



GROWING UNDERCOVER

SEPTEMBER | 2025

UPDATES

IDO Update

Matt Plunkett

As we move into the warmer months and pest and disease pressure increases, it is timely to revisit the fundamental principles of Integrated Pest & Disease Management (IPDM). IPDM is defined as the holistic approach to managing plant pest and diseases that combines a range of tactics and strategies that minimises damage in crops whilst reducing reliance on chemicals. It is also about managing pest and diseases below economically damaging levels, whilst using chemicals judiciously. There are a range of elements that are critical to ensure pest and diseases are kept at manageable levels in the greenhouse.

1. Good biosecurity and hygiene:

What are my sanitation and maintenance programs to ensure equipment and staff come clean and go clean? Sticky traps and regular scouting are important to know what the current pest population status is and identify beneficial insects that can be introduced to do the work for you. Ensure crop waste is disposed of, and weeds are kept under control on the periphery of the greenhouse.

Staff training is also important to upskill your labour force on what to look for.

2. Biological and Cultural Controls:

What beneficial organisms and natural predators such as ladybugs and predatory mites can be introduced to control targeted pests or suppress their numbers.

Crop rotations and using resistant varieties can also help break pest and disease cycles.

Preventative cultural practices such as efficient irrigation management practices and managing the greenhouse climate effectively can also prevent widespread disease outbreaks.

Companion planting can attract beneficial insects which keep targeted pests at manageable levels.

3. Chemical Control:

Use selective and targeted chemicals choosing options, where practical that have little impact on beneficials and pollinators such as bees. Understanding the lifecycles of the pests you are trying to control is also important as is rotating chemical groups to prevent resistance buildup. Timing of your sprays and ensuring you're using the right water rates and application equipment is crucial to maximise the effectiveness and targeted control of the pest or disease.

4. Data and Tools:

There is a range of tools that can record data such as pest alerts, and you can setup economic thresholds to determine for each crop type what your thresholds are. Good record keeping is important for compliance and assists in benchmarking what works for future pest and disease outbreaks.

Where can I seek more information?

PCA has a great relationship with Biological Services, Bugs for Bugs and other independent agronomists who specialise in designing IPDM programs tailored to your needs. Check out their website or drop me a line if you would like further information.

Have a great month.

EVENTS

OCTOBER



Vertical Farming World Congress 2025

[Learn More →](#)

OCTOBER



Gatton Agtech Showcase Tickets Now Available

[Learn More →](#)

OCTOBER



Protected Cropping Facility Launch

[Learn More →](#)

JUNE

GREENTECH & NL INDUSTRY TOUR 2026



EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

Protected Cropping Australia are seeking expressions of interest from PCA members who would like to participate in a study tour trip that would take in a visit to the Greentech 2026 expo and key industry and farm sites in the Westland area of the Netherlands. The event itself is aiming to provide an insight into the latest technologies and developments in the protected cropping industry.

The Greentech event is in itself - massive! With some 550 trade stands and a packed lecture program, the event is certain to provide interest for all growers. For more details on the Greentech itself, please feel free to visit the link shown to provide more insight into this event - <https://youtu.be/SS16-J3dUT8>

Preliminary discussions have revealed strong support from key industry players to facilitate site and generic industry visits. These companies include Rijk Zwaan, Priva and Grodan to name but a few. We anticipate that the tour would be based around the Amsterdam region to facilitate easy access to the Greentech and also provide a central meeting point for the tours. Once we have

Greentech & NL Industry Tour 2026 EOI

[Learn More →](#)

OCTOBER

IPM in action: monitor, manage, protect

This workshop will provide a practical approach to integrated pest management (IPM) in protected cropping

Learn about integrated pest management (IPM) principles in protected cropping and identify key pests and beneficials!

Participants will hear from a leading expert on:

- **IPM essentials** – how to integrate cultural, biological and chemical controls
- **Managing key pests** – thrips, mites, whiteflies and aphids
- **Beneficial insects** – how they work for you
- **Monitoring skills** – practical infield tips for detection and decision-making

Guest speaker:
Jake Bryne – Biological Services

Monday 13 October
8:30am – 12:00pm
Central room, Sydney Market
Adjacent to Shed B – North
Side, Homebush West

For more info:
Contact Tony on 0409 007 000
or projects@protectedcropping.net.au

Join us for a FREE workshop, designed for cut flower growers in

This Storm and Flood Industry Recovery project is jointly funded by the Australian and NSW governments under Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements

Disclaimer: Although funding for this product has been provided by both Australian and NSW governments, the material contained herein does not necessarily represent the views of either government

NSW Cut Flower Industry - IPM Workshop

[Learn More →](#)

OCTOBER



PCA 2025 Annual General Meeting (Members Only)

[Learn More →](#)

INFORMATION

NATIONAL

TENDER

Request for Tender



Join the Movement to Transform Australian Vegetable Industry

Hello Matthew

Are you ready to help shape the future of one of Australia's most vital agricultural sectors

This Open Innovation Challenge is your opportunity to make a real impact, by tackling the toughest issues facing vegetable growers today and unlocking bold, transformative solutions. Whether you're a startup with disruptive tech, a researcher with fresh insights, or a business ready to lead change, your ideas could drive the next wave of innovation across farming systems, supply chains, and consumer health.

Let's reimagine what's possible and build a more resilient, productive, and sustainable vegetable industry – together.

Hort Innovation is seeking innovators as delivery partners, individuals, startups and researchers to join us in addressing the following challenges being faced by Australian growers:

- Increased cost and farming system complexity, including, but not limited to, chemical access, water, fertiliser and labour.
- Supply chain optimisation, opportunities to address quality standards and decrease compliance burden through efficiency improvement.
- Utilising vegetables as an input in product innovation, addressing key challenges in consumption and preventative health.

Respondents need to be able to demonstrate that their solution addresses a real-world need and confirm a pathway to adoption.

Hort Innovation Request For Tender

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OPPORTUNITY

[About](#)

Advance your career with a Farming and Agriculture Sector women's leadership scholarship

Partial scholarships of \$700 - \$3000 are available to help women in select industries participate in our world-class leadership courses.

Courses are available for women at all levels.
Applications close Friday 24th October 2025, unless allocated earlier.

[Enquire now](#)

Farming & Ag Sector Women's Scholarship

[Learn More →](#)

NEWS

[About](#)

The Australian Awards for Excellence in Women's Leadership

Now in its 13th year, the Australian Awards for Excellence in Women's Leadership recognises women and gender-diverse leaders who have demonstrated impactful leadership.

Nominations for the 2026 Awards close on Friday 3rd October 2025. Submit your nomination in the form below.

2026 Award For Excellence In Women's Leadership

[Learn More →](#)

NEWS



PLANTS FOR SPACE
 ARC CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE

Our T

Complete nutrition plant-based foods

Our first mission aims for the development of 'complete nutrition' plants that hui sacrificing health. Our focus will be on optimising concentrations of all essentia minimal suite of plants that can be processed into appealing food forms to fulfil



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Plants For Space ARC Centre For Excellence

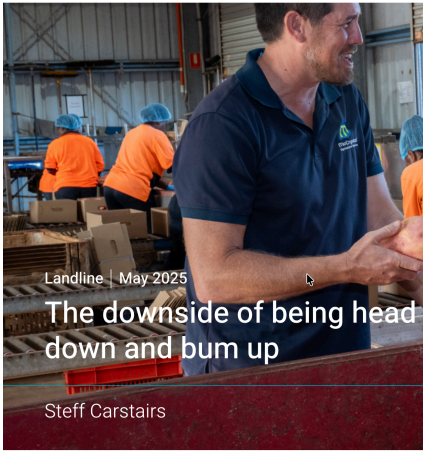
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NEWS

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About Us ▾ Our St



Landline | May 2025

The downside of being head down and bum up

Steff Carstairs

[planfarm.com.au/resources](#)

head down, bum in tune of farmer? You work pretty hard aln

The Downside Of Being Head Down And Bum Up

[Learn More →](#)

NEWS



Horticulture isn't just about growing plants – it's about growing health. In this newsletter, we feature an article about the Dutch garden centre ntratuin, which aims to achieve a 70% chemical-free product range by 2030 through close collaboration with growers. Experts Patrick Deckers (Caring Doctors) and Wendy Walrabenstein (Plants for health) share how plant-based diets support healthcare. And, we'll showcase inspiring initiatives connecting food, health, and innovation in a session that was part of the World Horti Center, recorded at GreenTech Amsterdam this year.



"We will part ways with growers who do not comply"

ntratuin, with 71 garden centres across the Netherlands, Belgium, and Germany, is a leading international player committed to sustainability. We're intrinsically driven to green the world," says Elise Wieringa (Sustainability Manager). By 2030, 70% of their products must be

Efforts For A 70% Chemical-Free Product Range

[Learn More →](#)

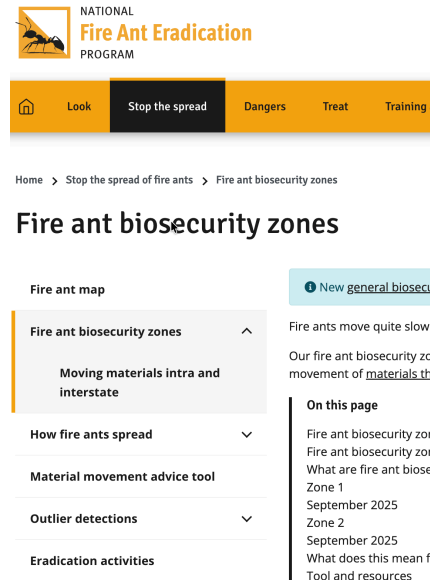
NEWS



Press Release - Hagelunie & Achmea Farm Insurance

[Learn More →](#)

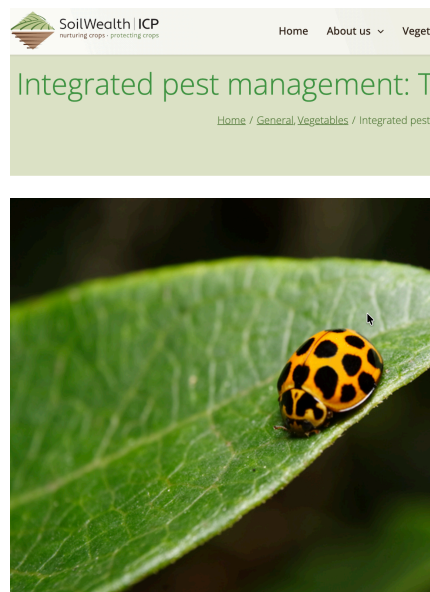
NEWS



QLD Fire Ant Biosecurity Zones Updated

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RESOURCE



IPM - Thresholds Guide & Beneficials

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MEMBER ADVERTISEMENTS

AIPH - FLORACULTURE INTERNATIONAL

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SEPTEMBER 2025



CERTIFICATION THAT COUNTS

**GLOBALG.A.P. building trust
across supply chains**

SMART TECH SOLUTIONS

**TTA-ISO is bringing automation
to growers worldwide**

PLANTS FOR THE FUTURE

**Belgium's Plant Select leads
with innovation**

SUSTAINABILITY IN FOCUS

How Responsibility is Reshaping Our Industry



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