



*R&D Insights* contains the latest levy-funded R&D project updates, research findings and related industry resources, which all happen under the Hort Innovation Olive Fund.

Hort Innovation partners with leading service providers to complete a range of R&D projects to ensure the long-term sustainability and profitability of the olive industry.



## Biosecurity exercise ensures industry preparedness

**In the lead-up to the recent 2022 National Olive Conference & Exhibition, the Australian Olive Association (AOA) Board gathered in Devonport to complete a desktop simulation of a major biosecurity incident.**

The exercise was run by Craig Elliott, former Co-Ordinator of the National Xylella Preparedness Program. Commenced in 2019, the three-year program was funded in part by the Olive Levy through the Hort Innovation cross-industry levy project *Xylella Co-ordinator* (MT 17006), co-funded by Wine Australia and run through the Plant Biosecurity Research Initiative (PBRI).

Craig has extensive experience in biosecurity emergency responses and preparedness around Australia and

overseas. He is currently in a role with Wine Australia, and also continues to work as a consultant to governments and industry bodies preparing for emergencies.

### Detection and response scenario

Originally scheduled for 2021 but postponed (like so many other events!) due to the COVID pandemic, the exercise looked at how the detection of a major biosecurity emergency would be managed and how the AOA would be engaged by the government agencies leading the response. Given the catastrophic risk it poses to our industry, the AOA exercise dealt specifically with Australia's #1 pest and disease threat, *Xylella fastidiosa*.

Over two days, Craig walked the Board through the governance and

decision-making arrangements that underpin a large-scale biosecurity emergency, along with the points of contact and input for the AOA in response planning.

Using the scenario of a Xylella outbreak in Tasmania, they also looked at some of the key issues that the Board could be asked to consider during an emergency, including:

- what are the expected impacts and consequences on the sector?;
- what are the communication priorities/information needs?; and
- how quickly can the AOA gather sector data (grower and processor locations and contact details, volumes/value of crops, plant and fruit movements in a specified area).

# EPP

PLANT BIOSECURITY RESEARCH INITIATIVE


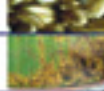


**Emergency Plant Pest or EPP** is a Plant Pest that is included in Schedule 13 or which is determined by the Categorisation Group to meet one or more of the following criteria:

- It is a known exotic Plant Pest the economic consequences of an occurrence of which would be economically or otherwise harmful for Australia, and for which it is considered to be in the regional and national interest to be free of the Plant Pest.
- It is a variant form of an established Plant Pest which can be distinguished by appropriate investigative and diagnostic methods and which, if established in Australia, would have a regional and national impact.
- It is a serious Plant Pest of unknown or uncertain origin which may, on the evidence available at the time, be an entirely new Plant Pest or one not listed in Schedule 13 and which if established in Australia is considered likely to have an adverse economic impact regionally and nationally.
- It is a Plant Pest already found in Australia that:
  - is restricted to a defined area through the use of regulatory measures intended to prevent further spread of the pest out of the defined area or into an endangered area; and
  - has been detected outside the defined area; and
  - is not a native of Australia; and
  - is not the subject of any instrument for management which is agreed to be effective risk mitigation and management at a national level; and
  - is considered likely to have an adverse economic impact such that an emergency response is required to prevent an incident of regional and national importance.

## Cost-sharing

Examples:

- Myrtle rust [Cat. 1] - Xylella [Cat. 2]
- Oriental fruit fly [Cat. 2] - Ring rot [Cat. 3]
- BMSB [Cat. 2] - Spider mite [Cat. 4]

	Category	Funding	Examples
Public Impact Private Impact	Category 1	100% Government	 Myrtle rust, Cat. 1
	Category 2	80% Government : 20% Industry	 Xylella, Cat. 2
	Category 3	50% Government : 50% Industry	 Ring rot, Cat. 3
	Category 4	20% Government : 80% Industry	 Spider mite, Cat. 4

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Knowing the regulated cost-sharing commitments for implementation of an agreed Emergency Plant Pest Response Plan can help industries prepare financially for the possibility of an incursion.

## Critical outcomes

Craig said it was a very valuable process, which opened avenues for further industry preparedness.

“It was really pleasing to see how engaged the AOA Board was in the exercise right across the two days,” he said.

“At several points we stopped and did a “rose/bud/thorn” check-in - what’s working or already in place, what’s ‘ok’ and we’re semi-prepared for and/or there’s an opportunity to build on, and what’s a problem we don’t have a handle on and need to do something.

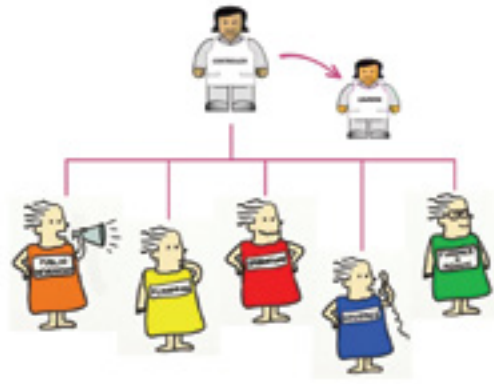
That enabled the AOA to produce a bit of a plan, and identified opportunities to continue to develop the capability of the olive sector to respond to a biosecurity emergency.

“Biosecurity emergencies can be extremely volatile, complex and stressful for everyone involved, so sitting down and working through the decision-making processes, and how the sector can have input into the response planning and operations by government before it happens, is really critical.

“We continue to monitor the situation with Xylella overseas and to prepare for a worst-case scenario of it arriving on our shores. There have been a lot

# Response Functions

PLANT BIOSECURITY RESEARCH INITIATIVE



Incident Controller	Command, Control, Coordinate
Liaison	Coordinate & Engage (with external organisations)
Planning	Thinks, Analyses & Reports
Public Information	Tells
Operations	Does
Logistics	Gets
Finance & Administration	Monitors & Reports

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Knowing “who does what” - Emergency Biosecurity Response roles and responsibilities - in the event of an incursion is crucial to a successful outcome for all stakeholders.

of lessons with Xylella overseas that we can learn from, as well as other biosecurity incidents locally that we continue to apply and use to refine our contingency plans.

“This exercise enabled the AOA Board members to think more specifically about the association’s role in those plans as the body directly representing the industry.”

## Industry involvement imperative

AOA CEO Michael Southan said the exercise provided a clear understanding of the need for direct - and appropriate - industry involvement in any incursion.

“It was designed around giving us an idea of what would be involved if there was an outbreak of Xylella and the impact that would have on us as a peak body,” he said.


“In the case of a biological incursion, the government steps in and takes control to prevent further spread. What Craig talked about was the importance of industry getting in there and being involved - asking questions, knowing what’s going on and providing advice to government, so they’re not making significant decisions which will impact on the industry without asking the industry first.

“We gained an understanding of what would be required of the industry liaison - which would be the AOA - to ensure that the communications which come out to industry are official - authorised and approved by government - and are not going to spread the wrong information or create panic.

“It’s about being ready, so that if/when it happens we’re in a better position: that we’ve identified the correct people to go in and can have them there to make sure that industry are fully involved and consulted.

“Because in the end, industry is going to bear a lot of the cost of this particular disease. Cost in terms of dollars, quarantining properties so they can’t move anything on or off - which means no product going out to market - and then there could be the destruction of groves. And ultimately, once it's been controlled, it could be the cost of replanting or moving to another horticultural industry.

“So while it’s all controlled by government in these situations, it’s important that industry is in there, checking that all the important industry considerations are taken into account before action occurs



## I&C Management 101

- The presence of a pest or disease and the response operations are expected to cause disruption, financial losses and stress to affected growers and anyone linked to the industry
- Impacts = direct effects
- Consequences = flow-on effects from the impacts
  - 1<sup>st</sup> Order, 2<sup>nd</sup> Order, 3<sup>rd</sup> Order ...
- Short-term & Long-term
- Relief & Recovery

Impact and Consequence Management was one of the major areas covered by the exercise.

- and that will happen very quickly, especially in the first few days when it’s being actioned 24/7.

### Prepared = effective

“The take-out is that, like the boy scouts, we’ve got to be prepared. If you didn’t know what was coming, you’d be so overwhelmed you couldn’t be effective. You wouldn’t know who’s doing what and that you have to go in and be assertive to a degree.

“It’s about being actively involved and making sure you’re being effective on behalf of the industry, to ensure the best outcome for the industry.”

### More information

You can find out more about the ongoing work being undertaken on biosecurity and Xylella preparedness across Australia at the Plant Biosecurity Research Initiative website: [www.pbri.com.au](http://www.pbri.com.au).

## Your role in Australia’s biosecurity

While preparedness at a national level is crucial for rapid action and containment in the event of a biosecurity incursion, growers have a critical role in protecting our industry from Xylella and other biosecurity risks, both in terms of prevention and preparation for the worst-case scenario.

Ensure you play your part by:

- only sourcing plant material from quality nurseries who demonstrate strong biosecurity hygiene practices;
- monitoring your grove for any unusual signs that may show a pest or disease outbreak;
- training your staff to identify possible biosecurity outbreaks, and having a response plan in place to contain any new pests or diseases;
- reporting suspect outbreaks to the Plant Biosecurity Hotline on 1800 084 881 - immediately;
- considering how your business would manage during a biosecurity incident if the movement of plants, fruit, and even people and machinery, was restricted or prohibited - and then planning for this contingency;



**If nothing else, remember**

- Arrive Clean, Leave Clean
- Check, Clean, Disinfect, Dry
- See, Secure, Report
- ... and Hope is not a Plan

**IF YOU SEE ANYTHING UNUSUAL, CALL THE ENTIRE PLANT PEST HOTLINE**  
1800 084 881

Provide as much information as you can. This includes:

- what you found
- when you found it
- where you found it
- what crop it was on
- how many you see or how infected the crop is
- how widespread it is
- anything else that catches your attention

If you can, take photos

- making biosecurity a part of local discussions - share information and work together to be prepared for biosecurity incidents;
- respecting biosecurity laws and reporting anyone who breaks them - they’re putting your industry, your community and your business at risk.





(Above and following) The project outputs are broad in both content and publication format, including field days, webinars, grove management videos and the national industry Conference.

## Five-year future for industry communications and extension project

Over the past three and a half years, the olive levy project *Australian olive industry communications and extension program* (OL18000) has provided an ongoing stream of information and learning opportunities across a wide range of timely and relevant industry topics.

It's had great practical results across the industry, so it's great news that it's all set to continue - and grow - thanks to a new five-year extension of the project which commenced in October.

Once again being run by the industry's representative body, the Australian Olive Association (AOA), the project will "provide and promote the skills and capability the Australian industry needs to be internationally competitive, with products which have a marketable point of difference that can deliver price premiums".

### Fine tune and build

AOA CEO Michael Southan said the new five-year project provides the opportunity to fine tune what has been a highly productive program, and to build on both the processes and outcomes to ensure the best possible flow of information to and across the industry.

"The first phase of the communications and extension project was an incredible success,

with growers confirming that the information provided has been relevant, practical and highly useful," he said.

"And importantly, it is having real impacts on the ground: survey feedback has shown that the project has provided invaluable solutions to issues being experienced in groves and businesses, and the introduction of new techniques and methodologies has assisted in improving management practices.

"All of that is translating into a continuing increase in product quality and viability across Australian olive businesses, outcomes which are reflected in both the soaring scores being achieved by entrants in the Australian International Olive Awards and the number of new producers entering the industry."

### Continuity and flexibility

The continuance of that positive trajectory will be further strengthened by the new five-year project, Southan said.

"A five-year timespan means we can really plan the activities: we've got time to create a structure of what we want to achieve, and then shape and mold things as we go," he said.

"Because in terms of meeting grower needs, both of those elements

- continuity and flexibility - are important. We have five years over which we can run a series of field days, workshops and webinars, so we can plan them to build from year to year on the information provided. But then you learn during one year's activities what information is still needed, and you have the chance to respond and provide that in following years.

"It's an exciting opportunity to really build on what we've achieved with the project so far, and to drive even further increases in knowledge, best practice management and capability across the industry.

"It's come a long way in the past 20 years and, if the recent leaps in quality and production are anything to go by, the next five years are set to be truly transformative."

### About the project

Utilising the AOA's industry-owned communications platform and network of national and international industry experts, the project promotes best practice through events, activities and resources, and openly disseminates the results of these and other R&D in grove management and olive oil production to the Australian olive industry.

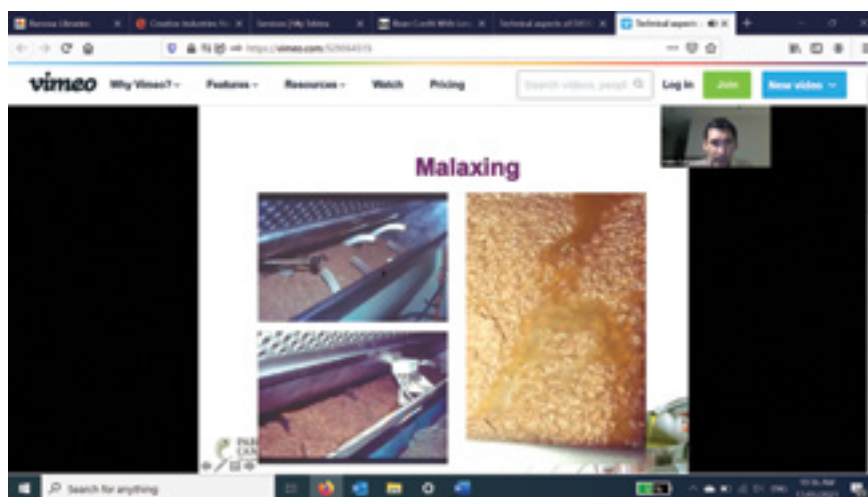
Like its predecessor, the new project's objectives are based



on the aims of the Olive Strategic Investment Plan 2022-2026:

“Building capability and an innovative culture supports industry to use the relevant investment outputs across the supply and demand initiatives to better manage risk and create positive change” using the key strategies:

- Support industry-driven innovation and extension initiatives (based on the open sharing of knowledge and expertise from Australian and international networks and benchmarking initiatives) that help support positive change in the areas of sustainable production, biosecurity, and meeting consumer quality expectations.
- Strengthen industry leadership through training initiatives.
- Identify and communicate the latest Australian and international trends relating to the development of circular business models (production and value-adding) for the Australian Olive industry as part of a communications initiative.”



## What information do YOU want?

Two of the “sell-out” elements of the industry communications and extension project are the national field day programs and the annual production workshops. Both are locked into the continuing five-year program and the organisers are keen to know what topics you, our growers and producers, would like to have covered.

- Field days: what would you like them to focus on? Where should they be held in your state?

- Workshops: currently cover processing of EVOO and table olives. Are you interested in learning about producing flavoured olive oil?

Suggestions for webinar topics, fact sheets and other project outputs are also most welcome.

Please email your feedback to Liz at [secretariat@australianolives.com.au](mailto:secretariat@australianolives.com.au).





**PROJECT NAME:** Australian olive industry communications and extension program (OL22000)

**PROJECT AIM:** Continuing to build greater skills, capacity and knowledge in the Australian olive industry by promotion and dissemination of world-best practice and the results of R&D in grove management and olive oil production

**PROJECT PARTNER:**  
Australian Olive Association

**FUNDING:**  
Hort Innovation Olive Fund

**PROJECT COMMENCEMENT:**  
1 October 2022

**PROJECT END:**  
30 September 2027

### Project outputs

The outputs are broad in both content and publication format, aiming to reach and inform as much of the industry as possible. To date they include:

- events including best practice workshops and field days, held across all producing states and supported by information on the *OliveBiz* website;
- recordings of and/or from these events for ongoing reference;
- other videos on best practice management topics;
- webinars covering topical issues and practices;
- fact sheets, manuals and other reference material;
- annual national industry Conference;
- expert updates of existing industry RIRDC resources;

- monthly *Grove Innovation* e-newsletters, emailed to levy payers and also available on the *OliveBiz* website;
- quarterly *R&D Insights* lift-outs, published in the *Australian & New Zealand Olivegrower & Processor* industry journal and also available on the *OliveBiz* website.

Southan said most of these will continue with the new project - and the ever-popular field days and production workshops are locked in - along with new elements including an upgrade of the industry's online presence to increase usability.

"We're rejigging the website - which is actually currently multiple websites - so it's easier to navigate and find things," he said.

"There'll be back-end work to make it more efficient to run the project, and "face-on" improvements to make it easier for growers to access information. We'll do that on all of the websites and then integrate them so it will look, and work, like one website: there'll be the AOA website and embedded in that will be all of the *EveryDay* information, the *OliveBiz* resources, the AIOA information, etc. The end result will be that when *OliveCare*® members log in, for example, it will give them instant access to all of the industry information, rather than them having to log into multiple websites.

"The aim is for a seamless integration of all of the industry information and websites for our various events etc, and a much easier and more efficient user experience."

### Access resources online

The first phase of the olive industry communications and extension program has generated a wealth of resources, from grove management videos and webinar recordings to fact sheets field manuals.

All are available to access, view and/or download 24/7 from the *OliveBiz* website. Go to [www.olivebiz.com.au](http://www.olivebiz.com.au) and you'll find them in the various dropdown tabs - *Publications*, *Projects*, *R&D Reports* and *R&D Insights*.

# Olive Fund Annual Report 2021/22 released

The Hort Innovation Olive Fund is your R&D fund, with olive levy payments invested along with Australian Government contributions into initiatives to help you, our growers, to be more productive and profitable. That also ensures the ongoing viability of your businesses and the Australian olive industry.

We know that every levy dollar paid is hard-earned, so it's important that all stakeholders know how their levy contributions are being used and what they're achieving for the industry. To that end, Hort Innovation produces annual reports for each of the 37 industries whose levies it manages: the latest were released in late October, covering the 2021/22 financial year.

The reports provide project information from across the year, including grower case studies of how levy investments have made an impact on the ground.

## Report overview

Not everyone has time to read the fine print, so here's an overview of the latest edition, the Olive Fund Annual Report 2021/22.

## R&D projects

Among the projects active during the 2021/22 year, including multi-industry investments, were:

- *Australian olive industry communications and extension program*, delivering *Grove*



*Innovation* newsletters, *R&D Insights*, field days, best practice workshops and more;

- *Extending OliveCare® to foster excellence in production of Australian olives*, building and maintaining the quality of Australian olive products via the Industry Code of Practice and expanded participation by retailers, food service distributors and exporters;
- *Educating health professionals about Australian olive products*, providing evidence-based health information and educational resources about olive products to health professionals and the olive industry, via the Olive Wellness Institute;

- *Improving preparedness of the Australian horticultural sector to the threat potentially posed by Xylella fastidiosa* (a severe biosecurity risk), providing a lifeline for our industry in case of incursion;
- *Olive industry minor use program*, providing industry access to safe, relevant and effective chemicals to manage pests, weeds and diseases;
- *Horticulture trade data*, providing a subscription to the Global Trade Atlas Database to assist with strategy and focus areas for international trade; and
- *Australian horticulture international demand creation*, delivering insights into international consumer demand across priority markets for the Australian horticulture sector.

## Strategic Investment Plan (SIP) alignment

Investments specific to the Olive Fund are guided by the olive Strategic Investment Plan (SIP). The SIP features priority outcome areas that have been identified and agreed upon by the industry, and Hort Innovation works to invest in R&D initiatives that are aligned to these.

Project expenditure in the Olive Fund during 2021/22 was aligned to the SIP, with each project allocated to a SIP outcome based on its primary objective:

Outcome 1: *Extension and capability* - Improved capability and an innovative culture in the Australian olive industry maximises return on investments in productivity and demand - saw investment of \$148,645 on two projects:

- *Extending OliveCare® to foster excellence in production of Australian olives* (OL17006)
- *Australian olive industry communications and extension program* (OL18000)

Outcome 2: *Industry supply, productivity and sustainability* - The Australian olive industry has increased profitability, efficiency and sustainability through innovative R&D, BMPs and enhanced biosecurity







preparedness - saw investment of \$12,868 on four projects:

- *Improving preparedness of the Australian horticultural sector to the threat potentially posed by Xylella fastidiosa (a severe biosecurity risk)* (MT17006)
- *Regulatory support and co-ordination (pesticides)* (MT20007)
- *Plant Biosecurity Research Initiative Phase 2* (HA19007)
- *Olive industry minor use program* (OL16000)

Outcome 3: *Demand creation* - Supports the Australian olive industry to develop existing and future domestic and international markets - saw investment of \$77,494 in two projects:

- *Educating health professionals about Australian olive products* (OL19001)
- *Australian horticulture international demand creation* (ST21007)

Outcome 4: *Business insights* - The Australian olive industry is more

profitable through informed decision-making using consumer knowledge and tracking, benchmarking performance and independent reviews - saw investment of \$8,492 in four projects:

- *Horticulture trade data* (MT19005)
- *Consumer demand spaces for horticulture* (MT21003)
- *Pilot program: Consumer usage, attitude and brand tracking* (MT21201)
- *Consumer usage and attitude tracking 2022/23* (MT21202)

#### Other content

The report also includes the 2021/22 Financial operating statement, a list of new and current chemical minor use permits for olives, and a case study focusing on the approach, use and impact of the (now completed) project *An integrated pest and disease management extension program for the olive industry* (OL17001), featuring Boort, Victoria producers Peter and Marlies Eicher of Salute Oliva.



#### 2021/22 Olive Fund investment activity snapshot

**Levy collected in 2021/22:**

**\$399,228** (2020/21 = \$130,809)

**Invested in R&D in 2021/22:**

**\$256,193** (2020/21 = \$392,322)

**Fund activity 2021/22:**

**12 R&D investment projects**

**Ongoing activity:**

**9 R&D investment projects**

#### Future investment

The report lists the four productivity and profitability outcome areas identified in the olive SIP for future investment, which continue to be:

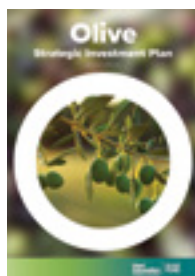
- Industry supply, productivity and sustainability
- Demand creation
- Extension and capacity
- Business insights

The focus for the next five years is detailed in the Olive Strategic Investment Plan 2022/2026, and the Olive Annual Investment Plan 2021/22 details how levy funds will be spent over the 12-month period. Both documents are available on the Hort Innovation website - [www.horticulture.com.au](http://www.horticulture.com.au).

## Want more detail?

The full Olive Fund Annual Report 2021/22 is available to download from the Hort Innovation website. Fund annual reports for the financial years from 2017/18 to 2020/21 are also available further down the page for reference and comparison. Go to [www.horticulture.com.au](http://www.horticulture.com.au) and search for 'Fund Annual Reports'.

And if you want to know more about the Olive Fund, there's an overview of how it works and how it's managed in the Growers section of the Hort Innovation website: navigate to the Olive Fund page and you'll find



the Fund Management dropdown in the top menu.

You can also access information on both ongoing and completed Olive Fund R&D projects under the Your investments dropdown.

And for the big picture on Australian horticultural R&D, the Hort Innovation Company Annual Report 2021/22 is also available online to download. Just search for 'company annual report' from the Hort Innovation website home page - where you'll also find links to the Olive Annual Investment Plan 2022-23 and the Olive Strategic Investment Plan 2022-2026.