

What happened in the Nursery Fund last year?

Annual Report 2021/22



About Hort Innovation and the Nursery 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 nursery R&D and marketing levies, together with Australian Government contributions, into key initiatives for growers, through the Nursery Fund. We're proud of the work we do to help drive productivity, profitability, and demand for nursery growers and the horticulture sector.

Read on for an overview of what Hort Innovation delivered in the Nursery Fund during the year.

We also encourage you to download a copy of the overarching Hort Innovation Annual Report 2021/22 at www.horticulture.com.au/annual-report-portal to see how Hort Innovation worked to benefit the horticulture sector during the year.

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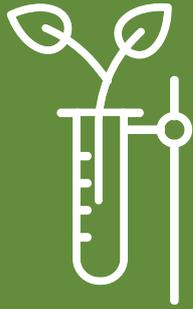
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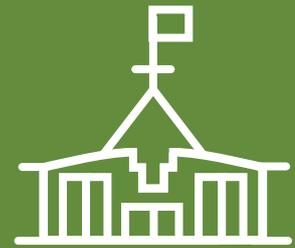
\$2.49M

invested in R&D



\$824,495

invested in marketing



\$2.95M

in levies collected
by the Government and passed on to
Hort Innovation for investment

Industry facts



\$2.79B

The nursery industry is Australia's largest horticulture industry by value, with a production value of \$2.79 billion in 2020/21



2.3B

Production units (for example, live plants and starter plants) have been increasing steadily, growing from 1.9 billion in 2017/18 to 2.3 billion in 2020/21



3

The majority of nursery production takes place in three states: Queensland (30 per cent), New South Wales (30 per cent) and Victoria (28 per cent)

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. See www.horticulture.com.au/horticulture-statistics-handbook.

Consumer insights



65%

65 per cent of the Australian population purchased nursery products in the 12 months to March 2021



4.7 plants

An average of 4.7 plants were purchased per Australian adult in the last twelve months for potted application, whether indoor or outdoor

These insights were made available through the Harvest to Home platform (www.harvesttohome.net.au) delivered as part of an investment providing regular consumer behaviour data and insight reporting.

Just some of the things delivered for you during the year



A host of biosecurity-related programs to help prepare and protect the nursery industry from possible pest and disease threats (see www.horticulture.com.au/nursery)



The industry communications program, delivering the *Your Levy @ Work* newsletter and website (www.yourlevyatwork.com.au), monthly *Nursery Papers* and plenty more



The nursery industry data tool, which allows growers to benchmark core aspects of their business and can be requested by emailing communications@horticulture.com.au



A multi-pronged domestic marketing campaign, centred around the Plant Life Balance initiative (myplantlifebalance.com.au) plus ongoing work through Greener Spaces Better Places (www.greenerespacesbetterplaces.com.au) – read more on [p10](#)



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*



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 2021/22 for more details*

You can visit www.horticulture.com.au/nursery at any time to access information on new, ongoing and completed projects, and to download resources produced by your levy investments.

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

Here's how your R&D levy was invested over the year



The nursery Strategic Investment Plan (SIP) guides investments specific to the Hort Innovation Nursery Fund. The SIP features priority outcome areas identified and agreed upon by the industry. Hort Innovation works to invest in R&D and marketing initiatives aligned to these.

The above chart shows how project expenditure in the Nursery Fund during 2021/22 was aligned to the SIP. We have allocated each project to a SIP outcome based on its primary objective.

Which projects were in each of the SIP outcome areas?

Outcome 1: Demand creation

Demand creation supports the Australian nursery industry to develop existing and future domestic markets.

Marketing activities during 2021/22 contributed towards the demand creation outcome. You can read more about this year's nursery marketing campaign on [p10](#).

Outcome 2: Industry supply, productivity and sustainability

The Australian nursery industry has increased profitability, efficiency and sustainability through innovative R&D, biosecurity and sustainable BMPs.

Project title and code	2021/22 investment	Status	More information
Plant Biosecurity Research Initiative – Phase 2 (HA19007)	\$2,402	Ongoing	
Improving preparedness of the Australian horticultural sector to the threat potentially posed by Xylella fastidiosa (a severe biosecurity risk) (MT17006)	\$17,816	Ongoing	hortinn.com/mt17006
Improving plant industry access to new genetics through faster and more accurate diagnostics using next generation sequencing (MT18005)	\$30,000	Ongoing	hortinn.com/mt18005
National tomato potato psyllid and zebra chip surveillance (MT18008)	\$41,753	Ongoing	hortinn.com/mt18008
Field-based testing for fall armyworm, Spodoptera frugiperda (MT19014)	\$2,000	Completed	hortinn.com/mt19014
Identifying potential parasitoids of the fall armyworm, Spodoptera frugiperda, and the risk to Australian horticulture (MT19015)	\$7,166	Completed	hortinn.com/mt19015
Regulatory support and coordination (pesticides) (MT20007)	\$7,912	Ongoing	hortinn.com/mt20007
Improving pest management for the nursery industry (NY17009)	\$39,540	Completed	hortinn.com/ny17009
Nursery industry natural disaster risk mitigation and recovery plan (NY18008)	\$58,000	Completed	hortinn.com/ny18008
Ensuring business continuity during biosecurity incursions – social and economic research learnings for the production nursery industry (NY18010)	\$92,590	Completed	hortinn.com/ny18010

Continued

Investments

Outcome 2: Industry supply, productivity and sustainability (continued)

Project title and code	2021/22 investment	Status	More information
Review of the biosecurity plan for the nursery industry (NY19003)	\$14,349	Ongoing	hortinn.com/ny19003
Improving on-farm surveillance strategies for tospoviruses and thrips to enhance the biosecurity of the nursery industry (NY19007)	\$46,469	Ongoing	hortinn.com/ny19007
Resourcing, supporting and assessing biosecurity in nursery production (NY20000)	\$314,158	Ongoing	hortinn.com/ny20000
National biosecurity and sustainable plant production program (NY20001)	\$1,057,768	Ongoing	hortinn.com/ny20001
Digital remote monitoring to improve horticulture's environmental performance (ST19024)	\$93,750	Ongoing	hortinn.com/st19024

Outcome 3: Extension and capability

Improved capability and an innovative culture in the Australian nursery industry maximises investments in productivity and demand.

Project title and code	2021/22 investment	Status	More information
Australian nursery industry communications program (NY18001)	\$316,098	Ongoing	hortinn.com/ny18001
Nursery industry conferences (NY21001)	\$6,818	Completed	hortinn.com/ny21001

Outcome 4: Business insights

The Australian nursery industry is more profitable through informed decision-making using consumer knowledge and tracking, independent reviews, production statistics, benchmarking and independent reviews.

Project title and code	2021/22 investment	Status	More information
Nursery industry statistics 2020-21 to 2024-25 (NY21000)	\$289,692	Ongoing	hortinn.com/ny21000

Financial operating statement

Nursery Fund Financial operating statement 2021/22

	R&D (\$)	Marketing (\$)	Total (\$)
	2021/22 July – June	2021/22 July – June	2021/22 July – June
OPENING BALANCE	296,185	397,207	693,392
Levies from growers	1,724,246	1,229,498	2,953,744
Australian Government money	1,445,572	–	1,445,572
Other income*	1,636	808	2,443
TOTAL INCOME	3,171,454	1,230,305	4,401,759
Project funding	2,487,990	824,495	3,312,485
Consultation with and advice from growers	2,709	1,459	4,168
Service delivery	400,445	170,030	570,475
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	2,891,143	995,984	3,887,128
CLOSING BALANCE	603,374	487,347	1,090,722
Levy collection costs	(26,879)	144,181	117,302

*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 Nursery Fund's focus over the next five years?



Hort Innovation developed the nursery Strategic Investment Plan (SIP) in 2021 to reflect current priorities for the nursery industry, involving extensive consultation with nursery growers and industry stakeholders, including Greenlife Industry Australia. The SIP is the roadmap that helps guide Hort Innovation's oversight and management of individual levy industry investment programs.

The nursery SIP lays the foundation for decision-making in levy investments and represents the balanced interests of the nursery industry. The most important function of the SIP is to make sure that levy investment decisions align with industry priorities.

The nursery SIP identifies four outcome areas that will contribute to the productivity and profitability of the 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 nursery Annual Investment Plan (AIP) 2022/23 details how Hort Innovation spends levy funds over 12 months. The nursery industry SIP guides investment decisions, and our consultation process prioritises investments based on potential impact and levy fund availability.

Hort Innovation publishes Annual Investment Plans each year over the lifespan of the SIP and advises industry stakeholders via various communication channels.

Hort Innovation will continue to report on fund performance regularly, focusing on outcomes and the impact of investments.



Visit www.horticulture.com.au/nursery-fund-management to view both documents and better understand how Hort Innovation invests your levy.

Smart technology helping Golden Grove Nursery to optimise their efficiency

In October 2019, Hort Innovation secured a \$2.9 million grant through Landcare's Smart Farming Partnerships program, supported by the Australian Government. Together with some nursery levy contributions, the funding is allowing us to work with partners to raise the horticulture sector's environmental performance.

The *Digital remote monitoring to improve horticulture's environmental performance (ST19024)* project involves collaborators including Hort Innovation, Applied Horticultural Research, Freshcare, Hitachi Consulting, Landcare and industry bodies Greenlife Industry Australia, AUSVEG, the Australian Banana Growers' Council, the Australian Macadamia Society and Growcom.

With a focus on protecting ecosystems in horticulture growing regions, it's establishing four demonstration 'smart farms' in the Great Barrier Reef catchment area. Here, remote technology will be used in the continuous monitoring of environmental indicators such as nutrient leaching, sediment run-off, water and energy use efficiency and more.

The demonstration sites will be used to help growers understand digital environmental monitoring and its use in business decision making and good environmental stewardship.

Meet Wayne Parr from Golden Grove Nursery

Golden Grove Nursery is one of Australia's leading citrus production nurseries, providing commercial citrus growers with exceptional quality products at affordable prices.



Golden Grove Nursery must continuously be at the forefront of new technology trends and invest in innovation to maintain this position. That's according to Wayne Parr, Director of Golden Grove Queensland Pty Ltd, a fourth-generation citrus grower with vast practical experience spanning over 40 years as a commercial grower of horticultural and agriculture crops.

The production nursery currently supplies over 200,000 nursery trees per year (with the capacity to provide 240,000 nursery trees) into the Queensland citrus industry and other fruit tree industries.

Owing to its dedication to innovation, Golden Grove Nursery has been an ideal participant in the strategic levy-funded project *Digital remote monitoring to improve horticulture's environmental performance (ST19024)*. The project has identified and supported Golden Grove Nursery in implementing a new innovative irrigation control system, installing new environmental measuring devices, and redesigning growing media for horticultural tree stock.

"With a firm focus on innovation, we are incredibly excited to be a part of this project. It will provide Golden Grove Nursery with the tools and knowledge to implement the latest technology and trendsetting ideas to transform our growing processes," Wayne said.

Meet a grower



“

“A key goal for this project is to improve our water management processes, reduce the overheads of water usage and decrease the environmental impact through runoff catchment and recycling.

“Improving labour efficiency is another critical area of focus; by adopting innovative technology, we hope to create more streamlined nursery operations and growing practices.

“These new processes will help to reduce crop growth cycle times and provide commercial growers with a higher quality uniform crop.”

“Since starting this project, we have already made big changes. We installed a free-standing weather station within the shade house to monitor the microclimate. There are pH, EC and Redox sensors installed in the dam and drain to monitor water quality. We’ve also installed four networked cameras to monitor dam overflow, pest activity via sticky traps, stem length and crop growth. Another significant change was the installation of a leachate monitor to identify nutrient runoff, weight scales and soil moisture sensors to measure the growing media moisture content and the crop water use.”

“Since incorporating new information and communication technology into our day-to-day processes, we have begun to optimise our productivity and labour efficiency,” Wayne said.

As a result of this project, we have reimagined our entire business operation and are incredibly excited to reap the rewards of investing in innovative technology, creating a thriving, sustainable business.”

Wayne Parr, nursery grower

“With the help of smart technology, data is now uploaded to the cloud using modern communication technologies and presented live on a screen in the office, which removes the need to manually record the data in spreadsheets.”

“We’ve also found the monitoring sensors are starting to give the nursery staff a good overview of the crop requirements through the different growth stages and weather events.

“As a result of this project, we have reimagined our entire business operation and are incredibly excited to reap the rewards of investing in innovative technology, creating a thriving, sustainable business.

Greener Spaces Better Places encourages Aussies to buy more plants

Hort Innovation is responsible for investing the nursery marketing levy into a range of activities to drive awareness and consideration. Here's a quick look at some of the activities and achievements in 2021/22.

CONSUMER MARKETING

In 2021/22, the consumer marketing campaign for nursery involved three key activities: the *Greener Spaces Better Places* brand relaunch, *School of Thumb* consumer video content series, and social media activity.

***Greener Spaces Better Places* brand launch**

In February 2022, the *Greener Spaces Better Places* brand was launched to combine the *Greener Spaces Better Places* government program with the former consumer brand Plant Life Balance. *Greener Spaces Better Places* is now the overarching brand for

the nursery marketing program, creating a unified movement that brings the power of plants into the lives of all Australians. It acknowledges that a greener Australia starts at home, but continues into the country's streets, suburbs, and cities. A complimentary mixture of media channels was used to launch the rebrand, including out-of-home advertising, public relations, an ambassador partnership, and social media.



Marketing spotlight



Out of home

An out-of-home campaign ran from February to April 2022. Street furniture and large digital advertisements were showcased near nurseries in Western Australia, Queensland, South Australia, New South Wales and Victoria.

Public relations

A national media campaign introduced the new *Greener Spaces Better Places* brand to the key target audience. Partnering with Australian landscape designer and television presenter Charlie Albone from Better Homes and Gardens as a brand ambassador, public relations activity aimed to inspire and encourage Australians to feel confident in incorporating plants into their living spaces with practical tips.

Strong traction was received with media, with a total of 121 pieces of coverage across major media channels, which provided more than 64 million opportunities to be seen. The channels included *The Morning Show*,

7 News, *The West Australian*, *Herald Sun*, *WA Today*, *The Daily Telegraph*, *The Mercury*, *The Advertiser*, *Brisbane Times*, *Sydney Morning Herald*, *The Age*, *Sunday Life* and *Women's Day*.

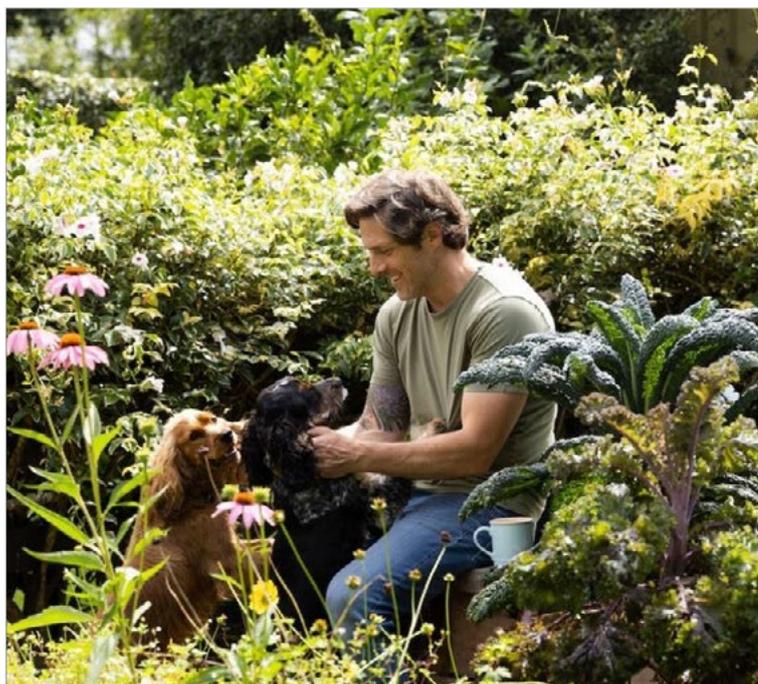
Social media

A social media partnership with brand ambassador Charlie Albone was used to extend the reach of the campaign's message. Charlie Albone was able to add value and bring a face to the new *Greener Spaces Better Places* brand, and his posts outperformed other content in terms of the amount of engagement, people reached, saves and profile activity.

The *Greener Spaces Better Places* Instagram account grew exponentially over the last year. This was achieved through consistent posting, creating engaging content for the community (including user-generated content) and having clear content pillars. In turn, the campaign has educated consumers and enhanced their social media experience.



Continued



 **greenerespacesbetterplaces** Are you looking for the best advice to get you confident in the garden? Great! Now's the time to give your green thumb a go because we've teamed up with gardening guru @charlie_albone to bring just that to the Greener Spaces Better Places community.

Charlie will be sharing his best-ofs, such as; potting 101, how to turn a dirt patch into a flurry of colour, and tending to your veggies, plus more!

Stay tuned and get the gardening gloves ready!

 @amiebaines_photographer for @greenerespacesbetterplaces

Edited · 19w



andyditmann2u ❤️❤️

7w Reply



dorothy.ella Love those 🐶

20w Reply



bluebellechelle And he loves dogs, this guy can't get any better! Spaniels?!



610 likes

FEBRUARY 11

During 2021/22, the social media campaign:

- Achieved over nine million impressions (number of times content appears on user's screen), a 902 per cent increase from the previous year.
- Reached over seven million consumers (number of people viewing the content), an 840 per cent increase from the previous year.
- The *Greener Spaces Better Places* Instagram account has increased followers by some 13,500 people.

School of Thumb consumer content series

School of Thumb is a horticultural content series that leverages a group of colourful expert growers as the 'watchers', the experts solve the public's horticultural and green space queries Australia-wide, hosted by stand-up comedian and television host Claire Hooper. In June 2022, the series completed production of its first three episodes in Western Australia (for launch in early 2022/23), with more videos scheduled for production, likely in NSW and VIC throughout the year.

School of Thumb sets to equip the general public with simple gardening skills and knowledge to build and grow green spaces across Australia. The series which will primarily be seen on Instagram initially through organic and paid content aims to educate and inspire the everyday Australian on greenlife.

GOVERNMENT CAMPAIGN

Map-Listen-Learn-Connect

'Map-Listen-Learn-Connect' was the main 'always-on' feature of the government campaign. It involved the stakeholder management of several key bodies in the green urban space. These meetings included strategic recurring working groups and a peer review of the upcoming *National Urban Green Infrastructure Handbook for Standards Australia*, in partnership with Living Melbourne. This ensured Greener Spaces Better Places sustained its position as Australia's leading voice in the green space.

Let's Grow

The nursery R&D levy-funded project *Consumer usage and attitudes research (NY20002)* produced a report developed into a resource for local governments to engage their communities in private land urban greening. The *Let's Grow report* was launched nationally at the Local Governments for Sustainability (ICLEI) 'Cities With Nature' webinar in November 2021. Approximately 150 policymakers, practitioners, innovators, and institutions connected to urban greening and planning attended the well-received session. Briefings were also provided to 453 people in local and state governments' roles across all states, along with a local presenter talking about the role of planning in private land urban greening.

Marketing spotlight



Urban Greeners' Resource Hub 2.0

Greener Spaces Better Places teamed up with Living Melbourne to refresh the [Urban Greeners' Resource Hub](#). This one-stop, curated collection of best practice tools, guides, resources, and case studies helps urban greening professionals protect and enhance Australia's urban forests and green cover in towns and cities. The Urban Greeners' Resource Hub was developed in close consultation with technical experts across research, industry, and local government. Based on community feedback, content and functionality have been updated to provide urban greening professionals with a new and improved hub.

INDUSTRY CAMPAIGN

Growers are an essential stakeholder in all parts of the nursery marketing program. Throughout the 2021 marketing campaign, the nursery industry was engaged in the program to extend its reach and drive the end goal of increased plant sales for all stakeholders.

This included activities such as:

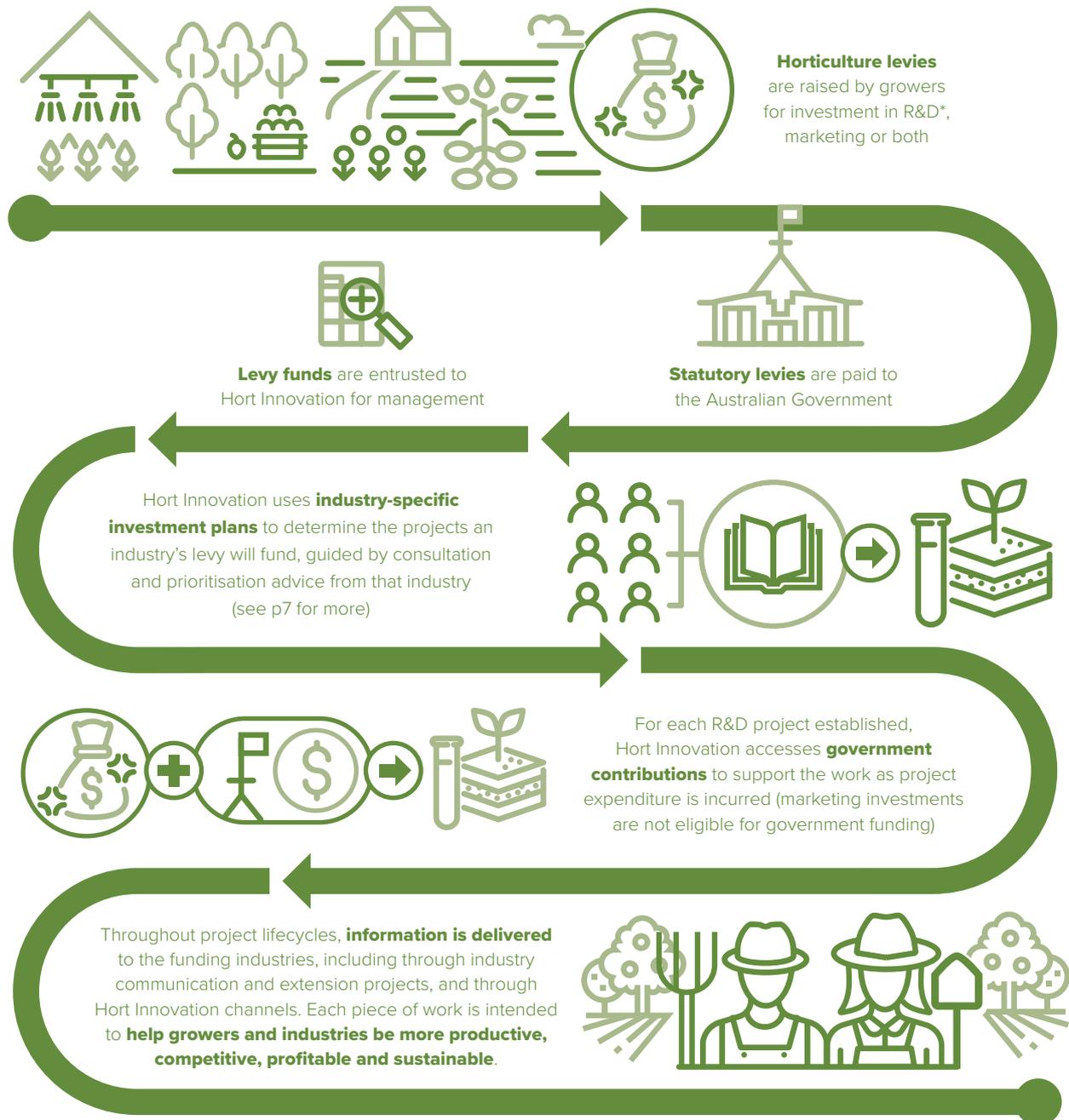
- A bi-monthly double-page spread in the Hort Journal.
- Updates to the Living Network through a monthly Living Network marketing email. This e-newsletter was sent to over 3,600 urban greening professionals, practitioners and researchers. It provides a monthly round-up of news, research releases, events, case studies and projects around Australia. Living Network subscriptions increased by 15 per cent this financial year.
- Ongoing connection with the Nursery & Garden Industry Victoria (NGIV) as part of the program's 'Map-Listen-Learn-Connect' stream and any connections are facilitated to industry.

A *School of Thumb* asset kit and user guide was also developed for retail nurseries. Its distribution strategy is currently in development for rollout in 2022/23. The asset kit includes social media content for nurseries to use across their own channels, downloadable and print-ready design assets (including point of sale cards, shelf wobblers and plant tags) and instructions on how to run a *School of Thumb* event.

In 2021/22 the Hort Innovation Marketing function underwent a significant shift in their approach to investing marketing levies. You can read more about this in the 2021/22 Hort Innovation Company Annual Report at www.horticulture.com.au/annual-report-portal.

How strategic levy investments are made in the Nursery Fund

The below diagram shows how Hort Innovation makes strategic levy investments on behalf of horticulture industries. The nursery R&D and marketing levies were invested this way during the year, guided by the nursery Strategic Investment Plan 2022-2026 and advice from the industry's investment advisory panel.



* Encapsulating extension and international trade

To learn more about funding specific to the Hort Innovation Nursery Fund, visit www.horticulture.com.au/nursery. 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.

Hort Innovation

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