

Subject: Growing Undercover - August 26

Date: Friday, 28 August 2026 at 11:35:49 am Australian Central Standard Time

From: PCA

To: Jade Lewis



GROWING UNDERCOVER

AUGUST | 2026

UPDATES

IDO UPDATE

Matt Plunkett

Welcome to the August edition of Growing Undercover.

This edition highlights PCA's ongoing engagement with members nationwide and recent work of the Industry Advisory Council as it begins shaping the PCA Strategic Plan for 2027–2030.

Members continue to expect strong advocacy, particularly in areas such as biosecurity, where PCA is working to strengthen national preparedness and minimise impacts of future incursions.

A major project underway is Phase Two of the National Map of Protected Cropping Systems, which will deliver critical industry data over the next two years. PCA is also focused on securing its financial sustainability through new funding partnerships and projects.

Protected cropping is positioned as a key contributor to Australia's National Food Security strategy, especially amid climate change and global economic uncertainty. PCA is exploring longterm funding models to expand services, including more national training and education events and deeper engagement with low to mediumtech growers.

Energy efficiency, water efficiency and plasticwaste solutions remain central priorities. Continued investment in R&D is important, particularly in robotics, pollination, automationand AI.

Emerging opportunities such as colocation of data centres with greenhouse production are noted as rapidly developing areas.

Labour efficiency and productivityboosting innovations will continue to scale, helping growers

remain globally competitive. PCA encourages members to contribute feedback as this input is shaping the future direction of the industry.

If you wish to have your say, feel free to reach out.

Until next time, have a great month and stay safe.

PCA2027



JULY 2027



PCA 2027 Conference - Gold Coast - Register Now!

[Learn More →](#)

JULY - OCTOBER

CALL FOR ABSTRACTS NOW OPEN

PROGRAM & CALL FOR ABSTRACTS

Share your expertise at PCA2027. Submit an abstract for an oral, poster, panel, or innovation spotlight presentation.

CALL FOR ABSTRACTS TIMELINE:

1 July 2026: Call for Abstracts Opens

31 October 2026: Submissions Close

Mid November 2026: Outcome Notification

November 2026: Preliminary Program Announced

28 February 2027: Speaker Registration Deadline

April 2027: Full Program Released

[Learn More →](#)

EVENTS

JULY - OCTOBER



GLOBAL EVENTS FOR IFPA MEMBERS

ENGAGE GLOBALLY AND TRANSFORM YOUR BUSINESS

all about **connection**! Global connections for regional impact: whatever your plans for the rest of 2026, we can help get you connected. If you're travelling, reach out before you hop on the plane!

AUSTRALIAN GROWER STUDY TOUR USA

APPLICATIONS NOW OPEN

open to those employed within or directly connected to the horticulture or fresh produce supply chain

FLORIDA U.S.A.

A, in partnership with [Hort Innovation](#), invites applications for the inaugural [Australian Grower Study Tour](#) to Florida this October, **closing 10 July 2026**. [The program](#) will be held from 17 October 2026, and will include an opportunity to attend the Global Produce and Horticulture Show. [The program](#) will develop leadership capability through international engagement, offering exposure to innovation, technology, and global supply chains. Limited to 10 participants from the Australian horticulture value chain, the program will strengthen horticulture industry leadership, global connections, and innovation.

project (LP25002) is funded through Hort Innovation Frontiers with co-investment from IFPA and contributions from the Australian Government.

Global Events for IFPA Members

[Learn More →](#)

NOVEMBER



Save The Date - Hort Business Summit 2026

[Learn More →](#)

OCTOBER



Myplant & Garden Middle East

[Learn More →](#)

INFORMATION

NATIONAL

RESEARCH

Genotypic difference in yield to far-red light in dwarf toma explained by fruit sink and so strength and predicted by see height plasticity

 Maria Mastoraki  Leo F. M. Marcelis  Ep Heuvelink

Horticulture and Product Physiology, Department of Plant Sciences, Wageningen Research, Wageningen, Netherlands

Abstract

Supplemental far-red (FR) light can enhance tomato yield and fruit soluble effects across genotypes remain poorly understood. The aims of this study genotypic differences in yield response to FR light are driven by dry matter and to identify an early predictive indicator (seed or seedling stage) of FR r tomato genotypes. We studied 23 dwarf tomato genotypes for yield and fr supplemental FR. To determine whether cultivars appearing non-responsive specific sensitivity 2 non-responsive genotypes were exposed to FR during

Genotypic Difference in Yield Response to Far-Red Light

[Learn More →](#)

NEWS

Tendrils

Your monthly round-up of plant biosecurity news





Message from the CEO

Welcome to the August edition of Tendrils and National Biosecurity Week 2026. This year's theme, Planning ahead helps protect what matters, serves as a reminder that strong biosecurity starts long before an emergency occurs. This month, I reflect on key preparedness initiatives for the coffee and vegetable industries, enhancements to AUSPestCheck® and the importance of these activities in contributing to build preparedness and intelligence across Australia's plant biosecurity system.

[Read more](#)

Safeguarding Australia together

7 days of awareness, 365 days of action.



NATIONAL BIOSECURITY WEEK

24-30 August 2026

[bioweek.org.au](#)

Upcoming meetings

Board meeting (RM24) in Online on Tuesday 15 September 2026

PHA - Tendrils Newsletter August 2026

[Learn More →](#)

NEWS



Dear Matt Plunkett,

From clean data to AI-driven decision-making, horticulture is entering a bold new era of intelligence. Explore why data quality matters, how growers can simplify multi-site data integration, and learn how to leverage AI to boost efficiency and performance. If you're looking to future-proof your operation, these three stories are a great place to start!



From 'digital native' to 'AI native'

AI is no longer a future trend, it is already transforming the way businesses operate. Discover how digital freight forwarder Shypple evolved from a digital-native company into an AI-native organisation, using AI to automate processes and improve decision-making. Founder Jarell Habets shares practical insights on where to start, what to prioritise, and why collecting data and experimenting are key to unlocking AI's potential.

GreenTech - From 'Digital Native' to 'AI Native'

[Learn More →](#)

NEWS

Building a Better NSW

Rate freeze on workers compensation premiums



Hello Protected Cropping Australia Ltd

The NSW Government has introduced a freeze on Workers Compensation premium rates for the 2026/27 and 2027/28 financial years.

This means most businesses can look forward to more stable and predictable premiums.

However, individual premiums would still need to be recalculated if wages, business activity, claims history or incentive eligibility changed during the freeze.

Rate Freeze on Workers Compensation Premiums

[Learn More →](#)

NEWS



Detection in Currumbin Valley, Qld

The NSW Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (the department) has been notified by the National Fire Ant Eradication Program (NFAEP) of a fire ant detection in the Currumbin Valley, approximately 1.6 km fr the NSW border.

Suspected nests were detected during routine surveillance on Wednesday 29 J 2026. As of Friday 31 July 2026, 16 nests were found and confirmed positive fo ants.

A team from the NFAEP treated the nests over the weekend. Surveillance of suitable habitat in the immediate area has commenced. Ongoing surveillance a eradication treatment requirements are being determined.

Emergency Order update

In response to the Currumbin Valley detection, the department published Biose (Fire Ant) Emergency Order (No. 9) 2026 on 4 August 2026. It supersedes Emergency Order (No. 8).

There are **changes to the boundaries of the Queensland fire ant infested a** in the Currumbin Valley and Tallebudgera Valley areas.

Biosecurity Update - Red Imported Fire Ants

[Learn More →](#)

NEWS



Agrinova Australia & New Zealand European

One of the highlights of our recent European tour of Agrinova's projects in Spa Italy was visiting the stunning South Tyrol region of northern Italy, where brea Alpine scenery provides the backdrop to one of Europe's most productive appl growing regions.

Part 2: Exploring Agrinova's Projects in Italy



A Visit to Europe's Apple-Growing Powerhou

Agrinova Australia & New Zealand European Tour

[Learn More →](#)

MEMBER ADVERTISEMENTS

AIPH - FLORACULTURE INTERNATIONAL

Cover image: TerraCoal® biochar, courtesy of Klamann-Deilmann

fci

WWW.FLORACULTUREINTERNATIONAL.COM

JUNE 2026



SUSTAINABILITY CLAIMS

Proof, not labels

RAW MATERIAL SECURITY

**Germany's supply
warning**

BUILT WITHOUT PEAT

Australia's lesson



GROWING MEDIA: THE NEXT PHASE

Proof, performance and reliable supply in substrate
transition



[Unsubscribe](#)

Protected Cropping Australia
PO Box 470, Roseville

Sydney, Australia
+61 2 9037 3166
admin@protectedcropping.net.au