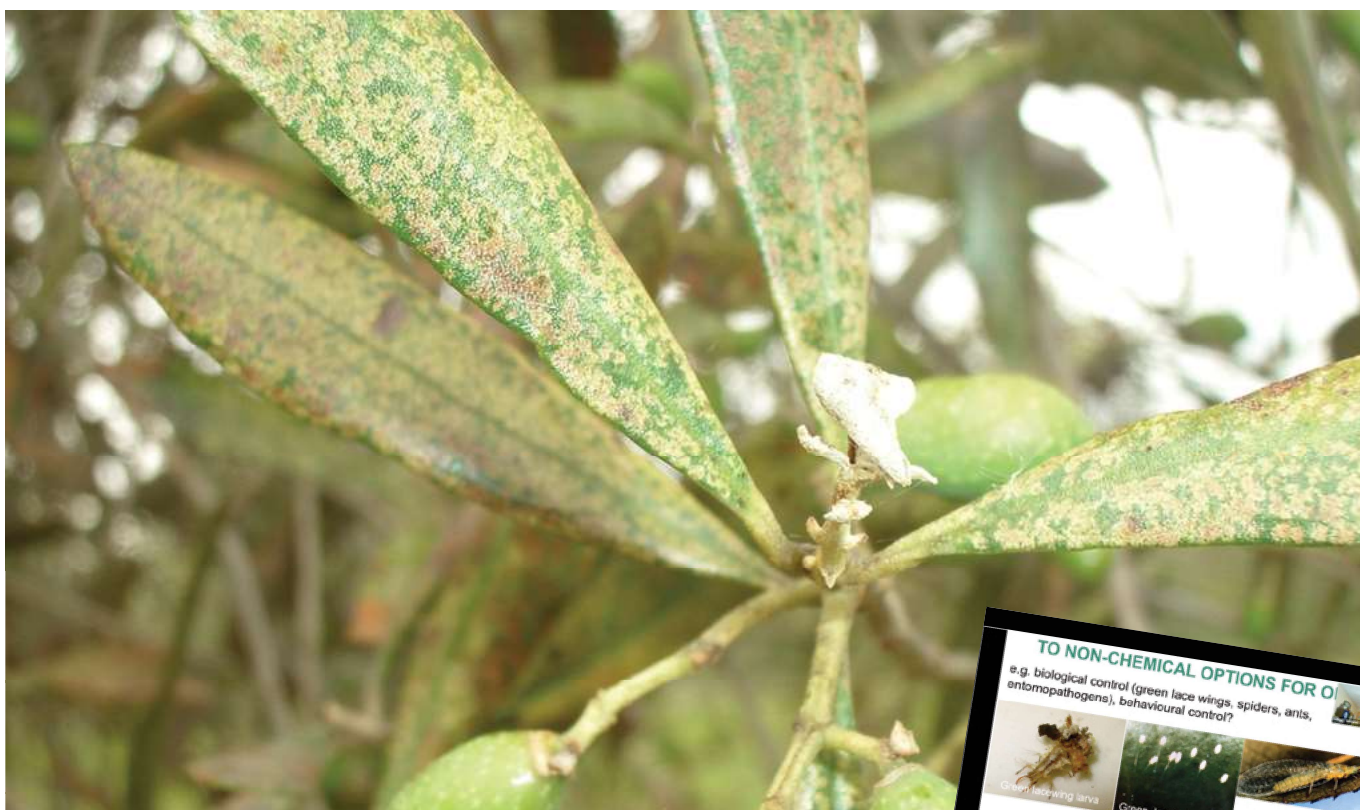




*R&D Insights* contains the latest levy-funded R&D project updates, research findings and related industry resources, which all happen under the Hort Innovation Olive Fund.

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.



## Record numbers for AOA OLB management webinar

**The AOA's latest Best Practice webinar hit the spot topic-wise, attracting the highest number of registrations of any online industry information session held to date.**

Presented by Research Associate Professor Dr Robert Spooner-Hart of Western Sydney University, the August 15 webinar was focused on the management of olive lace bug (OLB), one of the Australian industry's most significant pests.

OLB has recently been a major problem in many regions of NSW, particularly the Hunter Valley, and also in southern Western Australia. This is largely due to recent weather conditions more conducive to the survival and subsequent breeding activity of initial developing bugs.

### Critical timing

With improved monitoring and early management practices therefore

critical in reducing early populations and later-season problems, the AOA engaged industry 'pest guru' Dr Spooner-Hart to provide timely information and advice in the lead-up to peak breeding season.

The webinar also provided an opportunity for growers to discuss other olive pest and disease problems and recommended management solutions.



### Webinar take-home messages

- Monitor your crop regularly for OLB and other pests/diseases:
- Focus initially on areas with previous history
- Also consider regional communication
- Set up and implement a biosecurity plan
- Detect and target the first season OLB cohort
- Keep trees healthy (via plant nutrition, soil health, etc)
- Healthy trees are more tolerant of pests/diseases, especially OLB
- Groves with greater biodiversity generally have lower pest and disease problems
- Regularly prune trees to open them up
- Light and air circulation assists in minimising OLB, scale and fungal disease incidence
- Select chemical (or other) management strategies wisely and apply strategically (e.g. spot spraying)
- Monitor for success of your applied strategies and adjust/modify accordingly

It therefore wasn't really surprising to see a total of 135 olive levy payers and industry stakeholders register for the session, including 70 from NSW. The remainder were spread across Australia's olive production states, joined by several others from Argentina and Japan.

### Comprehensive coverage

Spooner-Hart's presentation covered all facets of the OLB issue, from species description and life-cycle to identification, symptoms, monitoring (crucial!) and treatment. He particularly emphasised spot treatment of affected areas only, rather than spraying the entire grove, and recording all data to inform future management decisions.

Topics also included new monitoring technologies, integrated pest and disease management (IPDM), biological control and the importance of tree health in protection from OLB attack.

And while the principles of IPDM are preferred and promoted by Spooner-Hart and the AOA, the session also included an overview of the chemicals currently registered or legally permitted for use against olive lace bug.

### Wide-ranging Q&A topics

As with all AOA webinars, the event finished with Q&A session, providing an opportunity for attendees to ask Spooner-Hart questions specific to their own groves and management practices. A wide range of topics around OLB and wider pest and disease issues was covered, including: additional chemical treatment options on the horizon; drone software for identifying pests and/or diseases; ladybugs and paraffinic oils for the control of

lace bug; spray treatment regimes; timing of beneficial insect release; grove plantings to provide refuge for beneficials; and the pruning/spraying relationship when OLB is present.

Attendees were enthusiastic about the session, with comments describing it as an 'excellent session', 'very clear, very useful', 'brilliant info', 'a good concise expose of the Olive Lace Bug problem' and 'a very worthwhile 40 minutes'.

All registrants have been provided with a link to the webinar recording, which is available for viewing on the *OliveBiz* website - [www.olivebiz.com](http://www.olivebiz.com) - under the Projects/*Webinars* dropdown.

### More information

Spooner-Hart pointed attendees to the wealth of additional information on managing pests and diseases on the *OliveBiz* website, including the outputs of the olive levy project *An integrated pest and disease management extension program for the olive industry* (OL17001). This includes a series of online tutorials, flyers, the revised *Field Guide to Olive Pests, Diseases and Disorders* and the *Best Practice IPDM Manual*, the 'must-use' grove management master tool for the industry.

They're all free to access and/or download: go to [www.olivebiz.com.au](http://www.olivebiz.com.au) and you'll find them under the *Projects/Industry Resources* dropdown.

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**\*This webinar is part of the Olive levy project *Australian olive industry communications and extension program* (OL22000), funded by Hort Innovation using the Hort Innovation olive research and development levy, co-investment from the Australian Olive Association and contributions from the Australian Government.**



# Hort Innovation Strategy 2024-2026: high industry growth, export and sustainability

Hort Innovation has released the *Hort Innovation Strategy 2024-2026*, setting out its vision for a prosperous and sustainable Australian horticulture industry built on innovation.

The new strategy has been driven by projected high industry growth, an appetite for expanded trade and increasing sustainability priorities, informed by feedback from growers across the nation through farm visits, surveys and advice provided through industry advisory panels and meetings.

It builds on the Strategic Investment Plans of 37 levy-paying Australian industries, including olives, and recognises growth projections of more than 20% for the horticulture sector identified in the recently released *Contribution of Australian horticulture industry* report.

Providing a roadmap for Hort Innovation investments over the next three years, the new strategy will carry on from the industry investment direction set out in the *Hort Innovation Strategy 2019-2023, Growing into the Future*.

## Focus on grower priorities

Hort Innovation says that, working alongside industry and building on existing strengths, the new three-year plan will focus the organisation on industry-wide, grower priorities through the delivery of five imperatives and 18 priorities.

The strategy aims to assist industry to:

- Enhance and safeguard supply - via production R&D, biosecurity and sustainability. Includes partnering with industry to address its sustainability priorities and support social and environmental stewardship. Spearheading world-class innovation and fortifying the industry against potential

disruptions in the supply chain are also key.

- Accelerate local and global demand - via market access, trade and marketing. Includes driving efforts to access and expand high-value markets, stimulate consumption, provide data-driven decision-making tools, and explore innovative approaches to utilising waste for generating new revenue streams.
- Maximise and diversify investments Hort Innovation makes on behalf of growers - via strategic investments, partnerships and investment plan. Includes building strategic partnerships to deliver bigger, bolder investments, a new flexible investment framework for research partners and partnering with industry to deliver impact at scale.
- Make the culture thrive - via collaboration and customer focus, and investing in industry capability.
- Work simply and effectively - via minimising of complexity, quality compliance and governance.

The focus also includes measuring performance, enhancing outcomes, and keeping growers and broader stakeholders informed.

## Adapting and working with industry

Hort Innovation chair Julie Bird said the strategy reflects horticulture growers' priorities, and the organisation is committed to working with industry to achieve its objectives.

"The value of Australian horticulture is projected to surge by up to 22.5% by 2030," she said.

"Equipping growers with the necessary tools to manage this remarkable growth is of the utmost importance. We are attuned to the needs expressed by growers, and

Hort Innovation is actively adapting to address them, with a new strategy and structure that supports Australian horticulture to grow more, sell more, and get bang-for-buck from levy investments."

## Internal changes

Hort Innovation CEO Brett Fifield said the new strategy builds upon Hort Innovation's progress over the past year, and emphasises a productive internal culture with operational complexities removed.

"We have made changes internally, including a new Industry Service and Delivery team which consolidates our partnerships, adoption and investment work," he said.

"We have also restructured our business so that production-related R&D and sustainability work are in the same team, and our biosecurity R&D projects sit alongside our international trade efforts.

"In partnership with industry, these changes position us to get ahead of key issues and work together on larger, transformative projects."

## More information

The *Hort Innovation Strategy 2024-2026* has been published as a detailed 'plan-on-a-page', which appears on the following pages.

The plan can also be found on the Hort Innovation website - [www.horticulture.com.au](http://www.horticulture.com.au) under the *Hort Innovation* dropdown, in *The Company* column list.

## Associated references

The *Hort Innovation Strategy 2019-2023, Growing into the Future*, is available for reference on the Hort Innovation website as a downloadable pdf. Just type 'Strategy 2019-2023' into the search tool.

# Hort Innovation Strategy 2024-2026



## OUR VISION

**A prosperous and sustainable Australian horticulture industry built on innovation**

## OUR STRATEGIC IMPERATIVES

### Enhance and safeguard supply

- **PRIORITY 1.1**  
Lead world-class innovation to ensure Australian horticulture is globally competitive
- **PRIORITY 1.2**  
Partner with industry on their sustainability priorities and research needs to support social and environmental stewardship
- **PRIORITY 1.3**  
Excel in breakthrough research to strengthen industry's readiness for existing and emerging opportunities and threats
- **PRIORITY 1.4**  
Collaborate with industry to bolster resilience and future-proof supply chain disruptions

### Accelerate local and global demand

- **PRIORITY 2.1**  
Access and expand high-value markets to deliver profitability and sustainability for industry
- **PRIORITY 2.2**  
Drive consumption through high-impact, evidence-based domestic and export marketing campaigns
- **PRIORITY 2.3**  
Deliver valuable data and insights that transform decision making
- **PRIORITY 2.4**  
Advance solutions to reduce and utilise waste to deliver new revenue streams for growers

### Maximise and diversify investments

- **PRIORITY 3.1**  
Partner with industry to deliver Annual Investment Plans ensuring industry levy-funded projects deliver impact
- **PRIORITY 3.2**  
Build strategic partnerships to deliver bigger investments in infrastructure for Australian horticulture
- **PRIORITY 3.3**  
Create a flexible framework attracting partners and additional funding resources



## Diversify

Industry to investment  
Industry projects  
at scale

Partnerships  
bolder  
innovation  
horticulture

Investment  
acting new  
alternative  
cases

## Make the culture thrive

- ▶ **PRIORITY 4.1**  
Collaborative and customer focused
- ▶ **PRIORITY 4.2**  
High performance, inclusive culture
- ▶ **PRIORITY 4.3**  
Empower our people
- ▶ **PRIORITY 4.4**  
Invest in industry capability

## Work simply and effectively

- ▶ **PRIORITY 5.1**  
Quality compliance and governance
- ▶ **PRIORITY 5.2**  
Transparent relationships
- ▶ **PRIORITY 5.3**  
Minimise complexity

## OUR ROLE

We advance Australia's \$16 billion horticulture industry by investing in research and development, marketing and trade to build a prosperous and sustainable future for growers.

We partner with Australian and international co-investors including government, leading science, technology, and consumer strategy experts to anticipate future challenges and opportunities.

Our role is to capture value from the investments we make to benefit all levy payers.

## OUR GOALS

- ▶ **Foster collaborative relationships** – stakeholder engagement > 60 per cent
- ▶ **Strong teamwork and shared purpose** – employee engagement > 70 per cent
- ▶ **Deliver real impact for growers** – Benefit Cost Ratio > 5:1
- ▶ **Live our values** – focus on our customers and innovation
- ▶ **Satisfaction with service** – partner and member rating > 60 per cent
- ▶ **Execute for industry** – Strategic Investment Plans delivered on time and on budget
- ▶ **Help grow value** – preference for Australian horticulture in key markets
- ▶ **Be ambitious** – 100 per cent annual investment target and attract new partners

## OUR GUIDING VALUES

- |  |  |
|--|--|
|  <b>Growth</b>  |  <b>Innovation</b>    |
|  <b>Courage</b> |  <b>Collaboration</b> |

**Hort  
Innovation**

[horticulture.com.au](http://horticulture.com.au)

# Increasing awareness the focus of new Olive Wellness Institute project extension

The Olive Wellness Institute (OWI) and Hort Innovation have signed off on funding for a further three years of the OWI's work via the olive levy investment project *Educating Health Professionals about Australian Olive Products* (OL22001). The project continues on from phase 2 of the project (OL19001 - 2020-2023) and will allow the OWI team to continue educating professionals about the health benefits of olive products through to July 2026.



**Olive Wellness**  
INSTITUTE™

OWI dietitian Sian Armstrong said the next phase of the project will be focused on spreading the word about the Institute and its resources - and through that, further increasing knowledge around the health benefits of olive products.

“Over the past few years, the Institute has focused on building and developing a strong bank of content and resources, covering a wide range of topics and discussion areas,” she said.

## Final report highlights

The final report of the project's previous phase (OL19001) showed the OWI team had an incredibly busy three years, with activities during the 2020-2023 period including:

- new blogs released monthly;
- key new research added to the olive science database of published literature;
- new website articles released regularly;
- new resources produced, including a virtual sensory tasting guide, e-books and an oil comparison tool;
- attendance at healthcare professional events (trade stands);
- regular webinars;
- podcast episodes on olive science;
- educational YouTube videos developed and launched;
- *Extra Virgin Olive Oil Health & Nutrition Report* produced and launched to key health professionals;
- annual market research via healthcare professionals and food service professionals;
- website re-development to improve user experience and improve search engine optimisation (SEO) ranking.

The report also shows how successful these activities were, with research showing that overall, there was a significant increase in awareness of the Olive Wellness Institute among healthcare professionals since the original

project (OL17002). Positive attitudes towards the health benefits of olive products continue to rise, along with the likelihood to promote them.

Importantly, there was also a significant increase in healthcare professionals' knowledge of how to identify extra virgin olive oil that meets Australian Standards.

### Stand-out statistics

Among the stand-out statistics contained in the final report were:

#### Website performance

Throughout the overall project period from 1 May 2020 to 31 March 2023, the Olive Wellness Institute's website logged 512,286 page views and 365,448 unique page views by 281,123 users.

The most accessed website content was:

1. 11 Health Benefits of EVOO (147K views/103.7K unique)
2. Homepage (22.4K views/15.3K unique)
3. Olive leaf tea (19.7K views/14.4K unique)
4. Olive leaf extract (14.5K views/11.5K unique)
5. Grades of olive oil (13.4K views/9.7K unique)

**How to look for a GOOD QUALITY EXTRA VIRGIN OLIVE OIL**

With an endless choice of oils at your local supermarket or food store, how do you know what is the best quality Extra Virgin Olive Oil (EVOO) and especially the healthiest oil for you? EVOO is the highest grade of Olive Oil and the best juice of the olive with a wide range of well-evidenced health benefits.

**WHAT YOU SHOULD LOOK FOR ON YOUR EXTRA VIRGIN OLIVE OIL BOTTLE LABEL:**

- The label should state "EXTRA VIRGIN"**  
As a result of its high quality and minimal processing, EVOO is high in natural phenols, vitamin E and polyphenols from the olive fruit.
- The label should include a BEST BEFORE DATE AND HARVEST DATE**  
The fresher the EVOO, the higher the phenol content. You should always look for the harvest date to make sure you are getting the fresh season EVOO.
- The bottle should be a DARK COLOUR AND GLASS**  
Good quality EVOO doesn't get better and the degradation of oil will happen more quickly when exposed to light and oxygen. If EVOO is stored in a dark coloured bottle away from heat and light, it will stay fresher for longer.

**Showing the total PHENOL CONTENT**  
Some EVOOs will state on the Nutrition Information Panel the total phenol content. The activity and extent of these phenolic compounds contribute to the health benefits of EVOO.

**Choose an oil that is CERTIFIED**  
Olive oil is one of the topmost additional food products worldwide and the food products most susceptible to food fraud. Standards exist nationally and internationally to prevent EVOO adulteration, and to guarantee the quality.

**Olive Wellness INSTITUTE™**

Thanks to the OWI's work, nearly a third of health care and food service professionals now know what to look for on a bottle of EVOO to ensure it meets Australian standards.

6. About hydroxytyrosol (11.4K views/8.8K unique)
7. EVOO and men's health (10.7K views/7.7K unique)
8. Med diet fodmaps (10.5K views/8.3K unique)
9. EVOO vs Flaxseed oil (7.8K views/4.3K unique)
10. Cooking with olive oil (7.1K views/5.6K unique)

And the website hits are growing rapidly: in comparison to the period April 21-March 22, the statistics for April 22-March 23 showed the number of total website users up 49%, pages per session up 48%,

“With so much excellent information already available on our website, we believe that instead of continually creating more and more, we should instead now focus on building our audience and increasing dissemination of the information we have already created for OWI.

“This further funding from Hort Innovation provides that opportunity to increase awareness of the Institute and our resources, with the aim of reaching as many healthcare professionals and food service professionals as we can.

“This helps us work towards our ultimate goal, which remains to increase demand for Australian olive products within Australia.”

### Planned activities

Armstrong said the OWI team’s plans for the new project phase include:

- Ongoing social media advertising targeting healthcare professionals (HCPs) and food service professionals (FSPs);
- Attendance and presentations at conferences and trade shows relevant to HCPs and FSPs;
- OWI events and webinars, particularly in conjunction with other Hort industry levy funded projects
- Education and advocacy to healthcare professionals



The recently launched **Extra Virgin Olive Oil Health and Nutrition Report** is a major resource in the OWI’s work to educate professionals about the health benefits of olive products.

users originating from an organic search (through unpaid search results on search engines) up 55%, users originating from social media up 49% and users originating from emails up an impressive 161%.

### Newsletter subscribers

Individual subscribers to the Olive Wellness Institute’s regular e-newsletter also increased dramatically over the three-year period, up by more than 250% from the end of the first project phase.

### Increased recognition of scientific evidence related to olive products

Market research results carried out at various stages throughout the project period show that the target audience are increasingly aware about the scientific evidence regarding olive products, particularly EVOO. There is also an increased willingness to recommend and promote EVOO. The most recent wave of research indicates that among healthcare professionals:

- 82% believe EVOO is highly beneficial for general health;
- 76% believe EVOO is high in antioxidants, and 58% the same regarding OLE.
- 57% believe olive leaf extract (OLE) is highly beneficial for immune health;

- 79% believe EVOO is highly beneficial for heart health;

### Practice and behaviour change with relation to olive products

The statistics also show that the OWI’s work is having a significant influence on healthcare and food service industry professionals’ practices in regard to olive products.

Three waves of market research conducted throughout the recently completed project have continually shown high engagement in willingness to promote extra virgin olive oil and olive leaf extract, with the most recent wave of research showing that 82% of health professionals were very likely to recommend extra virgin olive oil and 39% very likely to recommend olive leaf extract.

There was also a significant increase throughout the project in health and food service professionals’ awareness of what to look for on a bottle of EVOO to ensure it meets Australian standards, rising from 18% to 28%.

### Positive grower sentiment

In the 2023 end-of-project survey, 100% of participating olive levy payers expressed their support for the continuation of the Olive Wellness Institute, recognising it as a valuable resource.

This highlights the project’s value to Australian olive growers in promoting consumption of Australian olive products through education and an increased awareness of their health benefits.



### 11 Health Benefits of Extra Virgin Olive Oil That You Can't Ignore

Joe Leech

■ - Antioxidant - Cardiovascular Health - Diabetes - Inflammation - Mediterranean Diet - Olive Oil - Weight Management

Olive oil is widely recognised as one of the world’s healthiest oils.

In fact, people tend to live longer and healthier lives in regions where olive oil is a staple part of the diet.

Extra Virgin Olive Oil (EVOO) is the highest quality olive oil available, extracted from the olive fruit without the use of any heat or chemicals.

In this article we’re looking at the major health benefits of adding Extra Virgin Olive Oil to your diet, based on the latest scientific evidence.

‘11 Health Benefits of EVOO’ was the most accessed web page over the last project phase, with nearly 150,000 views.

around the Australian Dietary Guidelines update, to gain support for elevating EVOO within the guidelines; Working with universities and education institutions to educate students about the benefits of EVOO.

### Continuing grower support

While increasing the Institute's reach among health and food service professionals is the prime focus of the new project phase, Armstrong said supporting growers with knowledge and resources also continues to be a strong focus.

"Growers and the wider industry are the ground-level ambassadors for olive products; they're speaking with consumers, buyers and decision-makers on a day-to-day basis, and have invaluable opportunities to share information around their products," she said.

"So the OWI will continue to be here with resources to ensure growers are informed and equipped to have those conversations, backed by peer-reviewed science and research. From the wealth of information available on the website, to our virtual sensory kit, blogs to share on social media and the recently released *Extra Virgin Olive Oil Health and Nutrition Report*, we can help with answers to the



The OWI's Sian Armstrong will be at this year's National Olive Industry Conference & Exhibition in Canberra to speak with growers about the range of resources on offer.

big questions and help with how to answer them.

"I'm also looking forward to catching up with growers and other industry members at this year's National Olive Industry Conference & Exhibition

in Canberra. I'll have a range of our resources with me, so if you've got a consumer question you're not sure how to answer, or want a bit more in-depth information yourself, come and see me and I'll be able to point you in the right direction."



### Research Recap

**PROJECT NAME:** *Educating Health Professionals about Australian Olive Products (OL22001)*

**PROJECT AIM:** To increase the use of olive products in the daily lives of consumers by equipping Australian health care, food service and culinary professionals with the knowledge they need to advise about their health benefits and uses. Delivery is via the Olive Wellness Institute, a scientific repository on the nutrition, health and wellness benefits of olives and olive products.

The project's expanded focus has also ensured it provides relevant information and support tools to olive growers and processors in Australia to enable them to further increase awareness through their customers and networks.

**KEY RESEARCH PROVIDER:** Boundary Bend Olives

**FUNDING:** Hort Innovation Olive Fund

**PROJECT TERM:** Three years

**PROJECT ENDS:** July 2026 (current project phase)

### Access resources

You can find all of the Olive Wellness Institute resources, including downloadable information tools like fact sheets and the *Extra Virgin Olive Oil Health and Nutrition Report*, on the website - [www.olivewellnessinstitute.org](http://www.olivewellnessinstitute.org).

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The strategic levy investment project *Educating health professionals about Australian olive products (OL22001)* is part of the Hort Innovation Olive Fund. The project is partially funded by Hort Innovation, using the Olive Fund research and development levy and contributions from the Australian Government. Hort Innovation is the grower-owned, not-for-profit research and development corporation for Australian horticulture.