

Final Report

Chestnut industry communications program

Project leader:

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Delivery partner:

Chestnuts Australia Incorporated

Project code:

CH18000

Project:

Chestnut industry communications program (CH18000)

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Public summary

The aim of this project was to assist the ongoing development of the Australian chestnut industry through a range of communication and adoption programs. This project was developed to support implementation of the Australian Chestnut Strategic Investment Plan 2017-2021 through increased knowledge of all R&D outcomes, particularly outcome 3: Better informed industry and improved adoption of R&D outputs.

The project was designed to support the Australian chestnut industry by providing a mechanism to transfer information and technology to all stakeholders, including growers, other industry partners and consumers.

Project Leader Tanya Edwards with her important communication, organisational and administration skills working for the Australian chestnut industry has been able to provide a consistent, knowledgeable and accessible contact for the Australian chestnut industry. Tanya is widely recognised by the growers, industry and government. Her position as the CAI Communications Officer is a well-established position and she has a strong rapport with the growers.

The broad activities to support the chestnut industry communications within this project included:

- Expansion of the current communications platform used by Chestnuts Australia Inc.
- Maintenance and expansion of the industry website
- Organisation of field days
- Facilitation of technology exchange between growers and industry stakeholders utilising alternative methods of communication
- Updating and disseminating a range of information through a range of mechanisms including newsletters, e-blasts and articles in industry journals including the Australian Nutgrower
- Effective collection and distribution of relevant industry statistics.

The Australian chestnut industry aspires to;

- Be a growing, sustainable, innovative and profitable industry,
- Deliver a consistent high-quality product underpinned by quality standards and levels of accreditation,
- Increased demand and consumption through smart marketing, promotion and consumer education.

The ultimate goals are to ensure that..." Australian chestnuts are recognised for their versatility, unique flavour and health attributes, and as a fresh product, are sought after in their season" and..." achieve over all increasing consumption of fresh and processed Australian chestnuts".

This program was responsible for effectively communicating the findings of levy-funded R&D investments and other relevant industry news, issues and data to chestnut growers and key industry stakeholders. The ultimate objective was to increase knowledge and awareness of levy-funded R&D investments and outcomes, and to inspire on-farm engagement of new learnings and technologies.

This national chestnut communications program ensured the chestnut industry had access to time-sensitive information that growers needed to run their businesses effectively, as well as information on how the chestnut levy was invested.

All newsletters, conference and field day presentations and market data developed thorough this project is available to Levy Payers via a portal at www.chestnutsaustraliainc.com.au

Keywords

Chestnut; Communications Officer; newsletter; website; field day; nut rot; chestnut blight; phytophthora; cool chain; best practice; www.chestnutsaustraliainc.com.au; CH18000; LoP (life of project); biosecurity, CAI

Introduction

The Australian chestnut industry is a small but expanding national industry. There are approximately 300 chestnut growers in Australia: 70-80% of these are in NE Victoria, with other growers in NSW, Tasmania, SA and WA. Prior to 2006 the industry lacked a formal plan for communicating issues and technical information. Effective communication and technical support were necessary for the transfer of technical understanding and up-skilling of the industry, key elements to the growth and development of the chestnut industry. This project was designed to continue to support the Australian Chestnut industry by maintaining and expanding the transfer of information and technology to all stakeholders, including growers, other industry partners and consumers.

Since 2006, Chestnuts Australia Inc. (CAI), and its R&D and Marketing Subcommittees have undertaken well planned and highly successful communications and technology transfer through the capable human resource of Tanya Edwards (Communications Officer–2006 to 2022).



1.L – R Tanya Edwards – CAI Communications Officer/Trevor Ranford – CAI Industry Development Officer - Attending ANC 2022, Melbourne

This has been undertaken through a range of projects - CH06004, CH09003, CH12000, CH13003 and CH16000 –which have provided a formal mechanism within the industry for dissemination of information. Results, reported in milestone and final reports, together with the findings from the Industry Development Needs Assessment (CH08002) indicate that these projects were extremely effective. CH18000 built on the results and expanded the activities from these previous projects.

Industry members now have an up-to-date website with links to other sites of interest, a comprehensive newsletter and a focal contact point for all industry enquiries.

The industry has had a simple communication plan in place that has been directed toward growers and broader industry stakeholders. This plan distributed information describing best practice post-harvest handling, tree management and production inputs (water, fertiliser, soils) and supported this information with field days and workshops. Other information - concerning biosecurity, chemical usage and regulatory requirements - is also distributed using this plan.

A major outcome of the CH08002 was the recognition of the value of maintaining a simple and effective means of interacting with all growers so that changes occurring in the industry could be advised in a timely fashion. Project CH18000 effectively built on the 'needs assessment'.

This project supported implementation of the Australian Chestnut Industry Five Year Strategic Plan 2015-2020. Developed in January 2015, this plan focused on the Chestnut Industry's position within six key priority areas:

1. Market Opportunities
2. Product Value
3. Efficient and Sustainable practices
4. Supportive Operational Environment
5. Technology Transfer
6. Managing Industry Effectively

Activities conducted through project CH18000 were closely aligned to the Chestnut R&D program and build on past projects and information contained within the Australian Chestnut Growers Handbook.

Methodology

A Steering Committee will be established to oversee project activities. The Steering Committee will meet at 12 monthly intervals to approve Annual Operating Plans and twelve-monthly KPI's specific to the role.

Tanya Edwards, as the Communications Officer, will be responsible for undertaking the following key functions:

a) **Develop a national communications platform for the Australian chestnut industry, broker information and R&D content for industry publications and electronic media.**

CAI has been able to develop and maintain an effective and innovative 'national communication platform' built around

- The website – www.chestnutsaustraliainc.com.au
- Regular field days, farm walks and conferences.
- Regular newsletters, e-blasts and mini newsletters.
- International linkages and exchanges.
- Communications with Australian researchers and relevant industry networks.
- Collaboration.

The maintenance of a CAI R&D Committee has ensured the industry has been and continues to be focussed on the R&D needs of the industry. Strategies implemented have included:

- Utilising previous research on Phytophthora, Nut Rot, Surface Moulds and Cool Chain. CAI has identified a range of gaps and has already commenced the scoping process for some very specific projects.
- The maintenance of a specific Nut Rot working group to collect scientific and technical information and data. Discussions have commenced with researchers in the USA, NZ, Europe and Australia to look at collaborative work.
- Linkages with researchers at the University of Queensland, Deakin University, NSW DPI, Agriculture Victoria, University of Sydney and the CSIRO to discuss and develop R&D concepts.
- Maintenance of the position of 'Industry Development Officer' and the sourcing of additional grants, complementary to the Chestnut Fund, to undertake specific projects. (Examples are funding through the NE Catchment Management Authority and the Farming Together Program.)

The level of scientific and technical information held by CAI and the overseas contacts and collaborators now working with CAI, ensures CAI is in the best position to take these issues forward for, and on behalf of, the Australian chestnut industry and undertake Project CH18000.

CAI has over a long period worked hard to access the best people to do certain roles knowing that it has limited resources to achieve the best possible results demanded by the growers. Given the level of resources, CAI has accessed people with specific skills and who are willing to work part time for small non-profit industry organisations. CAI feels very fortunate to have Tanya Edwards with her important communication, organisational and administration skills working for the Australian chestnut industry. CAI appreciates that she is widely recognised by the growers, industry and government. Her position as the CAI Communications Officer is a well-established position and she has a strong rapport with the growers.

b) **Through this project CAI will drive the broader industry R&D investment and communicate information on R&D and general information to improve on-farm and business practices with specific emphasis on the following components:**

- **Updating the Chestnuts Australia Inc. Industry website with communication outputs (i.e. newsletters) and other relevant chestnut information**
CAI has established a three-tiered website
 - (1) Chestnut Levy Payers
 - (2) CAI members
 - (3) General community/consumers

In relation to the Chestnut Levy Payers section all relevant material will be included in this section. Levy payers will be required to confirm that they pay chestnut levies and to request access. On acceptance they will receive their own specific log-in code. All future technical material will then be prepared in an agreed format and posted onto the website on a regular basis.

In addition, CAI through the Communications Officer will manage and direct the stakeholder and website enquiries to the appropriate person(s) within the Australian chestnut industry, will have responsibility for maintaining both the website and the grower database and will then disseminate all relevant information as and when required.

- **Producing and distributing up to two (2) issues per year of the industry newsletter 'Chestnut Industry News' both printed and electronically. The newsletter should include technical articles on current issues and updates on relevant R&D**

The use of Mail Chimp, or a similar newsletter format, will be used and where practical the built-in monitoring and evaluation programs will be used to track and record how stakeholders are utilising the newsletter.

CAI, through the Communications Officer, will prepare two issues of 'Chestnut Industry News' in March and September utilising both general information and technical/scientific material sourced and supplied. The majority of the newsletters will be distributed electronically, but where there are growers with no e-mail/internet then hard copies will be posted.

Some of the topics to be covered in 'Chestnut Industry News' will include:

- Best practice production and handling guidelines
- Farm productivity, quality, sustainability and adoption of market preferred varieties
- Grower and supply chain product quality and presentation
- On-farm production pests and diseases
- Chemical requirements including chemical registration and permits
- Industry biosecurity, including addressing grower education and awareness
- Chestnut blight eradication.

- **Provide updates for the Australian Nutgrower magazine and manage chestnut industry subscriptions to Australian Nutgrower**

The Communications Officer will have responsibility for:

- 1) Preparing the quarterly chestnut report for the Australian Nutgrower magazine.
- 2) Maintaining the database of growers who have paid their subscription to the Australian Nutgrower as part of their membership to Chestnuts Australia Inc.

- **Conducting ONE (1) industry field day per year; and regional grower meetings and workshops as required**

CAI will undertake the organisation of one field day per year through the following program:

- February 2020, February 2021 and February 2022

The Communications Officer will have the responsibility of organising venues, program material, distribution and registration for each Field Day and working with the CAI Industry Development Officer and the Project Team in developing the technical components of these events.

Aspects to be covered in the Field Days will include:

- The adoption of best practice production and handling guidelines
- Assisting growers to improve farm productivity and improve orchard sustainability
- Assisting growers in the implementation of quality standards
- Adoption of market preferred varieties
- Working with supply chain partners in optimising product quality and presentation
- Adoption of on-farm production pest and disease management through IPM and on-farm biosecurity

- Chemical and biological agent availability and use
- Chestnut industry bio-security processes, including addressing grower education and awareness, reinforcing the messages from the bio-security project on chestnut blight and other relevant exotic pests and diseases.

The Field Days will use the learning and expertise from Plant Health Australia; NSW Temperate Nut Officer, Jacquelyn Simpson/Michael Lang; Victorian Nut Officer, Michael Treeby; State agencies and research facilities; Victorian Horticulture Industry Network; Agriculture Victoria; Overseas growers, researchers and scientists from Europe, USA, China, Chile and New Zealand; CSIRO and other national agencies and departments.

- **Develop alternative methods of communication via email, blasts or a mini e-newsletter to supplement the 'Chestnut Industry News' newsletter and ensure relevant and time sensitive news is effectively communicated**

In the months between the distribution of the 'Chestnut Industry News' CAI will prepare and distribute specific mini e-newsletters when necessary to ensure that relevant, and time sensitive news is effectively communicated. The e-newsletter will be prepared and distributed by the Communications Officer.

Over and above this, regular e-blasts, of general industry information and/or technical nature will be sent to the grower base. This will include the information and newsletters from agencies and organisations including the Victorian Horticulture Industry Network newsletter, and Hort Innovation newsletters. Again, the information distributed will be sourced and distributed by the Communications Officer.

Some of the topics to be covered in e-newsletters and e-blasts will include:

- Best practice production and handling guidelines
 - Farm productivity, quality, sustainability and adoption of market preferred varieties
 - Grower and supply chain product quality and presentation
 - on-farm production pests and diseases
 - chemical requirements including chemical registration and permits
 - industry biosecurity, including addressing grower education and awareness
 - Chestnut blight eradication.
- **Collect, collate and disseminate annual industry statistics, detailing the national planting and production statistics for the industry**

CAI recognises that data collection is an important part of the role in assisting the development and expansion of the industry; assist in planning technical programs, responding to industry, government and community enquiries and allocation of industry resources.

CAI has a strong record of collecting relevant data and supplying it to a range of programs including the following groups and/or publications:

- Fresh Logic and the Hort Innovation Statistics Handbook
- ANIC and the 2019 Nut Booklet – 'Growing for Success'
- PHA
- Nuts for Life annual reports
- CAI weekly reports for levy payers.

CAI also recognises that collecting data from growers is extremely difficult particularly if growers wish to protect their information and not supply it to CAI or any other service provider.

CAI will continue to collect industry data through all possible means including:

- Directly from growers,
- Transport companies and market agents,
- Wholesale markets (nut prices)
- ABS and Government agencies– export and import figures
- ANIC.

CAI will continue collecting and collating the data using Survey Monkey and/or an industry on-line platform. In addition, CAI will investigate the use of GPS, Google Earth or aerial photography but the implementation of such methods will be potentially through a more specialised R&D project/program. CAI will implement an appropriate 'incentive program' for growers to encourage them to complete the annual survey forms.

c) Develop a communications strategy for the project (targeted at all project outputs) including a detailed monitoring and evaluation plan that contains a combination of KPI's measuring outputs and outcomes

CAI will prepare a range of documents to support CH18000 which will include:

- a program logic,
- stakeholder monitoring and engagement plan,
- project risk register,
- communications and engagement plan,
- Full Work Plan,
- 6 monthly KPI's.

CAI will within the first month of the project review, amend and where necessary prepare new documents submit to Hort Innovation as part of Milestone 102. In addition, CAI will agree to and have signed-off a full project work plan with twelve monthly KPI's that measure the performance of the project.

In addition, CAI will develop, in conjunction with Hort Innovation an effective evaluation and monitoring methodology, built around an annual survey that will gather information on project effectiveness and grower adoption of specific research and development or technology and ensure continuous improvement.

Results and discussion

Discussion - Website

The industry website is an important way to communicate and house information. The website was continuously updated with information on chestnut blight, chemical registrations, conference presentations, Hort Innovation Chestnut Fund reports, research projects etc.

Website statistics, along with evaluation will be listed under Outputs in this report.

Result - Attachment A - List of items posted on the industry website www.chestnutsaustraliainc.com.au - 1/10/19 – 31/8/22

Discussion - Newsletters

6 newsletters 'Chestnut Industry News' were produced over the life of the project.

4 other 'Chestnut Industry News Mini Update' newsletters were also distributed to ensure that relevant, and time sensitive news was effectively communicated. The newsletters conveyed information on technical, current issues and updates on relevant R&D.

Result - Attachment B – List only of Chestnut Industry News Newsletters produced – 1/10/19 – 31/8/22

Discussion - Trackable Emails

A total of 18 trackable emails were circulated to stakeholders on specific chestnut industry information. Again timely, relevant information was able to be conveyed on topics such as field days, surveys, Hort Innovation updates, industry standards and obligations.

Result - A full list of trackable emails along with evaluation will be listed under Outputs in this report

Discussion - General Emails

Over and above information shared via newsletter, regular emails (non-trackable), of general industry information and/or a technical nature was shared with the grower base. 101 in total. These included relevant and timely information from agencies and organisations including PHA, Hort Innovation, AgVic, Nuts for Life, ANIC, Freshcare, Safe Ag and CAI.

Result - Attachment C – Full list of emails circulated to stakeholders - non trackable – 1/9/19 – 31/8/22

Discussion - Market Report/Industry Statistics

CAI recognises that data collection is an important part of the role in assisting the development and expansion of the industry. Results assist in planning technical programs, responding to industry, government and community enquiries and allocation of industry resources.

Result - A full list of surveys conducted collecting industry statistics and the collection of market data, along with evaluation will be listed under Outcomes in this report.

Discussion - Nutgrower Reports and other Media

The opportunity to report on chestnut events, issues and activities to the broader horticultural industry and the general public is of interest and raises awareness and adds value to overall communications. Quarterly chestnut reports for the Australian Nutgrower magazine were submitted and the database of growers who have paid their subscription to the Australian Nutgrower as part of their membership to CAI was maintained.

Result - Attachment D - List of Stand-Alone articles published in the Australian Nutgrower plus other media outlets – LoP

Discussion - Field days

Field days have proven time and time again the importance of face-to-face learning and offers an opportunity to network between growers, industry and researchers.

Comments from attendees – 'Informative and interesting' 'Good update on industry developments' 'Doesn't matter how long you have been in the industry; you always learn something new'.

Result - A full list of surveys conducted after each field day, along with evaluation will be listed under Outcomes in this report.

Outputs

Table 1. Output summary

Output	Description	Detail
Newsletters	<p>Chestnut Industry News</p> <p>Chestnut industry stakeholders x (currently) 137</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Best practice production and handling guidelines; •Farm productivity, quality, sustainability and adoption of market preferred varieties; •Grower and supply chain product quality and presentation; •On-farm production pests and diseases; •Chemical requirements including chemical registration and permits; •Industry biosecurity, including addressing grower education and awareness; •Chestnut blight eradication 	<p>The newsletter along with mini updates – 10 in total over the LoP were emailed to chestnut industry stakeholders. Those not on email were posted a hard copy</p> <p>Recipients were surveyed 2 times over the LoP, as to the newsletters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevance • Number of Issues • Adoption <p>Attachment E - Industry Newsletter Survey Results – SurveyMonkey - 1/9/19 – 31/8/22</p> <p>Newsletters are available to all registered levy payers at www.chestnutsaustraliainc.com.au</p>
Industry reports/Articles in the Media	<p>Horticulturists/Consumers/Chestnut growers</p> <p>The Australian Nutgrower + various Newspapers</p>	<p>The Australian Nutgrower is a magazine dedicated to the furtherment of the Australian nut industry</p> <p>A total of 12 industry reports were submitted for publishing</p> <p>A further 16 media articles were produced and published by The Australian Nutgrower and various other newspaper outlets (and or information/photos provided for publishing)</p>
Website	<p>The website is a resource for;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chestnut growers • Levy Payers • Industry • Researchers • Hobby Farmers • General public 	<p>The website was continuously maintained and updated during the LoP</p> <p>Over 200 website and email enquiries were received and followed up on. Providing a valuable conduit of information to all sectors</p> <p>Attachment F – Evaluation - Website statistics</p> <p>Attachment G – List of website and email enquiries received - LoP</p>
Industry Statistics - Tree/Variety/Size/Volume data	<p>Chestnut growers</p> <p>Hort Innovation</p> <p>Peak Industry Body</p> <p>Plant Health Australia</p> <p>Agriculture Victoria</p>	<p>All data collected has been published in Chestnut Industry News</p> <p>Data collected will assist decisions across all aspects of the industry</p>

Market Report – Transported Volumes/Prices	Chestnut growers Hort Innovation Peak Industry Body	All data collected has been published on the industry website www.chestnutsaustraliainc.com.au and in the Chestnut Industry News
Field Days	Chestnut growers Average of 30 registered attendees over 3 events	Influencing growers via research and other relevant information presented All field day presentations have been made available to all registered levy payers at www.chestnutsaustraliainc.com.au
Trackable emails	Chestnut growers - CAI members and chestnut Levy payers Field days/Industry Standards & Obligations/Chestnut blight/Surveys 17 in total	Communication via email on industry information and/technical nature/coming events was shared with the grower base regularly over the LoP Attachment H – Evaluation – trackable emails LoP

Field Day Photos

15th February 2020



2. L-R L-R Presenter Trevor



3. Presenter Luciano Cester



4. Group of attendees

Ranford-Field day hosts

Chris Lightfoot and

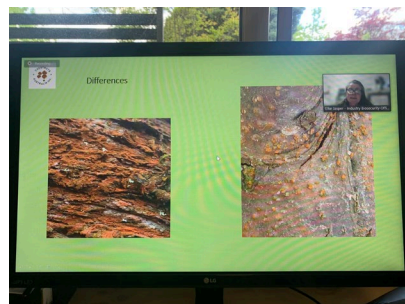
Ugana Erdene

Field day Photos – Zoom Workshop

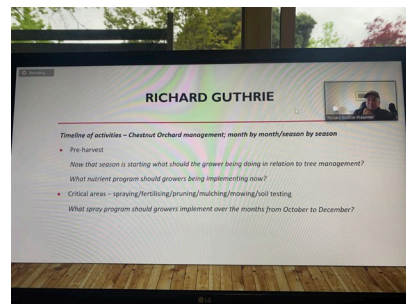
13th October 2021



5. Attendees



6. Presenter Elke Jasper – Blight



7. Presenter Richard Guthrie

Field day Photos

12th February 2022



8. Field Day Host Stef Antonello



9. Presenter Don Ardern



10. Presenter Assoc Prof Femi
Akinsanmi - Phytophthora

Outcomes

Table 2. Outcome summary

Outcome	Alignment to fund outcome, strategy and KPI	Description	Evidence
<p>Industry had access to Chestnut Industry News through a newsletter published in March and September of 2019/2021/2022 – 6 editions in total</p> <p>In addition, Industry had access to Chestnut Industry News Mini Updates through a newsletter published in April 2020/November 2021/December 2021/February 2022 - 4 editions in total</p>	<p>Technology transfer</p> <p>A better informed and engaged industry</p> <p>Higher adoption</p> <p>Efficient and Sustainable practices</p> <p>Supportive Operational Environment</p>	<p>Newsletters were targeted to all chestnut industry stakeholders</p> <p>CH18000 was aiming for a 50% Open Rate and 10% Click Rate (<i>this could vary due to amount of links contained within document</i>)</p> <p>Results achieved over 10 newsletters</p> <p>67.7% average open rate</p> <p>6.9% average click rate</p>	<p>Newsletters were circulated via Mailchimp and the amount of opens/clicks/bounce rates could be evaluated</p> <p>Using this information mailing lists could also be kept up to date</p> <p>Attachment I – Evaluation - Newsletter - Chestnut Industry News – LoP - Open/Click/Bounce – 1/9/19 – 31/8/22</p> <p>Attachment J - Example of Chestnut Industry News – Edition 1 March 2022</p>
<p>Industry reports/articles in the Media</p>	<p>A better informed and engaged industry</p>	<p>12 chestnut industry reports were submitted to the Australian Nutgrower. In addition, a further 16 media articles were produced and published by The Australian Nutgrower and various other newspaper outlets (and or information provided for publishing)</p>	<p>Attachment D - List of Stand-Alone articles published in the Australian Nutgrower plus other media outlets – LoP</p>
<p>Website - two components to this output:</p> <p>Website maintenance</p> <p>Uploading of new content</p>	<p>A better informed and engaged industry</p> <p>Higher adoption</p> <p>Managing industry effectively</p>	<p>Updated and edited continuously as required</p>	<p>Attachment A - List of items posted on the industry website www.chestnutsaustraliainc.com.au - 1/10/19 – 31/8/22</p>
<p>Industry Statistics - Tree/Variety/Size/Volume data</p>	<p>Better industry data is required to inform decision-making</p> <p>Managing industry effectively</p>	<p>A yearly survey was conducted</p> <p>An incentive was offered to participate</p>	<p>Data was collected via a SurveyMonkey</p> <p>Compiled statistics were disseminated through the 'Chestnut Industry News'</p> <p>Attachment K - Chestnut Industry Collection of Annual Statistics - tree data 2019 - 2022</p>

<p>Market Report – Transported Volumes/Prices</p>	<p>Better industry data is required to inform decision-making</p> <p>Managing industry effectively</p>	<p>Information was collected weekly during the season and circulated to chestnut stakeholders</p> <p>Decisions based on these reports could influence growers, if and when to send chestnuts to market</p>	<p>Data was collected weekly, to build into a report that assisted industry to determine the size of the crop, where the bulk of chestnuts were sold and at what price according to size</p> <p>All data is housed on the website www.chestnutsaustraliainc.com.au in the Levy Payers section under Market Report</p> <p>2022 - As of the 31st August, the date this report was submitted, 2022 data was still being collected</p> <p>Results of the 2022 Market Report will be made available in Chestnut Industry News in March 2023 and published on the industry website in November 2022</p> <p>Attachment L - Statistics – Market Data – 2019 - 2021</p>
<p>Field Days - 2 in person field days were held and one online Workshop (due to COVID-19 restrictions)</p>	<p>Higher adoption</p> <p>Market Opportunities</p> <p>Product Value</p> <p>Efficient and Sustainable practices</p> <p>Supportive Operational Environment</p> <p>A better informed and engaged industry</p>	<p>Sharing knowledge</p> <p>Higher level of productivity across industry</p> <p>Technology transfer</p> <p>Networking opportunities</p>	<p>Face to face Field days were held in February of 2020 and 2022</p> <p>An online Zoom Workshop was held in October 2022</p> <p>Feedback was provided by conducting a survey of each event</p> <p>Attachment M - Monitoring and Evaluation – Field Days - 1/9/19 – 31/8/22</p>
<p>Trackable emails</p>	<p>A better informed and engaged industry</p> <p>Higher adoption</p> <p>Market Opportunities</p> <p>Supportive Operational Environment</p>	<p>Sharing knowledge on specific chestnut industry information</p>	<p>A total of 17 trackable emails were distributed over the LoP</p> <p>Attachment N - List of Trackable Emails Circulated on Specific Chestnut Industry Information – 1/9/19 – 31/8/22</p>

Monitoring and evaluation

Table 3. Key Evaluation Questions

Key Evaluation Question	Project performance	Continuous improvement opportunities
Relevance of Newsletters	<p>Newsletters have proven to be an effective means of communication</p> <p>Stakeholders surveyed were satisfied with the number of newsletters produced, their relevance and the usefulness of the information</p> <p>Attachment E - Industry Newsletter Survey Results – SurveyMonkey - 1/9/19 – 31/8/22</p>	<p>Newsletters and Mini Updates need to source relevant, timely and information of interest, to be of real use to growers</p>
Importance of the industry Website	<p>The industry website plays a key role in keeping both CAI members and Levy Payers informed and updated</p> <p>From statistics generated it is clear that the website is a vital means of communicating to all sectors</p> <p>Attachment F - Website statistics - 2019 – 2022</p> <p>Having a single point of contact for industry provides a supportive operational environment for CAI Members and Levy Payers alike including a host of other departments and the general public sourcing information on the chestnut industry</p> <p>Attachment G - Total amount of Website and Email enquiries received – September 2019 – August 2022</p>	<p>Updating the website regularly remains a key function in keeping the website current. The website also provides the means to house important industry documents, reports and newsletters</p>
Why invest in holding Field Days	<p>Attending levy-funded events and activities with likeminded persons is an important way to learn about the positive changes stakeholders can make to their business to increase productivity and profitability</p> <p>Valuable learnings can be taken from what not to do as much as what to do</p> <p>Networking in person at events continues to be one of the key benefits of attending field days stated in survey responses</p> <p>Attachment M - Evaluation - field days - LoP</p>	<p>Promoting and engaging growers to attend is a challenge. Generally, the majority of chestnut growers work their orchard's part time, with full time employment commitments elsewhere, so they are time poor. Programs must address industry concerns, showcase new technologies, deliver up to date research and be of general interest to attract attendees</p>
Why spend time gathering Industry Statistics -Tree data	<p>It vital that statistics can be gathered to see where the industry is at as regards; Varieties grown/Nut</p>	<p>Incentives have been offered to growers to encourage participation</p> <p>It is recommended this continue to</p>

	<p>size/Volumes/Trees/Tree Losses/% of Nut Rot/Future plantings</p> <p>Attachment K - Chestnut Industry Collection of Annual Statistics 2019 - 2022 tree data</p>	<p>promote engagement</p>
<p>What are the benefits of providing a weekly Market Report</p>	<p>The Market Report serves two purposes, it allows growers in real time to see volumes transported to the major wholesales market and at the end of the season, data collected is used to determine the size of the overall crop</p> <p>Attachment L - Statistics – Market Data – 2019 - 2021</p>	<p>CAI continues to rely of good will of a major NE transport company to produce the weekly report</p> <p>As an industry we thank them for their support and commitment to this arrangement</p>
<p>Relevance of Trackable Emails</p>	<p>Communication via Mailchimp email on industry information; technical/obligations/coming events/general interest was shared with the grower base regularly</p> <p>Attachment H – Trackable Emails Circulated on Specific Chestnut Industry Information – Open/Click/Bounce - 5/9/19 – 31/8/22</p>	<p>Due to the prevalence of junk emails, Communication from industry must cut through this and continue to be of interest to growers and provide value to their businesses</p> <p>Having a mechanism to analyze if the emails are being considered assists in the overall communication program</p>

Recommendations

An accessible/knowledgeable conduit for growers/researchers/general public/Government departments and Hort Innovation is critical to the everyday functions of Chestnuts Australia.

This funded project was a means to manage three of the industries key priority areas – a supportive operational environment, managing industry effectively and providing a consistent point of contact.

It was highly recommended by chestnut industry stakeholders to further fund a communications program.

Refereed scientific publications

N/A

References

N/A

Intellectual property

No project IP or commercialisation to report.

Acknowledgements

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Trevor Ranford – CAI Industry Development Officer

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Don Ardern – Chestnut Nurseryman