were able to attend and present at our conference. Their presentations and connection with delegates were informative, highly professional and demonstrated their passion for our industry. While I have been away for the industry for over 6 years, the positive change in Hort Innovation's connection to industry and industry organisations is remarkable.

And a special thanks to our AMIA team for the tremendous amount of work undertaken to organise and deliver a successful conference, scientific symposium and field day.

## FUTURE REGIONAL EVENTS

While conferences are a great way to get many people from our sector together to discuss issues and opportunities, many people don't attend conferences, for a range of reasons. In the future while I expect we will continue to hold regular national conferences, it's important we

deliver events in our production regions. Where possible we should be working with State and Territory departments and other businesses to bring events (e.g. field days, workshops etc) to your region.

## FRUIT AND VEGETABLE CONSUMPTION

During his presentation at the Hort Connections conference, Michael Simonetta (Perfection Fresh) highlighted statistics showing a drop in the consumption of fresh fruit and vegetables in recent years. As economic conditions continue to be challenging consumers appear to be cutting back across many areas. This trend is particularly concerning as it leads to lower demand, affecting all growers in the horticulture industry. Our efforts to promote the consumption of fresh fruit and vegetables and in particular Australian mangoes needs to be maintained and maximised wherever possible.

## CROP FORECASTING AND CROP FLOW

Our team dedicates considerable effort to developing seasonal crop forecasts for each region prior to the season and collecting weekly dispatch information to provide crop flow data. This information is made available on our website and used by wholesalers and retailers to inform their decision-making processes. While we recognise that some growers may not fully support providing this information, we firmly believe that the benefits are significant and tangible.

Understanding the timing of regional harvest and accurately predicting mango volumes through the season, and then backing these predictions with dispatch data, is crucial for maximizing the effectiveness of marketing and promotional efforts. When booking promotional activities, timing is everything. Scheduling promotions when mangoes are in short supply or failing to promote when there is a high supply, can both have negative impacts. While we respect that some growers may not see the advantage in this work, when major retailers are making decisions on when and where to invest money in promotional activities, the more accurate and timely the information they receive, the better their decisions will be, ultimately benefiting the entire industry.

## PRE-SEASON ROADSHOWS

Our pre-season roadshows commence in Darwin on Monday 29th July. I encourage everyone involved in the industry to attend. This is your opportunity to see our plans for the upcoming season, what we are doing to address a range of issues and for you to highlight issues that impact on your business.

# CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

## Ben Martin

Chairman, AMIA

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It was great to see many of you at our conference in Cairns. The industry has gone through a number of challenging years. Many of the challenges we face are shared with other fruit and vegetable industries. Through our membership in the National Farmers Federation Hort Council we are working to address these issues, ranging from compliance costs, market issues, workforce reform and biosecurity. Working collectively we are making some progress on these issues but there are few quick fixes.

Growers from Mareeba/Dimbulah have suffered through one of the worst seasons on record. The amount of rain and flooding caused by ex cyclone Jasper is hard to imagine, even for those of us who are accustomed to northern rainfalls. It is in these times growers need all of the support available.

I would like to thank Andrew Francey from Hort Innovation who worked with us to enable the employment of Ebony Faichney in the early part of the year. Ebony has been working with growers to assist them access QRIDA funding and provide general support through this very tough time. We appreciate the funding made available by the Queensland government although we will continue to work to address some of the inequities in funding available to growers of tree crops compared with other sectors.

Mango twig tip dieback has been a serious issue for Darwin mango growers. NTDITT have been doing research for a number of years and it has proven challenging to resolve. Working with NTDITT, NTMIA, NT Farmers and Hort Innovation we are organising a workshop for the 25th July in Darwin to bring a collective view to on possible causes and to move forward with a shared approach to future research.

At our Annual General Meeting held in conjunction with our conference I was re-elected Chairman and I would like to thank my fellow Board Directors for their support. John Nucifora was also re-elected Deputy Chairman.

Geoff Warnock representing NT and northern WA and David Morecombe representing southern WA, SA and Victoria were returned unopposed and Scott Pershouse has also been returned representing southern Qld and NSW.

Our pre-season roadshows commence in Darwin on Monday 29th July. I encourage growers to attend and participate in these roadshows when they are in your region. While there will be a number of presentations from us, from my perspective it's more important that we hear from you.

Queensland Good jobs  
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The **Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries (DAF)** has local extension officers, agronomists, agricultural economists and researchers supporting you to increase on-farm profitability and sustainability, including:

- optimising fertiliser use
- reducing in-field and edge of field erosion
- retaining nutrients on farm
- establishing vegetated buffers and bioreactor treatment systems
- monitoring water and soil quality on farm.

**Call us to find the best systems and solutions for your business. We're here to help.**



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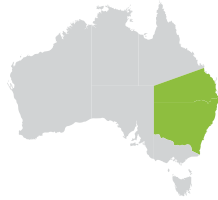
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Queensland  
Government

# DIRECTORS' REPORTS

## Southern Queensland & New South Wales



Scott Pershouse  
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The 2024 Australian Mango Conference was a great success. I would like to thank the AMIA team and everyone else involved in organising the event. It was wonderful to see such a good turnout at the first conference since COVID, and especially after a very challenging season for the industry.

I would also like to welcome the new CEO, Trevor Dunmall. It is fantastic to have Trevor back on the AMIA team.

Most farms in the region are reporting healthy trees that are settled with hardened flush ready to throw flowers. A warmer and damper autumn has helped the trees recover well from last season's harvest. Early varieties in cooler areas are already starting to push flowers due to cool weather in the third week of May. The cold temperatures predicted for this week (the first week of June) will hopefully be the trigger for all the trees in the region to begin flowering.

I wish all growers the best, and hopefully we will have more consistent flowering this season.

## Northern Territory & Northern Western Australia



Geoff Warnock  
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The mango trees in the region are looking very good and healthy at present. The weather at present is mild day temperatures and night temperatures fluctuating between 10 - 15 degrees in addition there is evidence of small flushes of flower appearing in the trees. We trust that everything continues to develop in this manner and we don't have the same experience that occurred last season.



Leo Skliros  
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I attended this year's Mango Conference & Science Symposium. The event was extremely well-organised, and the AMIA team did a fantastic job. The presenters were informative and relevant, and the venue and location were excellent. Some even claimed it was the best mango conference they had ever attended.

However, I couldn't help but feel that we lost sight of our growers' main objective: profitability. The discussions seemed less relevant to this crucial topic. I would have loved to see more growers attending to help stimulate more focused discussions.

Compliance, a word that evokes thoughts of slavery for me, was a painful topic in our growers-only session. I saw the anguish, costs, and desperation that farms and farmers experience due to the auditing systems, with many facing 4-6 different audits during their harvest window. There was no harmony or simplification in this process.

Labour remains our greatest cost. While our Pacific workers are able to return, the scheme falls under foreign aid and is overly regulated. The Ag visa, which we all fought hard for, was reintroduced after we lost 50,000 workers, but we only received 1,000 Ag workers from Vietnam. I don't quite understand the math here, and I hear these workers are being redirected to the cattle industry.

Despite these challenges, there are some positives. Flowers and small fruits are appearing around Darwin and Katherine. Let's see what this year brings.



Mitchael Curtis  
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This year has been a bit nerve-racking as a mango farmer with such a poor outcome last year.

We were approximately 90% down on our average crop numbers but KP were far worse than that as most of the crop we did get were R2E2 - they performed alright. I don't know how many times I have been asked, "Why didn't you get a crop?" Of course, the first excuse is climate change, but upon checking the climate for the 3 months around flowering, we were average - not hotter and not colder. So that doesn't fit.

Sometimes it gets frustrating when we start with what is the current global scientific declaration and then try and prove that. We need good science in our industry, we start with the problem and try and find the cause, with no preconceived ideas - that's good science.

I am happy to say we currently have a very strong showing of flowers as of the 18/6, even though the bureau of meteorology have been warning us of above average temps this winter the weather is being very kind to us in Katherine and the trees are flowering a bit early.

A few months ago I had the privilege of going and sitting with the pollies in Canberra for a few days to talk about the current struggles we have as growers, there are so many at the moment. We did have some good meetings with high level politicians. The thing I noticed the most was they have a very poor understanding of our industry.

All of them said they don't hear from growing groups very much. Most other industries have lobbyists working in that space full time. But growing groups don't have much of this happening. For example, when I was talking about the 38hour requirement on the workforce and that the seasonal workers are not looking for work-life balance they are here to work and send money home.

They don't have a choice to work more than the current hort award. So now they can't send much money home after the cost of living in Australia is taken out.

This leaves them depressed and embarrassed with pressure from home as to why there is little, to no funds coming. Then we get problems with drinking and drugs and absconding because moral is driven down by the rules put on us.

One of their responses was, "Don't you have a voluntary overtime clause like other industries where the worker can choose to work more at the same base rate?" My response was that would help dramatically if we could.

These conversations need to happen continuously from growers and workers, saying we would like to give the workers more hours but can't, and the workers complaining about the award restricting them. The group that is doing this is the Union but not with what is beneficial to the worker or the farming sector.

They are spreading a very negative view of our sector and driving the costs up dramatically. We need to tell our story, and our workers tell their stories repeatedly to get change and have meetings with your local members with some of your workers.

Tell your story, send your story to Murray Watts' office and encourage your workers to do the same. If we do it enough, they will hear. Doing nothing will change nothing. NFF are busy chasing their live sheep export ban, they are not doing anything around your needs.

Don't think other groups are representing you - send something yourself, send it to us as well as the AMIA. Tell your story. I hope this will provoke some thought.

## Southern Western Australia



**David Morcombe**  
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That was a very warm Autumn! After an early harvest due to the warmer than usual Spring and Summer the trees have enjoyed an extended post-harvest growing period which should help set up for next season. Sometimes if we have a late harvest and a cool autumn it seems that winter is straight onto us. The cool rains have now arrived, but for the beginning of June it's not very cold.

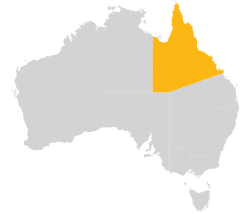
The first convention since pre covid days was held in Cairns in May and it was a great success. I came away with a greater understanding of where technology is taking our industry and a greater understanding of the challenges and opportunities facing us.

The team did a great job organising the conference, especially given the natural disaster and position changes that occurred during the time when the work organising the conference was done. Our new CEO certainly hit the ground running.

*"The 2024 Australian Mango Conference was a great success. I would like to thank the AMIA team and everyone else involved in organising the event."*

- SCOTT PERSHOUSE

## Far North Queensland & North Queensland



**John Nucifora**  
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The mango industry has experienced a challenging season, but the resilience and dedication of our growers are evident as we look forward to a promising year ahead.

The past season was very hectic for the region due to the cyclone. A lot of people lost a lot of fruit, and we hope to recoup that this year. The recent conference went well, with many attendees, though we would have liked more farmers from our local area. All in all, the conference went to plan.

In our region, everyone is now preparing for the new season flowering. The weather conditions are suitable, and growers are hard at work cleaning their trees, pruning, and getting ready for the upcoming season. We are all looking forward to it, especially after the difficulties faced last season with the cyclone.

The commitment and hard work of everyone in the mango industry give us hope for a fruitful and successful season ahead.



**John Nardi**  
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At the time of writing, The Australian Mango Conference & Scientific Symposium has just wrapped up last week. I would like to congratulate the AMIA team, and all involved in organising this as I thought it was one of the best I have attended. The topics and presentations were all very relevant and a great variety of information for all in the industry. I would encourage growers that did not attend this year to make an effort to be involved in the future as I am sure there is lots of valuable information you will take away from it.

In the growing region, most growers will be into or finishing their final pruning program and waiting for flowering. While we have had some cooler mornings, it has not been enough yet to get things moving for us yet. Some growers will have seen an odd flower starting to push out or trees starting to budd up ready to go and hopefully we will see good results soon. The wetter than usual weather last season proved very difficult for most QLD regions last season. Let's hope we see a great flowering and kinder weather conditions for us all this year.

# AMIA & INDUSTRY NEWS



Graham Perrett MP, Federal Member for Moreton, addressing and welcoming the delegates of the Australian Mango Conference.



## First Scientific Symposium and Australian Mango Conference in Cairns

The tropical city of Cairns played host to the Australian Mango Conference and first Australian Mango Scientific Symposium from May 20 to 23, 2024.

This event drew together growers, supply chain partners and researchers, growers, in the mango industry, making it a pivotal occasion for sharing knowledge and celebrating innovation.

### SCIENTIFIC SYMPOSIUM: A DEEP DIVE INTO MANGO RESEARCH

The Australian Mango Scientific Symposium was held on Monday, May 20 prior to the conference with 120 attendees and featured an impressive 26 presentations and 17 posters. The symposium showcased a wide range of research, addressing critical areas of mango production, from breeding and post-harvest management to pest and disease control, as well as technological advancements.

Marine Empson, AMIA's Industry Development Manager, remarked, "The breadth and depth of research presented at this symposium are truly astonishing. It highlights the significant developments being made in every area of mango production." Researchers and industry stakeholders engaged in meaningful discussions, paving the way for future collaboration and innovation within the mango industry.



Symposium delegates had the opportunity to hear from a wide range of researchers





Delegates had the opportunity to engage with trade show exhibitors



## CONFERENCE: A HUB OF INDUSTRY ACTIVITY

The two-day conference attracted 230 delegates and included 15 trade show booths. The Trade Show exhibitors highlighted the latest products and services available to mango growers, from cutting-edge agricultural technologies to innovative farming solutions.

The conference provided a vital platform for networking, learning, and sharing industry insights. Trevor Dunmall, AMIA CEO, stated, “The conference was an opportunity for growers and a broad cross section of the industry to connect and exchange knowledge. It was great to see the dynamic and collaborative spirit of the industry.”



Field day attendees at the Walkamin Research Station.



Gala dinner featuring the presentation of industry and innovation awards

## GALA DINNER AND AWARDS

A highlight of the event was the gala dinner, where key contributors to the mango industry were honoured. Professor Kerry Walsh received the Innovation Award for his work on Near-Infrared (NIR) technology and machine vision. His innovations in forecasting and automated harvesting are set to transform the efficiency and accuracy of mango production.

Geoff Warnock from Kununurra, an AMIA board member, was also recognized for his decades of dedication and substantial contributions to the mango industry. His long-standing commitment has been instrumental in advancing the industry and supporting the community of growers.

Ben Martin, AMIA chairman, remarked, “Celebrating the achievements of individuals like Kerry Walsh and Geoff Warnock is essential. Their contributions have paved the way for the future of our industry, and their dedication serves as an inspiration to us all.”

## FIELD DAY: PRACTICAL INSIGHTS AND NETWORKING

The event concluded with an engaging Field Day, attended by 100 delegates. Participants visited Rocky Creek Farm, where they observed the packing shed operations handling avocados. A demonstration of the effective use of drones to apply crop protection products was also a highlight.

Further, the visit to the Walkamin Research Station provided valuable insights into the Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries’ (QDAF) research. Delegates learned about the latest findings on carbohydrates, orchard intensification, rootstock trials, and extension services, which are pivotal for the future of mango farming.

The Field Day also included a visit to Favco’s orchard, at Mutchilba.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Australian Mango Industry Association (AMIA) extends thanks to our sponsors, Hort Innovation and Steritech, to all presenters, MCs, trade show exhibitors, and attendees. Their contributions and participation were essential in making the event a resounding success.

The 2024 Australian Mango Conference and Scientific Symposium in Cairns was a great event, setting a high standard for future gatherings and reaffirming the strength and innovation within the Australian mango industry.



*Some orchards along the Barron river were totally inundated*

## Disaster Recovery

### The impact of ex Tropical cyclone Jasper and disaster recovery.

On the 13th December 2023 Tropical cyclone Jasper crossed the far north Queensland coast. While the damage from wind to mango orchards was minimal, the rain event from ex Tropical cyclone Jasper was devastating.

Mango growers on the Atherton Tablelands were the worst hit following widespread rainfall and flooding associated. Many growers received over one metre of rain in just 4 days just as they had started their harvest. This was followed by further excessive rain with many growers receiving another meter of rain through summer and early autumn. The ongoing wet weather saw many growers unable to access paddocks for months, while others managed to pick

some of what was left of their crop, leaving a trail of destruction by harvest equipment operating in sodden grounds.

In addition to severe erosion, loss of fruit, trees and infrastructure, producers were faced with an additional freight bill of approximately \$20,000 per business due to the instalment of the 'Range Levy'. This came about due to major damage to the Palmerston Highway - the main freight route from Far North Queensland to southern markets. The closure forced transporters to use smaller trucks with extra runs on the Kuranda range or longer in-land routes, all at a higher cost. These costs were pushed onto farmers who had no other choice than accept it to get produce to market. The

Palmerston range was closed for seven weeks which aligned with peak harvest time for the Mareeba region.

The Queensland government announced Category D Extraordinary Disaster Assistance, the highest level of support to primary producers and this was welcome news to all impacted just a week after the cyclone hit. This package entails grants for primary producers through a reimbursement scheme for repair works up to a total of \$75 000.



*Prunings and irrigation lines dislodged by swift water*



*Many orchards were waterlogged for months due to the continued rainfall*



*Headlands became raging torrents*

*Many growers received over one metre of rain in just 4 days just as they had started their harvest. This was followed by further excessive rain with many growers receiving another meter of rain through summer and early autumn.*



*Washouts restricted access to some blocks*

AMIA Chairman Ben Martin, having experienced orchard damage from Tropical cyclone Debbie in 2017 understood the stress affected growers would be experiencing. Ben reached out to Hort Innovation to secure short term additional funding to employ an Industry Assistance Officer, Ebony Faichney.

Well-known by many mango growers, Mareeba local Ebony Faichney has been a wealth of support to those impacted, providing regular on phone and in-

person guidance for individual QRIDA grant applications, general agronomic advice, and liaising with other impacted industries to streamline advocacy efforts. This work has been critical in the recovery for Mareeba growers facing one of their toughest seasons to date.

AMIA is appreciative of the support the Queensland Government has provided to growers with this package in support of their recovery efforts in this

region. However, AMIA is disappointed in the inequities apparent between the compensation available to tree crop growers compared with the livestock industry and tourism sector.

For example, affected tourism operators have been eligible for grants of up to \$550 000 for both repairs and loss of income. The disparity continues to cause significant distress amongst affected growers in the region who are still coming to terms with their losses and the very difficult season. Clearly, the precedence to cover loss of income has been set, therefore AMIA believes it is only fair this money is made accessible to primary producers. Tourism providers have a much larger income window and flexibility to make a living, compared to a mango grower at the mercy of a ripening crop amidst weather and pricing out of their control.

AMIA will continue to highlight these disparities and collaborate with like-minded organisations in an attempt to see these inequities addressed.

In early June, the Queensland government announced an extension of the period for recovery work to be completed to the 20th December 2024. This decision alleviates significant stress for growers who have been struggling to secure contractors for orchard repairs.



*Harvest equipment left a trail of destruction*



*Extensive earthworks are required to make repairs*

# Australian Mango Export – Challenges and Opportunities

The data reveal a sharp decline in exports since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, with just over 3,000 tonnes exported last season compared to over 7,000 tonnes, during the 2019/20 season. This decrease is due to a range of reasons, not least the pandemic’s impact on freight costs and availability, as well as lower production volumes in some years.

The data provided in Figure 1 shows the volume of mango exports from Australia to our top ten markets over five seasons, from 2019/20 to 2023/24. The general downward trend across most destinations underscores significant challenges in the export market.

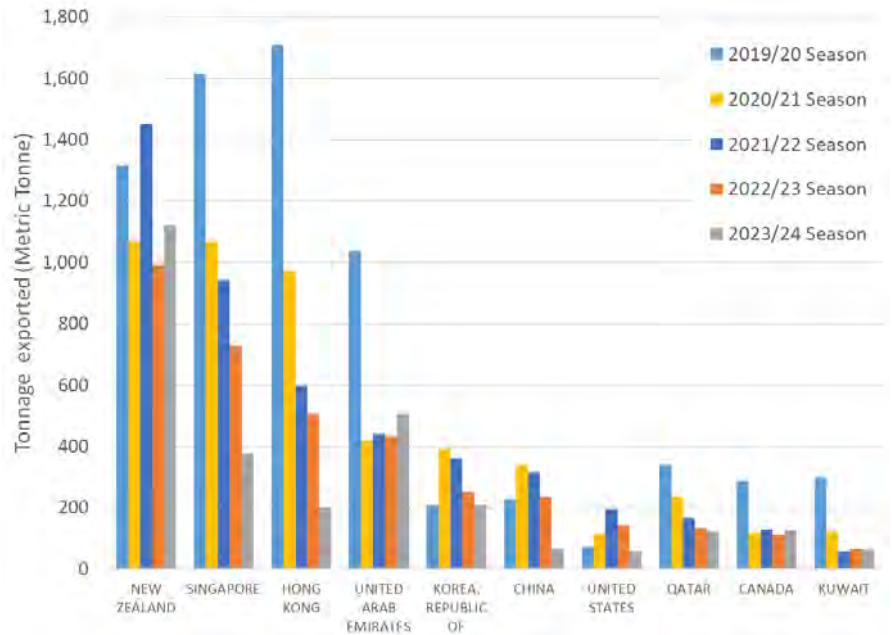


Figure 1: Export volume by country. Data source: Australian Bureau of Statistics

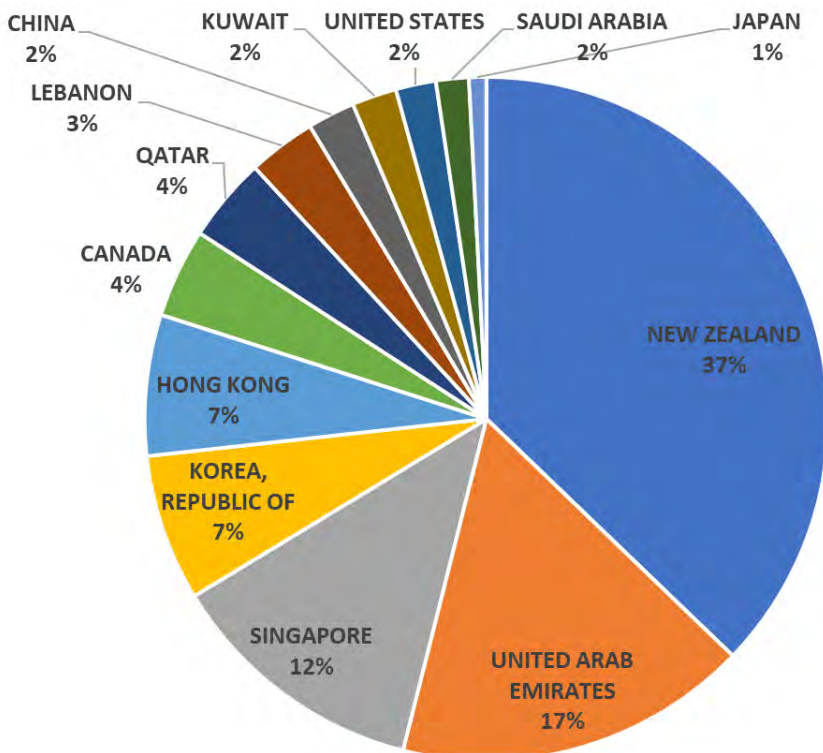


Figure 2: Mango export by market destination 2023/24 season. Data source: Australian Bureau of Statistics

New Zealand continues to be the largest importer of Australian mangoes, comprising over 37% of total export volumes (Figure 2).

Singapore and Hong Kong experienced substantial declines, highlighting broader market challenges.

Countries such as the UAE and Canada, although initially facing declines, have demonstrated more stability in recent years.

South Korea and China saw an increase in volume being exported during the Covid-19 pandemic which could be explained by the implementation of the International Freight Assistance Mechanism (IFAM) which covered part of the airfreight costs to export high-value perishable agricultural produce.

Despite these difficulties, some markets have shown resilience and potential for growth.

## CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

As we all are aware, our industry has been very reliant on our Australian market. While each mango season is different, in seasons with higher production, average prices are lower. While it is natural the Australian market will continue to be our most important market we do need stronger export markets.

Mango exporters are facing several significant challenges. High freight costs and lower production volumes in certain seasons have made it difficult to sustain export levels. Challenging phytosanitary protocols additionally make export to protocol markets challenging, and the lack of financial rewards to non-protocol markets often does not make them an attractive alternative to domestic markets.

Additionally, a lack of transparency and traceability within the supply chain hampers efforts to improve efficiency, presenting a hurdle for growers and exporters.

Despite these challenges, there are a number of committed growers and exporters who each season remain dedicated to building export.

Expanding export opportunities is essential for alleviating pressure on the domestic market and enhancing the resilience of the Australian mango industry.

As an industry we need to improve our performance in supporting export development. There are a range of activities as an industry where we can assist. Gaining access to new markets will continue to be important, but our focus needs to be on supporting growers and exporters to build demand for Australian mangoes presence in targeted export markets.

We also need to continue to work with industry and government to improve phytosanitary protocols that maintain importing countries requirements but provide the opportunity for greater volumes to be exported.

As an industry, we must collaborate to address challenges and capitalise on opportunities. A collective focus on exports is essential, all while respecting existing and future commercial relationships.

## AMIA AGM AND ELECTION RESULTS

The AMIA AGM was held on Tuesday 21st May. The AMIA Board comprises the following mango growers:

### BEN MARTIN

Chairman, Far North Queensland / North Queensland

### JOHN NUCIFORA

Deputy Chairman, Far North Queensland / North Queensland

### SCOTT PERSHOUSE

Southern Queensland / New South Wales

### JOHN NARDI

Far North Queensland / North Queensland

### DAVID MORCOMBE

Southern Western Australia, South Australia, Victoria

### LEO SKLIROS

Northern Western Australia and the Northern Territory

### MITCHAEAL CURTIS

Northern Western Australia and the Northern Territory

### GEOFF WARNOCK

Northern Western Australia and the Northern Territory

## 2024/2025 Export Registration

The online registration system for 2024/2025 is now open. Growers are required to register their orchards and packhouses for export to China, Korea and the USA.

Please note that registration is NOT required for orchards and packhouses exporting to Japan and New Zealand.

Details about the online export application process, crop monitor training and audits are available on the Australian Mangoes website.

If you have never registered, please forward your name, trading name, preferred email address to our Industry Development Manager at [marine@mangoes.net.au](mailto:marine@mangoes.net.au).

A no-reply email will be sent to you with a temporary password so that you can login and set up your account.

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FRIDAY  
26TH JULY

# Mango Marketing

**The 2023/24 marketing program continued to build on the 2023-2026 marketing strategy that aims to improve household penetration, increase value over volume and profitably increase export volume.**

## CONSUMER RESEARCH AND CURRENT ECONOMIC STATUS

The current economic climate is having a real impact on Australian households. Consumer sentiment is at levels seen during Covid and shoppers are becoming more price sensitive.

The 2023/24 season was challenging for many growers and lower production is reflected by household penetration down 7% to 53% on the previous season. Compounding this is

research indicating 54% of consumers are light buyers, only purchasing mangoes 2 to 3 times per season, compared with heavy buyers, purchasing 14 times during the season.

Further to this, mangoes continue to remain in the impulse purchase category, with 67% of shoppers buying mangoes on impulse.

While our season commences in September and extends through to March, with light supplies outside this period, mango consumers consider the mango season only extends from mid-October through to late January. Barriers to increased consumption include the perceived messiness of eating mangoes and price, compared with other fruit.

## 2023/24 SEASON

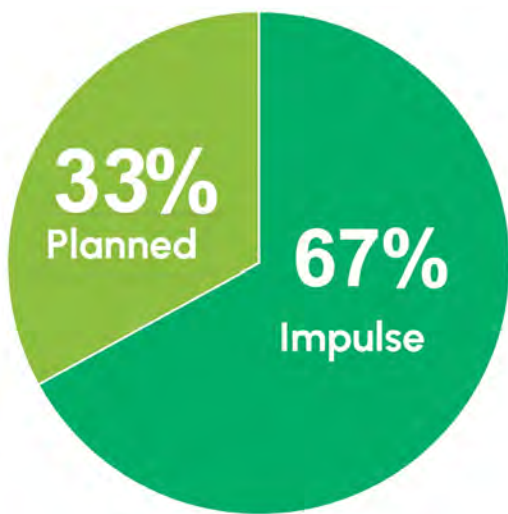
Driving demand for Australian mangoes through positioning mangoes as the iconic taste of the Australian summer was central to the 2023-2024 season's marketing program. The campaign built upon the previous year's campaign with a focus on the 'hedgehog' method of preparing a mango to help consumers overcome perceptions of mangoes as 'messy' or difficult to prepare.

The advertising campaign from October 2023 to March 2024 aimed to build awareness that Australian mangoes are in season and in store. Channel selection through the traditional Christmas holiday period was a key consideration. Another consideration was the increased cost of living and its impact on how households spend their money. The advertising included out of home shopper panels close to supermarkets, YouTube, retail online and social media advertisements.

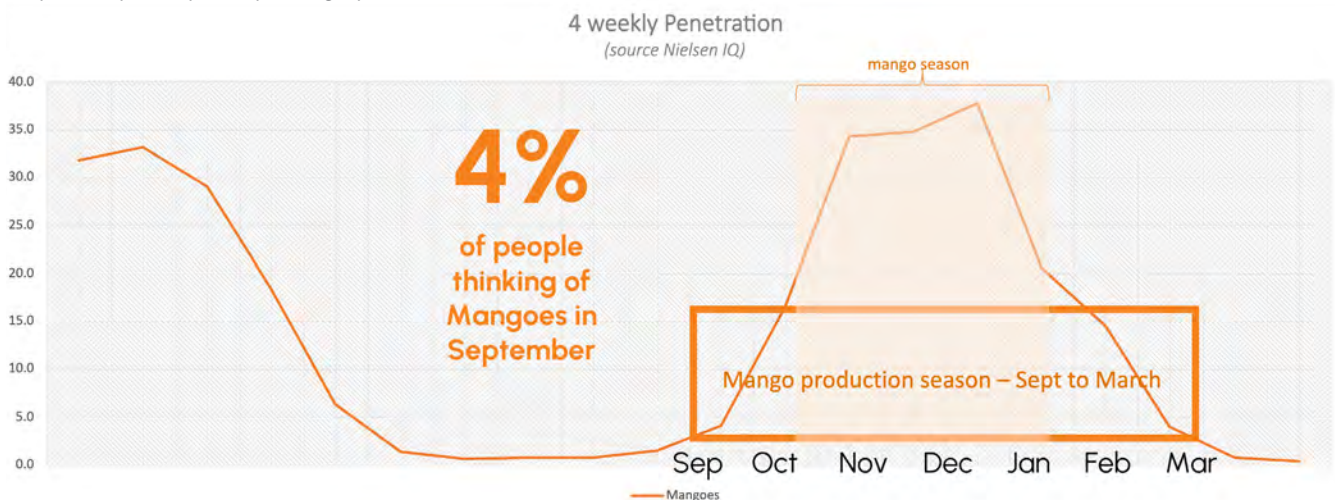
Shopper marketing included digital display banners on Coles and Woolworths online, to prompt 'add to basket' purchase, as well as point of sale advertising in major retail stores.

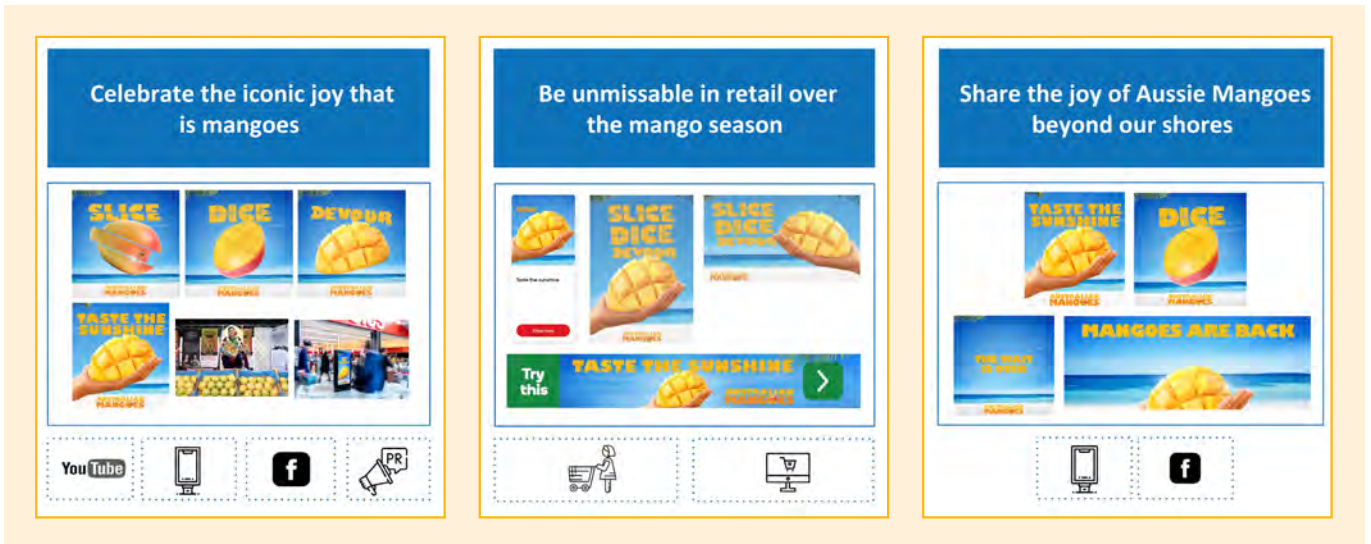
Following on from the previous season, social media was utilised to deliver reach at scale, where adverts were placed natively within people's newsfeeds, rather than relying on consumers following a specific mangoes page. To raise awareness, YouTube also featured 3 six-second video messages, targeting the beginning, middle and end of season with bespoke messages: "the wait is over/ mangoes are back" "taste the sunshine" and "grab one before they go".

The PR campaign was launched through sponsorship of the Brisbane Markets Mango Auction. To announce the new season, a range of assets and a press release were available. The winning bid of \$40,000 was made by Domenico Casagrande. Owner of Megafresh stores in Carina and Chandler, Casagrande won the day after a fierce bidding war with rival would-be-kings to secure his third Mango King title, after previously being crowned in 2018 and 2021.



Impulse compared to planned percentage spills





Following the launch of the season, Australian Mangoes teamed up with Bondi Rescue's Harrison Reid and central Queensland mango grower David Groves to drive further media coverage and consumer engagement. Celebrating the first day of summer, Harrison and David delivered trays of Australian mangoes to workers stuck inside offices, to deliver a taste of sunshine and brighten up their day.

Retail media drove incremental sales with online promotions through major retailers.

### EXPORT PROMOTIONS

**New Zealand** - The consumer marketing program was also extended to New Zealand, featuring out of home supermarket panels and social media advertising to share the joy of Aussie Mangoes beyond our shores.

**Singapore** - A comprehensive retail program was conducted in Singapore over a 6-week period in November and December 2023 in collaboration with Cold Storage, one of the leading premium supermarket chains in the region.

The program raised and enhanced awareness of Australian mangoes via an extensive range of activities and different touch points like in-store display, sampling sessions and gift-with-purchase activity. The distribution of samples is essential to initiate consumers' purchase intention and improve their brand loyalty via face-to-face interactions with a trained staff.

A total of 72 sampling sessions were conducted from mid-November to mid-December 2023 across 6 stores at Cold Storage. In parallel, more than 900 customised tote bags were distributed to customers who purchased more than two Australian mangoes at once.

### ABOUT HORT INNOVATION

Australian Mangoes is a brand that is managed by Hort Innovation, a not-for-profit, grower-owned company that delivers more than \$139 million in research, development and marketing activities on behalf of Australian horticulture each year.

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E: [belinda.vanschaik@horticulture.com.au](mailto:belinda.vanschaik@horticulture.com.au)



Please provide image caption

**+26%**  
incremental  
online sales

**123K new to product  
customers (last 52wks)**  
**17K benchmark oranges**

**+43%**  
incremental  
online sales

**112K new to product  
customers (last 52wks)**  
**38K benchmark oranges**

# Supply Chain Engagement Update

During the 2023-24 AMIA roadshow season, I presented in Darwin, Katherine, and Kununurra, engaging with numerous growers.

Feedback from our team and discussions with growers highlighted upcoming challenges, particularly with anticipated lower yields in certain varieties.



Early reports indicated a tough season ahead, especially for Kensington Pride production, with forecasts showing a substantially lower yields compared to previous year, a trend mirrored across Queensland regions.

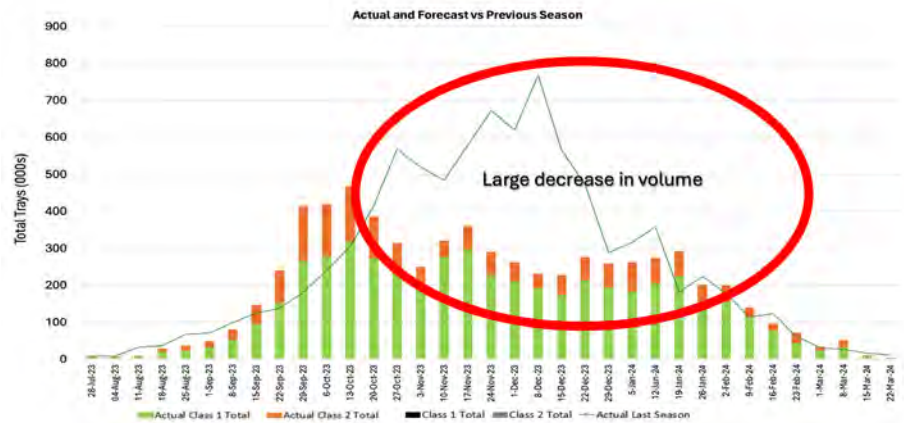
At pre-season planning sessions with retailers, discussions ranged from reviewing the 2022/23 season to discussing mango marketing for 2023/24 amidst potential supply challenges.

Early in the season, unexpected volume growth from the Northern Territory initially caused confusion. However, as the season progressed, it became clear that yields were indeed lower than expected.

The AMIA season forecast confirmed reduced supply compared to the previous year, reflecting the complexities faced, especially in Far North Queensland due to challenges from Cyclone Jasper and subsequent flooding.

With reduced supply, prominent, colourful mango displays typically seen at the front of stores were less prevalent this year. While Metcash (IGA) and Countdown in New Zealand creatively engaged in mango display campaigns, several other retailers chose not to participate due to supply constraints. IGA supported the industry with six weeks of high-visibility display competitions nationwide, using our marketing materials to promote mangoes with the message "Slice, Dice, Devour."

To support retailers, we developed a mango retail guide covering varietal





characteristics, merchandising, handling tips, and more. This guide, distributed to retailers, aimed to assist produce teams, including new members unfamiliar with mangoes, and will be updated for the upcoming season.

Despite challenges, retailers invested in diverse marketing approaches such as print, TV, radio, and online campaigns to amplify mango marketing messages throughout the season. However, due to reduced yields, retailer brochure campaigns saw a significant decrease from 482 adverts in 2022-23 to 272 in 2023-24, marking a 44% reduction.

This season, the range was streamlined, favouring single selling units over variety packs due to supply limitations. On a positive note, there was a noticeable increase in average retail mango prices compared to the previous year.

In the next Mango Matters edition, I will delve deeper into the 2023-24 season, providing comprehensive data from completed levy reports and insights from Nielsen Homescan.

**Andrew Burns**

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E: [marketing@mangoes.net.au](mailto:marketing@mangoes.net.au)

Retailer Brochure Activities. Investment/Amplification 2023/24



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Jan Van Niekerk talking at the Mango Intensification bus tour (Oct 2023).

## Measuring Farm Success Per Hectare

### Intensive Orchard Case Study #1 – JPK Farming

Jan Van Niekerk of JPK Farming at Mutchilba, north Queensland has been trialling different planting configurations of Keitt, Kensington Pride, and Honey Gold mangoes on his 42-hectare Sky Ridge farm since 2013. These more intensive management systems are demonstrating good early promise of improved fruit yield and quality, as well as greater farm input efficiencies. The Sky Ridge farm was a key stop on a DAF 'Project AS18000 - Mango Intensification' bus tour in October 2023, where Jan described his practices and learnings to 43 mango industry stakeholders (Figure 1).

#### WHY INTENSIFY?

Jan's experience on his own Mutchilba farms and his observations of other medium-density mango orchards in the region reinforced his views that efficiency and productivity could be increased through intensification. He had recently established a 14.07 hectare Keitt orchard at a medium-density (357 trees/ha) at his Sky Ridge farm.

On reflection, he decided that this system could be further intensified to improve profitability. He reconfigured this new Keitt orchard to a novel high-density system (715 trees/ha) by adding an extra tree row to double the planting density. Jan's strategy was that by keeping trees smaller and having more of them, you could increase production per farm area. "It's all about looking at yields per hectare, as opposed to yields per tree".

#### JAN'S DUAL-ROW OFFSET DESIGN

The original single-row Keitt block was planted in 2016 at a spacing of 7m x 4m. Another row 1.5m away from the original row was added in 2018, with trees also planted 4m apart, but offset to the original row (Figure 2). This doubled the planting density from 357 to 715 trees/ha. This design allows sunlight penetration to all sides of the tree canopy. Canopies are maintained as single trees, not hedges.

#### MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

The dual rows do not ideally suit traditional mechanised hedging. Jan has taken inspiration from the forestry industry and built a mechanised pruner that rotates around each individual tree in one operation (Figure 3).

Managing tree vegetative vigour is essential. This is being achieved through careful adjustment of fertiliser, irrigation, pruning and crop load management. Inter-tree competition from the higher density also helps control vigour.

The orchard is irrigated via drip irrigation. Sunburn and sun bleaching can be an issue at the farm. Jan is considering the addition of sprinkler irrigation to improve the microclimate during extreme summer conditions to reduce sunburn damage.

#### Early benefits

- **Good early yields.** Yield already 32 tonnes/ha at age 5 years. Aiming for up to 45 tonnes/ha when trees are fully mature.
- **Good fruit quality.** Pesticide sprays more effectively penetrate canopies on these shorter and narrower trees, giving higher premium pack-outs (>80%).
- **Improved land efficiency.** Higher yields achieved using smaller paddock sizes.
- **Improved cost efficiency/tonne of fruit.** This includes inputs such as labour, tractor diesel, pesticide, and harvesting costs. Picking is 20% faster in the high-density orchard.

#### Advice to growers

Do the maths. Increasing fruit yields per hectare is the best way to improve efficiency and profitability per hectare.

Any new systems will require management changes and novel solutions.

Interplanting trees into an existing planting is complicated and challenging!

Best to start afresh and go with a 'block by block' approach and progressively replace underperforming or aging blocks.

Learn from other tree farms (not just mangoes), do your research and fine-tune designs to suit your own farming needs.



Jan's dual-row offset Keitt orchard, with the younger trees on the right.



Jan's specialised rotating hedger for pruning individual trees.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

'Intensive Orchard Case Studies' is a mango communication output from the National Tree Crop Intensification in Horticulture Program (AS18000).

Article prepared by Tamaya Peressini, Dale Bennett and Geoff Dickinson, [Geoff.dickinson@daf.qld.gov.au](mailto:Geoff.dickinson@daf.qld.gov.au).

Special thanks to Jan and Carina Van Niekerk, Sky Ridge Farming.



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# FASTA - Fresh and Secure Trade Alliance

**A \$130 million eight-year program commencing in late 2023 aims to fast-track research in horticulture market access.**

The Fresh and Secure Trade Alliance (FASTA) sees key Aussie export stakeholders and authorities joining forces to help protect and grow Australia’s horticultural exports.

As part of the program, FASTA will also bring a host of biosecurity initiatives that will solidify Australia’s strong pest-management reputation for years to come.

Insect pests are a major challenge for Australia’s horticultural producers as they impact production and domestic and international trade.

Before new trade can commence, trading partners require evidence that Australia’s horticulture exports are insect pest free.

The program is focused on two areas:

- **Delivering robust and timely datasets to underpin market access negotiations:**  
State and Territory governments will work together to

standardise their approach to collecting phytosanitary, or pest and disease management, data. This data demonstrates that Australia’s produce is pest-free while also ensuring the impact of phytosanitary treatments on fruit quality will be minimised. These datasets will be used to open new export markets for Australian produce and improve conditions to existing ones.

- **Increasing understanding about fruit fly and other key pests:**

A multi-discipline, multi-organisational research team of over 70 scientists from across Australia will be assembled to test new technologies for tracking pests, trapping pests and reducing pest pressure. Through the eight-year program, this will increase Australia’s research capabilities in pest management research and facilitate world-class research.

The Fresh and Secure Trade Alliance is a partnership between Hort Innovation, the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries Queensland, the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (WA); the Queensland University of Technology, the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (VIC), the Western Sydney University, the Department of Tourism, Industry and Trade (NT), the Australian Blueberry Growers’ Association, James Cook University, the Department of Primary Industries and Regions (SA) and GreenSkin Avocados, with levy funding from the avocado and strawberry industries, and support from the Australian Government.

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## “I'd liken It to finding A Gold Nugget”

Alf Pappalardo, Marathon Man Go



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# AMIA Website Best Practice Resources

## Best Practice Resources

As mango season is still underway for some regions across Australia, and has already ended in other regions, we would like to encourage growers to visit the Best Practice Resources section of the AMIA website, which includes a wide range of useful resources on diverse topics such as pest and disease, nutrition, canopy management, business planning, and much more.

Many of these resources are the result of the collaboration between AMIA, state and territory governments, universities and other project partners, and cover years of research in the mango space.

## Growing Resources

While the resources are organised in sub-categories to ease the finding of information, there is also a search function to assist with the search for specific topics.

Available resources include information on topics such as understanding the optimum time to harvest, picking and packing training guides for new workers, grading posters and the chemical posters to assist growers with their use of chemicals.

The latest updates on chemical permits can also be found on the page “Agrichemicals for use in mangoes”.

## Fact Sheets

Fact sheets can be found in each of the sub-categories.

Other resources include webinars and recorded video presentations that were presented at roadshows, available for our growers to view at any time, to stay updated on the latest R&D updates in the industry.

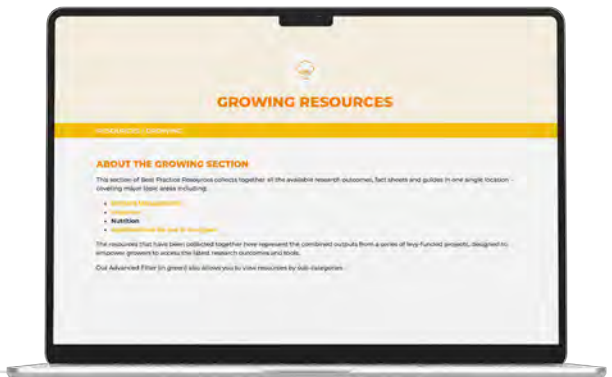
## Members Only Resources

Our Members Only resources are also available for download, such as the Cost of Production spreadsheet to help growers keep track of their business operational costs.

The Mango MRLs app, which is free for AMIA members, can be downloaded from the app store for both Android and Apple phones.

The AMIA welcomes any feedback to ensure that the content of the resources stays relevant, up to date, and easily accessible to our growers.

Should you require any assistance with your search for information, please do not hesitate to contact the AMIA team.



# Sign Up To Our Communications Today

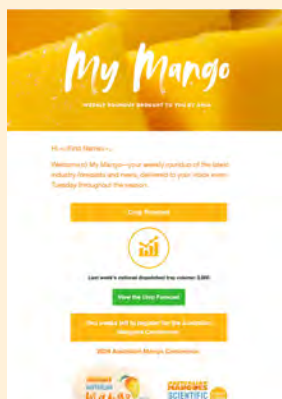
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## MANGO MATTERS

Our quarterly magazine style publication contains news and information about our industry, including research outcomes, marketing and issues impacting our industry.



## MY MANGO

During the mango season (August-March), you'll receive a weekly email every Tuesday. These updates include industry news, production forecasts, wholesale market prices, and marketing activities.



## THE SLICE

During the off season (April - July), you will receive monthly email updates informing you about news and events in the mango industry.

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