

# What happened in the **Dried Tree Fruit** **Fund** last year?

**Annual Report 2020/21**



# About Hort Innovation and the Dried Tree Fruit Fund

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

Whilst there were no current investments in the Dried Tree Fruit during 2020/21, the impact of a key industry program that delivered new varieties for dried apricot growers was seen. Read on for an overview of what was delivered.

We also encourage you to download a copy of the overarching Hort Innovation Annual Report 2020/21 at [www.horticulture.com.au/annual-report-portal](http://www.horticulture.com.au/annual-report-portal) to better understand how Hort Innovation worked for the benefit of the horticulture sector during the year.

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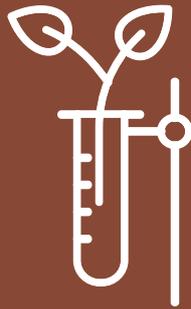
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**\$935**  
invested in R&D



**\$5,188**  
in levies collected  
by the Government and passed on to  
Hort Innovation for investment



**\$500,000**  
The production value of  
Australian dried tree fruit was  
\$500,000 in 2019/20



**440t**  
Australia produced more  
than 440 tonnes of dried tree  
fruit in 2019/20

These facts and more can be found in the Australian Horticulture Statistics Handbook, which is delivered by Hort Innovation each year. The handbook is packed with horticulture statistical information and analysis for some 75 categories, for use by individual industries and the wider sector. The 2019/20 edition was released in early 2021 and features an interactive dashboard format for desktop users. See [www.horticulture.com.au/horticulture-statistics-handbook](http://www.horticulture.com.au/horticulture-statistics-handbook).



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



**Preparation support for pest incursions such as fall armyworm and serpentine leafminer**, including emergency minor use permits and longer-term investments to bolster the horticulture sector's response



**Investments in the Hort Frontiers strategic partnership** initiative to address longer-term and often complex issues and opportunities critical to the future of Australian horticulture – see [www.horticulture.com.au/hort-frontiers](http://www.horticulture.com.au/hort-frontiers)\*



**Projects supported by grants** secured by Hort Innovation, ranging from cross-sector Rural R&D for Profit initiatives to horticulture-specific work to aid in access to crop protection products – see the Hort Innovation Annual Report 2020/21 for more\*

You can visit [www.horticulture.com.au/dried-tree-fruit](http://www.horticulture.com.au/dried-tree-fruit) at any time to access information on new, ongoing and completed projects, and to download resources produced by levy investments such as fact sheets and guides.

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



# Financial operating statement

## Dried Tree Fruit Fund Financial operating statement 2020/21

	R&D (\$)	Total (\$)
	2020/21 July – June	2020/21 July – June
<b>OPENING BALANCE</b>	<b>35,407</b>	<b>35,407</b>
Levies from growers (net of collection costs)	5,188	5,188
Australian Government money	5,306	5,306
Other income*	104	104
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>10,598</b>	<b>10,598</b>
Project funding	935	935
Consultation with and advice from growers	–	–
Service delivery	165	165
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>1,100</b>	<b>1,100</b>
Levy contribution to across-industry activity	–	–
<b>CLOSING BALANCE</b>	<b>44,905</b>	<b>44,905</b>
Levy collection costs	171	171

\* Interest, royalties

**Levy collection costs** – These are the costs associated with the collection of levies from industry charged by Levy Revenue Services (LRS)

**Service delivery** – Also known as Corporate Cost Recovery (CCR), this is the total cost of managing the investment portfolio charged by Hort Innovation

# Making sure that levy investment decisions align with industry priorities

## What will be the Dried Tree Fruit Fund's focus over the next five years?



The dried tree fruit Strategic Investment Plan (SIP) was created in 2021 to reflect current priorities for the dried tree fruit industry. This involved extensive consultation with dried tree fruit growers and industry stakeholders, including Dried Fruits Australia. The SIP is the roadmap that helps guide Hort Innovation's oversight and management of individual levy industry investment programs.

The dried tree fruit SIP lays the foundation for decision making in levy investments and represents the balanced interest of the particular industry from which the levy is collected. The most important function of the SIP is to make sure that levy investment decisions align with industry priorities.

The dried tree fruit SIP identifies four outcome areas that will contribute to the productivity and profitability of the dried tree fruit sector. They are:

- Industry supply, productivity and sustainability
- Demand creation
- Extension and capability
- Business insights.

## What projects will the fund be investing in next year?

The dried tree fruit Annual Investment Plan (AIP) 2021/22 will detail how levy funds will be spent over the 12-month period. Investment decisions will be guided by the industry SIP and prioritised based on potential industry impact, as well as availability of levy funds.

The AIP is developed by Hort Innovation, and is informed by the SIP and industry consultation, including collaboration with Dried Fruits Australia. The AIP is then discussed with the industry SIAP for feedback and prioritisation. All investments will need to link to the industry's SIP by addressing a minimum of one KPI against a strategy under one of the four outcomes.

Annual Investment Plans will be published each year over the lifespan of the SIP and industry stakeholders will be advised via established communication channels.

Hort Innovation will continue to report on fund performance regularly, with more focus on reporting on outcomes and the impact of investments.



**When available, you can visit [www.horticulture.com.au/dried-tree-fruit-fund-management](http://www.horticulture.com.au/dried-tree-fruit-fund-management) to view both documents and get a full picture of how your levy will be invested over the next five years.**

# Boosting apricot appeal with ever tastier varieties

**This investment produced new apricot varieties that better meet consumer tastes, increase market share, and help future-proof the industry.**

## The challenge

The dried apricot industry needed to develop new, higher-density apricot varieties to satisfy Australian tastes, sustain and grow the industry, and allow for increased mechanisation in the future.

## Meet Tim

South Australian apricot grower, Tim Grieger, has been actively involved with this project, experimenting with many different varieties over the years. Through his own vast experience, and the research and development work of this program, he's found several new varieties suited to his operation.

"I have a fairly decent size trial patch here, I'm establishing a commercial production," says Tim. "There are a couple of varieties I tried, which I didn't like, and I pulled out. But I think that all of the varieties they've ended up with now are pretty good."

According to Tim, when it comes to the taste test, the verdict is in. "The flavour and the eating quality of the new varieties is second to none. I was selling locally to the local market here, and the customer went for the new variety every time... and came back for more. So, that's the value of what we've got. But there's still a lot of learning to do."

During the program, growers were regularly informed about the new varieties involved, and their many different properties – all valuable tools, says Tim. "The comms that I get is pretty good and the info sheets I get on each variety is excellent. That was well set out and well done."

While this investment wrapped up in the 2019/20 financial year, the benefits of these new apricot varieties will have a positive impact on growers and the industry for years to come.

## The approach

This program is the culmination of a 35-year-old traditional breeding program to bring superior new varieties to the Australian market. In 2007 the program made crosses that produced 4500 new apricot seedlings. Superior new apricot varieties resulting from this are now commercially available to fresh and dried apricot growers for export and domestic markets.

The evaluation of recently released lines is continuing as we learn more about the intricacies of new releases with each passing season, in different regions, as more growers plant them with greater confidence. The new varieties are supported by grower information sheets that enable growers to make informed decisions on their use and will please consumers with a vastly improved consumer focused product on retail shelves.

## The impact

By focusing on increased fruit sugars in breeding and consumer eating experience via sensory panels during evaluation, this program has clearly identified several lines that deliver greatly improved consumer eating quality and are well adapted to Australian conditions. As with the earlier iteration, the new varieties will be supported by a grower information campaign.

For more information, visit [hortinn.com/mt12015](http://hortinn.com/mt12015)

## Project details

**Selecting and releasing to industry high quality fresh and dried Australian apricots for export and domestic markets (MT12015)**

Key research provider: Dried Fruits Australia

Status: Completed

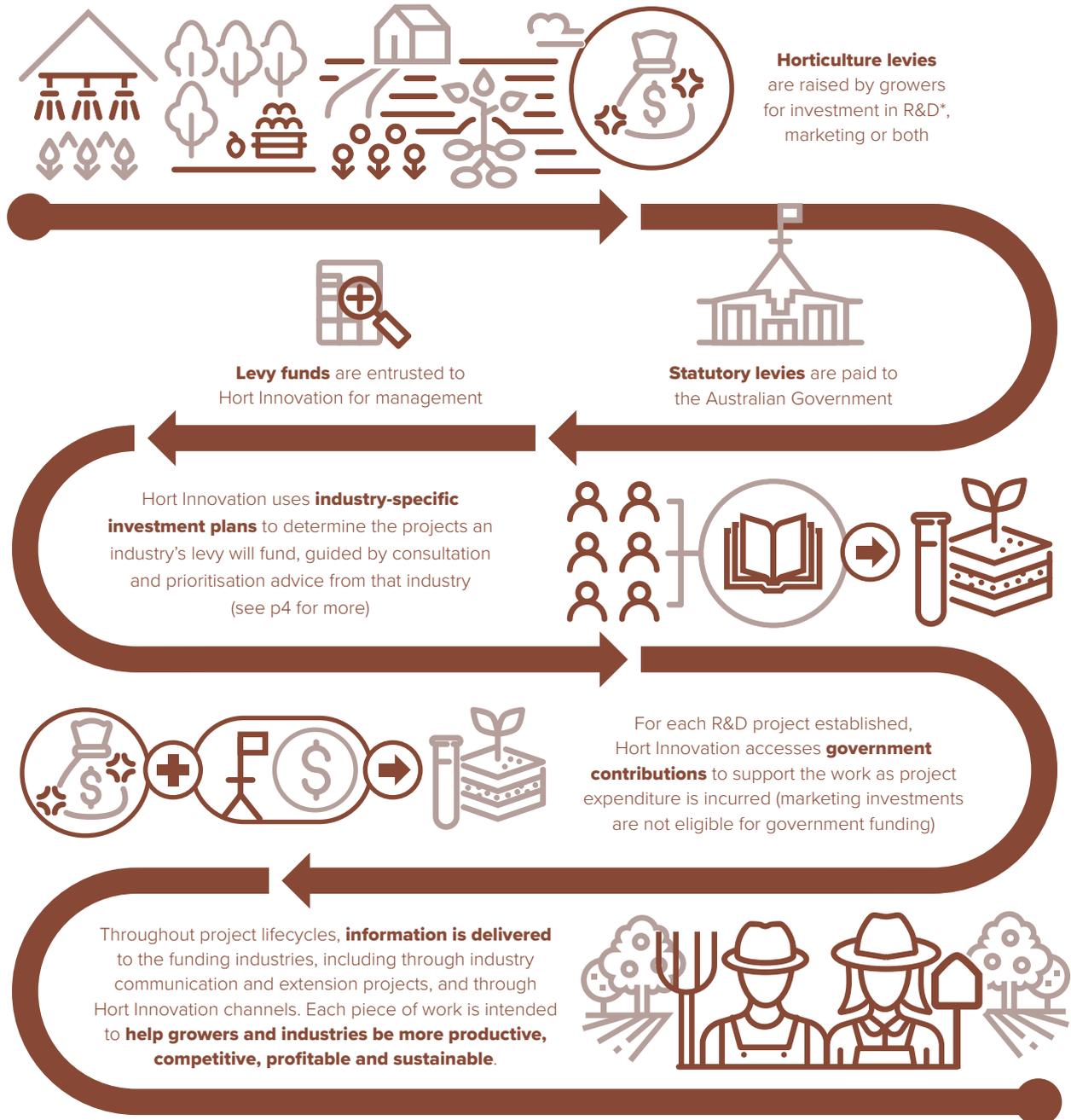
Start date: February 2013

End date: July 2018

Estimated value for life of project: \$182,000

# How strategic levy investments are made in the Dried Tree Fruit Fund

The below diagram shows how Hort Innovation makes strategic levy investments on behalf of horticulture industries. The dried tree fruit R&D levy is invested this way during the year, guided by the dried tree fruit Strategic Investment Plan 2017-2021 and advice from the industry's investment advisory panel.



\* Encapsulating extension and international trade

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

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