



GROWING UNDERCOVER

MAY | 2024

UPDATES

Behind The Scenes

Julie Krieger

PCA have been actively consulting with the Australian Building Codes Board (ABCB) on the recent release of the 2025 draft iteration of the National Construction Code (NCC). Contrary to previous advice, the current iteration does not include explanatory notes in this version for low to medium tech structures.

In late 2023, the Board of Directors from the ABCB requested that further investigative work was required for low, medium, and high-tech structures. More specifically, in the areas of fire and egress. In June, a detailed literature review is about to start and fully funded by the ABCB. This work will look at the combustibility of plastics and investigate work, health and safety issues in more detail. It will include what has been researched both here in Australia and overseas. This will inform the next stages of the project that may include a fire load hazard survey. If required, PCA will be seeking members input into this survey to ensure your voices are heard.

PCA have attended a range of briefings and are meeting with the Executive in the coming weeks to educate decision makers on the unique requirements of our industry. It is our role to

PCA have also advocated for a horticultural building classification for the 2028 iteration of the code. Whilst this may seem a long way off, the NCC works on 3-year timelines to inform any changes. All the work undertaken to date has contributed towards our ultimate goal of having a discrete classification for horticultural buildings in the NCC.

PCA have been advised that this is what the ABCB has in their plans for the next 3 years and together with your support, it is our role to ensure it stays front and centre in their plans.

For further information, please contact Julie Krieger at eo@protectedcropping.net.au.

advocate, on your behalf to ensure that this stays on their radar to avoid unnecessary red and green tape where possible.



Projects

Tony Bundock

As part of the Early Needs Recovery Project being delivered on behalf of Local Land Services NSW, Protected Cropping Australia delivered a grower event in the Coffs Harbour region on Monday the 20th of May.

The focus of the event was to look at the issues surrounding establishing a cucumber crop using grafted plants. The two main presenters were grower Cheyne Clark, and proprietor of Provenance Propagation – Jack Mooney.

Cheyne gave a first hand account of his experience working with grafted plants and the impact it had on the current crop in terms of ensuring quick establishment of the crop.

Jack Mooney outlined the principles and practices of how Provenance Propagation has developed the grafting process to ensure that growers receive a quality plant at a competitive price.

The presentations were followed by a walk-through Cheyne's crop where he outlined the issues and positive outcomes he had experienced in using grafted plants, which included an acceleration of planting to first harvest time. Cheyne also explained how he is approaching his IPM program



which was highlighted by the very ‘clean’ appearance to the crop.

“It was great to see a large number of growers and affiliated trade members attending this event, which provided all attendees with some fantastic insights into the growing process and also some great networking opportunities” said PCA Project Manager, Tony Bundock.

IDO Update

Matt Plunkett

Sustainability means different things to different people. What are our key priorities of focus in protected cropping?

In my discussions with growers and industry recently, there are 4 major areas in sustainability our industry needs to focus on:

- Plastic waste (growing containers and greenhouse film)
- Substrate recycling options (organic and inorganic)
- Improving water and nutrient management
- Food waste management.

Improving energy efficiency, sustainable packaging, and the transition to a net zero emissions future are mentioned regularly.

There are some excellent programs our industry partners such as Garden City Plastics are undertaking with the P5 recycling program. Similarly, some of the bigger players in our industry are implementing recycling programs together with an increasing interest in organic production methods.

That said, our partners and growers need more support to make these schemes viable at scale. Wouldn't it be great to have a Drum Muster equivalent for plastic recycling all around the

There is also clearly a gap in data around lifecycle assessments (assessing environmental impacts associated with all stages of a product or service) for a range of inputs we use in protected cropping. In other words, understanding the true costs to develop and recycle inputs in a circular economy are not well understood. This is an area of research that needs further work.

As the horticulture sector grapples with the transition to a net zero future by 2050, we have a remarkable story to tell around growing more with less resources. The lifecycle assessment work is critical to assist in telling this story to investors and consumers alike.

PCA would love to hear your views and positive stories on sustainability and practical areas of focus we can work with industry to address.

As always, please reach out for a chat on 0434 147 988 or ido@protectedcropping.net.au.

country where public and private companies share the costs.



GROWER UPDATES

Did you know we have an Industry Advisory Council?

The Industry Advisory Council (IAC) meets every second month and is led by our Deputy Chair, Andrew McIlwain.

If you would like to hear more or become a part of this vital group, please **get in touch** with us.

Webinar Recording Now Available

PCA

Tony Bundock's recent webinar presentation on **'Ferigation and Irrigation Principles'** is now available for members to watch on our website!

[WATCH WEBINAR](#)

Grower Membership Survey

PCA

We'd love to know more about your business, and how PCA can better support you. Complete the survey and go in the draw to WIN!

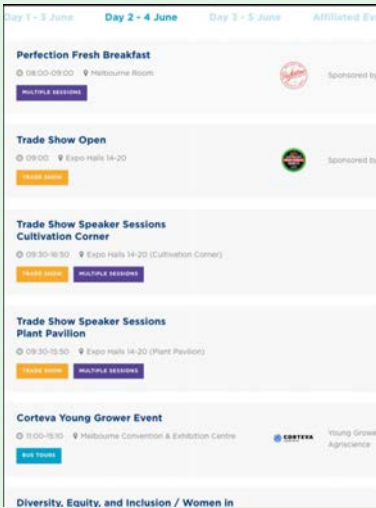
[TAKE THE SURVEY](#)

EVENTS

JUNE

SEPTEMBER

JUNE



Hort Connections - Full Program Out Now

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GVF Vertical Framing Show 2024

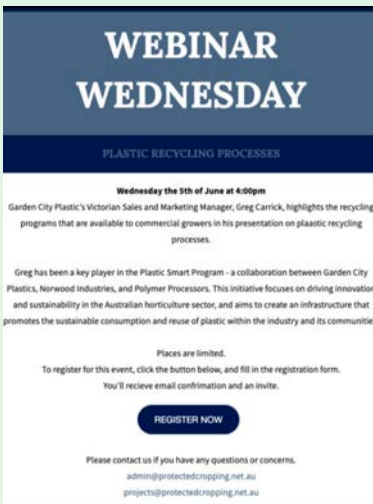
[Learn more →](#)



Farmer's Night Out - Numulgi Hall

[Learn more →](#)

JUNE



Webinar - Plastic Recycling Processes

[Learn more →](#)

AUGUST



Soil Biology & Health Certification 2024

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FEBRUARY



Berries Australia - 2025 Conference

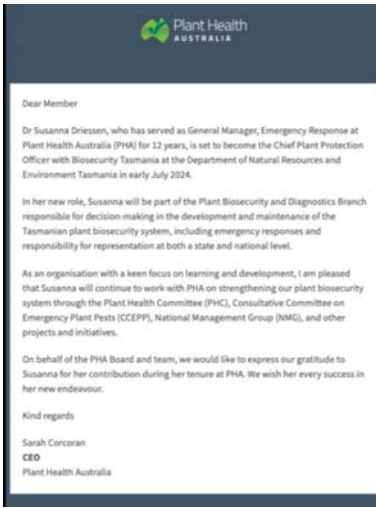
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INFORMATION

NEWS

NEWS

NEWS



Plant Health Australia - Susanna Driessen

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NEWS



Biosecurity Response - Red Imported Fire Ants

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NEWS



VICCHEM - 2024 Hort. Product Guide

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RESOURCES

RESOURCE LIBRARY

Welcome to the Berries Australia Resource Library

Here you can search our extensive database of resources, including publications since it was launched in 2019, factsheets, posters, and other websites.

This library is being continually expanded. We aim to provide resources. If you have something you think would be useful

Category Document Author

TITLE	SUMMARY
\$2.4 million boost for Rubus pest management	This is an article about a \$2.4 million boost for Rubus pest management. The program will be delivered through Hort Innovation and led by the Tasmanian Institute of Agriculture (TIA) ...
2019 Strawberry Review Report Edition 1	A report on the productivity of strawberry fields in Queensland and Florida in a warming climate.

Berries Australia - Resource Library

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[With thanks to ABC.net.au](#)

In breaking news, the future of controversial new legislation shaking up biosecurity funding in Australia is in doubt after the government failed to secure crossbench support, despite the Senate Committee handing in its **final report recommending that the BPL bills be passed**.

The Greens have told the ABC they will not back the bill, which includes a \$50 million levy to be paid by farmers.

That will leave the government without the numbers it needs in the Senate for the legislation to pass.

The levy was outlined in the 2023 budget and passed through the House of Representatives in March.

It was due to be implemented from July 1, but has faced intense opposition from farming groups.

[FIND OUT MORE](#)

Proposed Biosecurity Levy Update

[Learn more →](#)

NEWSLETTER



GreenTech is shining a spotlight on the transitions happening in the world today. With numerous challenges such as climate change, water scarcity and the need for more sustainable practices, the current food production systems are being greatly affected. This time, we dive deep into the 'sustainable energy', with a lot of valuable insights and developments!



Joint responsibility in making energy more sustainable

"We've asked a company that stimulates technical innovations to make horticulture more sustainable, what's happening in the field of energy," Jan Meurs (Division Q) said: "At the time when gas prices were extremely low, we sometimes wondered whether all of those investments in sustainable energy were worth it. But when prices shot up in recent years, we definitely reap the benefits and were confirmed that we made the right choices."

What Is Happening In The Field Of Energy?

[Learn more →](#)



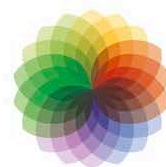
How to Eliminate TOBRV Quickly

[Learn more →](#)

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MAY 2024

THE PEAT ISSUE

**How the industry
addresses the growing
media debate**

FRANCE

**Powerful retail buyers
don't bode well for
growers**

ITALY

**Coverage of
Myplant&Garden show**

TULIP TRADE EVENT

From bulb to bloom: the remarkable journey of
Dutch tulips

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