

MEDIA RELEASE

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Research deal sealed with Indian superpower

A landmark research agreement between Horticulture Innovation Australia (Hort Innovation) and the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR, Government of India) was recently signed in New Delhi – marking the second such agreement with a substantial Indian agricultural agency in as many months.

Hort Innovation Research General Manager David Moore said the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) will allow both countries to work on a number of agreed collaborative research areas, for the mutual benefit of horticulture growers.

“This MoU is significant because the Indian Council of Agricultural Research is the world’s largest agricultural research organisation, responsible for guiding more than 100 dedicated institutes and more than 70 agricultural universities,” he said.

“India is a massive research engine that is focussed on doubling yields and farmer profitability. ICAR has an enviable record of contribution towards this, helping the nation’s horticultural output skyrocket by 950 per cent between 1951 and 2014.”

Mr Moore said in return, India will also benefit. “Here in Australia, we have some excellent research institutions that have achieved enormously in the areas such as post-harvest management technologies, biotechnology, and robotics.

“This agreement is essentially providing researchers from two vastly different jurisdictions the opportunity to share their knowledge and work together to create solutions to horticulture industry issues and crop production.”

The MoU, which was more than three-years in the making, was secured after a series of research prioritisation workshops in Bangalore, New Delhi, and Brisbane.

Research focus areas include best-practice biosecurity and post-harvest research sharing, pollination, diagnostic techniques and the application of genomics across a number of horticultural crops.

The ICAR-Hort Innovation deal complements a separate \$6 million Hort Innovation research agreement with the Indian Government’s Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council, recently signed at the Australian High Commission in New Delhi.

Mr Moore said the two MoU’s signify a strengthening bond between both countries.

“These research agreements will enhance our relationships and are hopefully a prelude to an anticipated India-Australia Free Trade Agreement that would have far-reaching macro benefits for both countries.”

Horticulture Innovation Australia delivers more than \$100 million in research, development and marketing activities across the horticulture industry each year with funding from the Australian Government, grower levies and other sources.

Contact: Kelly Vorst-Parkes, Communications Manager – Media 0447 304 255 or kelly.vorst-parkes@horticulture.com.au