

GROWING UNDERCOVER

APRIL 2023 NEWSLETTER

PCA

Protected Cropping Australia

FROM SAM TURNER, EXECUTIVE OFFICER

STRATEGY

The PCA has been well served by the current strategy. Developed in collaboration with industry, the strategy is due to end in June 2023. A detailed report outlining PCA's performance over the past 5 years will be produced to allow us to evaluate our performance.

With the completion of the 2023 strategy PCA, in collaboration with our partners, on whole, will be developing a new and improved business strategy. This 3-year strategy will inform PCA's operations and allow us to better target the requirements from industry. Development of this strategy has begun, and industry consultation will commence shortly. This is your opportunity to help inform the direction of the PCA and let us know what we can do to support your business.

As a passionately member-based association, we strive to efficiently and effectively deliver the activities and services you need to succeed.

Please take a few minutes to fill in our survey to have your say, and help us shape our strategy.

HAVE YOUR SAY

CONFERENCE

PCA 2023 conference is thundering down on us, and we are very excited to host you in Brisbane from the 17th – 20th July. We have over 70 speakers on the program, including incredible grower workshops, the best local and international PC thought leaders and a highly sought after Plant Empowerment workshop. We are proud to offer 150 free grower passes and hope to see you there.

ADVOCACY

The biggest advocacy priority for the PCA is to find a solution to the issues around the national building code and the challenges of getting new PC structures approved by the various building authorities. We have had a number of very productive discussions with the Australian Building Codes Board and have a clear pathway to deliver some much-needed direction in this area. The ABCB will be presenting at the conference, and we will hopefully be able to announce some solid progress in this area. Watch this space.

FUTURE FOOD SYSTEMS

Late last year the industry gathered at University of Queensland to discuss the future of our food systems. The Future Food Summit, hosted by the Future Food CRC was a great opportunity for industry, researchers and various other stakeholders to meet, collaborate and discuss. One of the most striking takeaways was how much of our future food production will rely on protected cropping systems. The opportunity for the industry is great and it is our job to ensure that our growers benefit from the increased interest and investment.



DATES TO REMEMBER

19th May: Close of Early Bird Conference Rates

17th - 20th July: Conference in Brisbane

18th - 19th July: Grower Workshops

CONFERENCE

Protected Cropping Australia are pleased to be funding 150 complimentary registrations to support grower attendance at the 2023 conference. The registrations provide complete access to the Welcome Function on Monday, Conference Sessions and Grower Networking Event on Tuesday, Conference and Conference Dinner on Wednesday plus so much more.

The best part is no application or reimbursement needed for the registration. Simply register for the conference by scanning the QR code.



PCA 2023
CONFERENCE
BRISBANE
17 - 20 JULY

<https://www.pcaconference.net.au/>



PCA 2023 GROWER WORKSHOPS
TUESDAY 18 & WEDNESDAY 19 JULY 2023

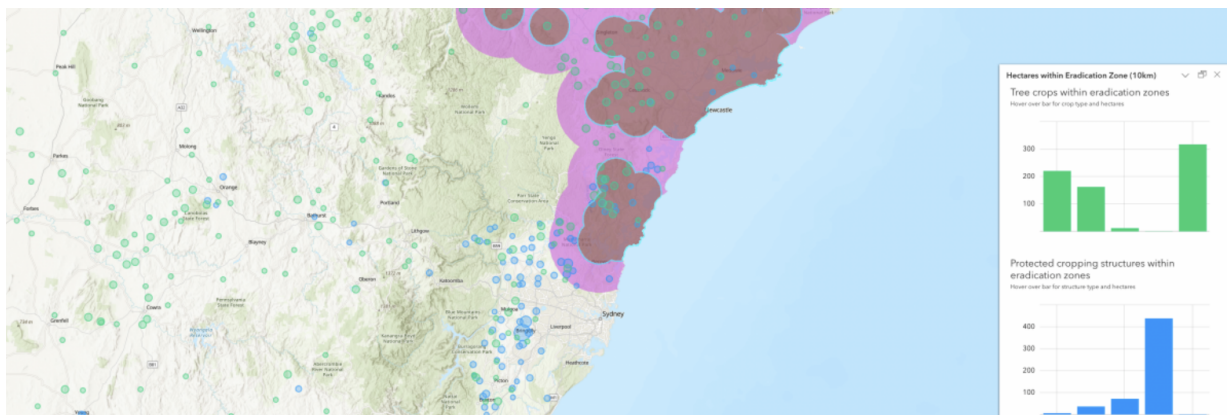
**150 COMPLIMENTARY
REGISTRATIONS AVAILABLE!**

1 complimentary
registration
available per farm



**REGISTER
NOW!**

Researchers at the University of New England have been mapping protected cropping systems (PCS) across Australia for 18 months, in a project supported by Hort Innovation, Protected Cropping Australia, Local Land Services, and the Future Food Systems CRC. The mapping will aid the industry in biosecurity preparations and coordination of surveillance, and also provide information on value chains, traceability, transport, and market accessibility. The mapping is especially relevant given a recent biosecurity breach that allowed varroa mites to enter agricultural regions of New South Wales.



[View the full article here.](#)

RECYCLING PROGRAM A 'NO-BRAINER' FOR OLD ORCHARD POLY, DRIPPERLINE

Discover Kyalite Pistachios sustainable solution for disposing of its irrigation system and leftover poly and dripperline, while contributing to a circular economy model that tackles plastic waste accumulation in the landscape.

Andrew Bowring, Kyalite Pistachios, says, "without the Netafim Recoil machine to help dispose of poly and dripperline, they would have had to hire or build a machine that later would have sat in the shed, as well as find a recycler and pay for freighting it off the farm".

[View the full article here.](#)



Successful recoiling of old 19-millimetre poly using the Netafim Recoil machine.



Bundles of poly are ready for collection and transport to Netafim's Australian recycling partners.



Poly bundles loaded to specific guidelines to ensure maximum transport capacity and easy recycler handling.

THE FUTURE OF PROTECTED CROPPING RESEARCH

To support the continued growth of Australian protected cropping, the industry invested in the 2021-2030 Australian Protected Cropping strategy, launched in late 2021. To support the opportunities outlined in the strategy, Hort Innovation and Protected Cropping Australian (PCA) facilitated the "Future of Protected Cropping Research Summit" to identify a suite of works to deliver targeted outcomes for PC growers in Australia. This consultation was led by an independent facilitator Cath Botta and involved major industry stakeholders including growers, researchers, allied trade and potential funding partners.

The outcome of the Research Summit was the development of the Australian Protected Cropping Program. This program of works was informed by the industry R&D strategy and structured around 5 key investment themes:

- Sustainability, Environmental, Social, Governance
- Advanced Agronomy
- Market Development and Insight
- Attracting and Retaining People
- Identification, Evaluation and Adoption of Technology

The next steps for the program are:

- Symposium notes shared and feedback sought from participants.
- Additional feedback at sought at Hort Connections (June 6, 2pm at Hort Innovation Stand #68-71)
- Additional feedback sought at Protected Cropping Australia conference (July 17-20)
- Hort Innovation seeks approval to procure R&D program. September 2023
- Program procurement October 2023

We are always keen to hear your feedback. To share your thoughts on the program, fill out the form below.

[HAVE YOUR SAY](#)

[FULL SUMMIT SUMMARY](#)



[View the full article here.](#)

AUTOMATING AUSTRALIA'S INDOOR CROPPING SECTOR

Western Sydney University is collaborating with industry partners in a \$6.8 million project to develop innovative and cost-effective solutions for monitoring and managing horticultural crops in protected facilities. A research team will develop and test non-invasive ways to monitor crop attributes such as yield, quality, stress, disease, and pollination using advanced decision support systems. The aim is to address challenges faced by the rapidly growing protected cropping industry by establishing a flexible decision support system.

HORTICULTURE NETTING PROGRAM - TRIAL

More growers will get help to buy and install protective netting. This will help them and their communities as they recover from drought and the pandemic.

[Read more here.](#)

Haifa quality now in micronutrients

Strong new option for soluble chelates

Haifa, renowned for supplying the highest quality water soluble fertilisers, is now offering the highest quality chelated micronutrients. This includes chelates with the highest stability, such as EDDHA iron with the strongest holding ability. Haifa also can supply specific micronutrient blends compatible with a wide range of fertilisers.



Don't waste time and money

Carefully check the analysis and choose the correct iron chelate for your crop's nutrition

Haifa Australia
(03) 9583 4691
australia@haifa-group.com
haifa-group.com



RESOURCES FOR GROWERS

PCA is excited to announce that we will be partnering with NSW LLS to develop and deliver resources and support to help vegetable growers transition into protected cropping.

The funding is part of the broader LLS managed Early Needs Recovery grants and is targeted to support vegetable growers affected by the 2022 floods. The funding will provide growers in affected regions access to one-on-one training and support and workshops and demonstrations to help them develop their protected cropping businesses. The program will also deliver a suite of resources including hardcopy tools and case studies, podcasts, webinars as well as a newly developed e-learning platform.

The program is currently under development and will begin to roll out over the next few months. We are always looking for industry collaboration, so if you want to get involved in the program, please reach out! admin@protectedcropping.net.au

The Early Needs Recovery Program is part of the \$150 million Primary Industry Support Package which is co-funded by the Australian and NSW Governments. For more information about the program, please visit [Early Needs Recovery Program - Local Land Services \(nsw.gov.au\)](https://www.nsw.gov.au/early-needs-recovery-program).

BECOME A MEMBER

PCA has more than 40 years of experience providing relevant and practical services to businesses in the protected cropping industry.

We strive to keep our growers profitable and to provide allied trade and other industry partners with opportunities to grow with the industry.

Corporate	Individual	Student
\$1000 /yr	\$250 /yr	\$50 /yr
+ GST	+ GST	+ GST

SIGN ME UP

fci

WWW.FLORACULTUREINTERNATIONAL.COM

APRIL 2023



AIPH

BROOKDALE TREELAND NURSERIES

**'Winning IGOTY23 validates
our hard work'**

ENERGY REVOLUTION

**The key to heating Westland's
greenhouses lies deep
underground**

IRANIAN HORTICULTURE

**Growers celebrate
Nowruz inspite of sanctions**

POSTHARVEST TREATMENT AND HANDLING

WUR investigation of the critical factors required to
improve the quality of sea freighted flowers

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