

Final report

Project title:

Partnering with Vegetables Western Australia to strengthen VegNET engagement of culturally and linguistically diverse communities

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Delivery partner:

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Public summary

The VG25001 project, *Partnering with Vegetables Western Australia to strengthen VegNET engagement of culturally and linguistically diverse communities*, was established to improve engagement between VegNET and culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) vegetable growers in Western Australia, with a particular focus on Vietnamese-speaking growers. Language and cultural barriers can limit access to industry information, training opportunities and support services, reducing the ability of some growers to benefit from industry-funded research, development and extension activities. The project aimed to ensure that all growers, regardless of language or background, could access practical information, industry support and opportunities to improve business performance, productivity and resilience.

The project was delivered across Western Australia through a combination of direct grower support, one-on-one farm visits, regional roadshows, demonstration activities, communication campaigns and advisory support. Activities included bilingual chemical training, soil moisture probe and soil amendment demonstrations, water-use efficiency grant support, pest and disease extension, technology demonstrations and grower engagement events. Information was shared through newsletters, magazine articles, direct communications and translated resources. The project also provided translation and interpretation support to growers and industry stakeholders and contributed knowledge and resources to support CALD engagement across the national VegNET network.

During the project period, 230 direct grower support interactions and 60 one-on-one farm visits were delivered. Sixteen growers successfully completed accredited bilingual chemical training in Perth, while more than 70 participants attended the Carnarvon and Geraldton Roadshows. Growers participating in project activities demonstrated increased knowledge, confidence and awareness of industry opportunities, including chemical stewardship, pest and disease management, water-use efficiency and emerging technologies. The project also supported growers to access government funding opportunities, industry programs and technical support services.

The project demonstrated that culturally appropriate communication, bilingual resources and relationship-based extension can significantly improve participation and engagement among CALD growers. The project strengthened connections between growers, industry organisations, researchers and government agencies while improving access to information and support services. It also provided practical insights into effective approaches for engaging culturally diverse grower communities, with lessons shared across the national VegNET network.

The project has established a strong foundation for future inclusive extension activities. Key recommendations include continued investment in multilingual extension resources, ongoing support for culturally appropriate engagement approaches, expansion of practical demonstration activities and stronger monitoring of long-term practice change and adoption outcomes. The project also highlights the opportunity for a more coordinated national approach to engaging culturally and linguistically diverse grower communities. By sharing resources, learnings and successful engagement models across regions, future investments can improve accessibility, strengthen industry participation and help ensure all growers benefit from industry-funded research, development and extension activities. This will contribute to a more productive, resilient and inclusive Australian vegetable industry.

Keywords

Regional Development Officer; Research & Development; Stakeholder engagement; Innovation; Extension; Adoption; Vegnet, vegetablesWA; CALD grower; bilingual training, Roadshow.

Introduction

The Australian vegetable industry operates in an increasingly complex environment, with growers facing challenges relating to rising production costs, workforce availability, biosecurity risks, environmental pressures, market requirements and increasing regulatory obligations. In this environment, effective extension and adoption programs play a critical role in ensuring growers have access to relevant information, industry support and opportunities to improve business performance. Through Hort Innovation’s investment in vegetable research, development and extension (RD&E), including the VegNET program, growers are supported to access and adopt new knowledge, technologies and best-practice approaches that improve productivity, profitability and resilience.

Western Australia’s vegetable industry includes a significant proportion of culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) growers, particularly within the Vietnamese-speaking community. These growers make an important contribution to the state’s vegetable production; however, language and cultural barriers can reduce access to industry information, training opportunities, research findings and support services. As a result, there is a risk that industry investments in research, development and extension do not reach all growers equally, potentially limiting adoption and industry-wide impact.

VegetablesWA has represented Western Australian vegetable growers since 1948 and has a long history of delivering industry development, extension and advocacy services. Through ongoing engagement with growers and industry stakeholders, VegetablesWA identified the need for more targeted approaches to support participation and engagement among CALD growers. The organisation also recognised an opportunity to strengthen the capacity of the broader VegNET network to engage more effectively with culturally diverse grower communities.

The project “Partnering with Vegetables Western Australia to strengthen VegNET engagement of culturally and linguistically diverse communities” (VG25001) was established in response to these challenges and opportunities. Funded by Hort Innovation, this project was designed to improve accessibility and inclusiveness within extension delivery by strengthening connections between CALD growers, industry organisations, research providers and support services.

The project builds upon previous industry efforts to improve engagement with culturally diverse grower communities and reflects growing recognition across the horticulture sector that extension approaches must be adapted to meet the needs of an increasingly diverse grower base. Previous experiences within Western Australia highlighted the importance of trusted relationships, culturally appropriate communication and language accessibility in supporting grower participation and engagement.

The investment aligns with the Vegetable Strategic Investment Plan (SIP) 2022–2026, particularly the objective of increasing industry capability and supporting the adoption of research, development and extension outcomes. The project also aligns with regional VegNET priorities relating to business resilience, workforce capability, industry communications and strengthening connections between growers and the broader horticultural innovation system.

Beyond Western Australia, the project provides an opportunity to generate knowledge and experience that may inform future approaches to engaging culturally and linguistically diverse growers across Australia. By exploring more inclusive models of communication and engagement, the project contributes to the ongoing evolution of extension services and supports the goal of ensuring all vegetable growers can participate in and benefit from industry investments.

Methodology

The project was delivered by VegetablesWA through a coordinated program of grower engagement, extension, communication, capacity building, national VegNET collaboration and REAG support designed to strengthen participation of culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) growers within the VegNET network and improve access to industry information, support services and research, development and extension outcomes.

Project Reach and Target Audience

The project was delivered across Western Australia, with activities undertaken in key vegetable-growing regions including Perth Metropolitan, Gingin, Geraldton, Carnarvon and Manjimup. While the primary target audience was Western Australian vegetable growers, particular emphasis was placed on engaging culturally and linguistically diverse growers, especially members of the Vietnamese-speaking vegetable-growing community.

A secondary audience included VegNET Regional Development Officers (RDOs), industry organisations, researchers, government agencies, agribusiness service providers and other stakeholders involved in the delivery of extension and industry development programs.

Extension and Engagement Approach

The project adopted a relationship-based extension model that combined individual grower engagement with group extension activities and industry communications. The approach recognised that trusted relationships, culturally appropriate communication and accessibility are key factors influencing participation and adoption, particularly among CALD growers.

Grower engagement activities were delivered through a combination of:

- One-on-one farm visits and grower meetings.
- Phone calls, text messages, emails and online enquiries.
- Participation in industry events and stakeholder meetings.
- Translation and interpretation support where required.
- Referral and connection of growers to relevant industry programs, grants, training opportunities and support services.

Extension Activities and Technology Transfer

The project utilised a range of extension and technology transfer strategies to facilitate information exchange, build grower capability and increase awareness of industry opportunities.

Activities included:

- Regional roadshows.
- Demonstration and field days.
- Workshops and training activities.
- Industry forums and networking events.
- On-farm visits and practical discussions.

Regional roadshows were used to bring together growers, researchers, industry representatives and government agencies to discuss priority industry issues, emerging research and practical management strategies. Topics were selected based on regional needs and included production, biosecurity, business resilience, input-use efficiency and industry innovation.

Demonstration activities and on-farm trials were used to showcase technologies and practices relevant to vegetable production. These activities provided growers with opportunities to observe innovations under commercial conditions and engage directly with researchers, technical specialists and other growers.

Workshops, training sessions and industry events were used to improve grower knowledge and strengthen connections between growers and the broader horticultural innovation system. Where appropriate, bilingual communication, translated materials and interpretation support were incorporated into activities to improve accessibility and engagement among CALD growers.

Communication and Information Delivery

Information was disseminated through:

- VegetablesWA e-newsletters.
- WA Grower and Australian Grower magazine articles.
- Social media: Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn.
- Direct SMS and email communications.
- Translation of selected extension resources and communications into Vietnamese.

National VegNET Collaboration and REAG Support

In addition to activities undertaken within Western Australia, the project contributed to the broader VegNET network through participation in VegNET RDOs monthly meetings and collaborative activities. The project provided advice on engaging culturally and linguistically diverse grower communities and supported knowledge sharing between Regional Development Officers across Australia.

The project also supported VegNET WA Regional Extension Advisory Group (REAG) by contributing local industry intelligence, grower feedback and emerging regional priorities to inform the planning and implementation of future extension activities and projects. Information gathered through farm visits, grower consultations, regional roadshows, field days and stakeholder engagement activities was used to identify industry challenges, opportunities and innovation needs within the Western Australian vegetable industry.

Project Management

Project delivery was coordinated by Chi Nguyen, VegetablesWA Regional Development Officer, and supported by the broader VegetablesWA extension team, including VegNET WA Regional Development Officer and Regional Support Officer. Activities were guided by project milestones, annual work plans and regional priorities identified through grower consultation and industry engagement.

Regular project planning and review processes were undertaken throughout the project, including monthly WA vegetable extension delivery meetings. These meetings were used to review progress against project objectives, coordinate extension activities, identify emerging grower needs, discuss opportunities for collaboration, and ensure alignment with VegNET priorities and milestone requirements.

Results and discussion

The project delivered a broad range of extension, engagement and communication activities across Western Australia between September 2025 and June 2026. Activities focused on improving engagement with culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) growers, strengthening connections between growers and industry support networks, and increasing awareness of research, development and extension opportunities.

Grower Engagement and Direct Support

A total of 230 direct grower support interactions were recorded during the project period, comprising 47 email enquiries, 115 phone calls and 68 text message enquiries. In addition, 60 one-on-one farm visits were undertaken across key vegetable-growing regions of Western Australia. These interactions provided growers with access to technical information, referral pathways, grant opportunities, pest and disease support, and industry development initiatives.

The volume of direct enquiries and farm visits highlights the continued importance of personalised extension support. For many growers, particularly those from CALD backgrounds, direct engagement remains a preferred mechanism for accessing information and building confidence to participate in broader industry activities.

Industry Events, Demonstrations and Extension Activities

The project supported and delivered a range of extension activities including regional roadshows, demonstration events, industry field days, grower meetings and technology demonstrations. Key activities included Carnarvon and Geraldton Roadshows, drone demonstrations, laser weeder demonstrations, OWL technology demonstrations, fall armyworm farm visits, water-use efficiency activities and industry networking events.

These activities provided opportunities for growers to engage directly with researchers, technology providers, government agencies and industry organisations. The demonstration-based approach was particularly valuable for showcasing emerging technologies and encouraging discussion around practical implementation under commercial growing conditions.

A total of more than 70 participants attended the Carnarvon and Geraldton Roadshows, with growers representing more than 40 per cent of attendees. Post-event evaluation indicated that 70 per cent of participating growers reported an increase in knowledge, attitudes, skills and aspirations (KASA).

Training and Capacity Building

The project supported delivery of accredited bilingual chemical training in Perth in November 2025, with 16 growers successfully completing certification requirements. Evaluation results showed that 100 per cent of participating growers demonstrated an increase in knowledge, attitudes, skills and aspirations following the training. This activity contributed to broader industry objectives relating to chemical stewardship, workplace safety and regulatory compliance.

The strong response to bilingual training reinforces the importance of culturally appropriate extension approaches. Providing training in both English and Vietnamese improved accessibility and enabled growers to engage more effectively with technical content and compliance requirements.

On-Farm Demonstration and Innovation Activities

The project facilitated participation in several on-farm innovation and demonstration activities, including a soil moisture probe trial, a soil amendment trial investigating bentonite clay for soil moisture retention, drone demonstrations, laser weeding demonstrations and precision weed management technologies.

The soil moisture probe demonstration transitioned between two commercial vegetable farms, allowing growers to observe real-time monitoring of soil moisture, salinity and temperature. Evaluation indicated that all participating growers involved in the trial reported increased knowledge and confidence in using soil monitoring technologies to inform irrigation decisions.

These activities demonstrated the value of practical, grower-focused innovation demonstrations as a mechanism for

increasing awareness and understanding of emerging technologies. Demonstration activities also created opportunities for discussion between growers, researchers and service providers regarding barriers and opportunities for adoption.

Communication and Information Transfer

The project supported the dissemination of industry information through a combination of newsletters, magazine articles, direct communications and translated extension resources. Multiple extension articles were published through Australian Grower and WA Grower publications, while regular updates were distributed through vegetablesWA communication channels.

Translation and interpretation services were also provided to support accessibility of extension resources and industry communications. During the project period, translation and review services were provided for VegNET, Hort Innovation, AUSVEG Biosecurity, DPI Queensland and the Research Institute for Northern Agriculture, covering training materials, biosecurity resources, grower surveys and technical factsheets.

The volume of translation requests demonstrates an increasing demand for culturally appropriate extension resources across the national horticulture industry. This highlights opportunities to further integrate multilingual communication approaches into future extension investments.

Project Coordination and Industry Engagement

Monthly WA vegetable extension delivery meetings were held throughout the project period to review activities, coordinate extension priorities and identify emerging industry issues. Key topics included grower training, roadshow planning, grant support, pest and disease management, water-use efficiency, innovation projects and grower engagement strategies.

These meetings provided an effective mechanism for project planning, coordination and continuous improvement, ensuring project activities remained aligned with industry priorities and grower needs.

Discussion

The results demonstrate that a combination of direct grower engagement, practical demonstrations, targeted communication and culturally appropriate extension approaches can successfully strengthen participation in industry programs and improve access to information and support services.

The project highlighted the value of trusted relationships and bilingual engagement in reaching CALD growers who may otherwise have limited participation in extension activities. The high levels of engagement observed through direct enquiries, farm visits and training activities suggest that personalised support remains a critical component of effective extension delivery.

The project also demonstrated that growers respond positively to practical, locally relevant extension activities that combine technical information with opportunities for peer learning and direct interaction with industry experts. Demonstration activities, roadshows and training events provided valuable pathways for introducing new technologies, management practices and industry initiatives.

Importantly, the project generated insights that may inform future investments. The increasing demand for bilingual resources, translation support and culturally tailored engagement approaches suggests that inclusive extension models have the potential to improve participation and adoption outcomes across a broader range of horticultural industries and regions.

Outputs

Table 1. Output summary

Output	Description	Detail
Milestone report	Milestone 102	Achieved
Final report	Milestone 190	As per this report
Develop a delivery, monitoring and evaluation plan	VG25001 M&E planning	See Milestone 102 Appendix 1 - VG25001 M&E planning
Monthly meeting held for WA vegetable extension delivery with RDO and RSO, and provide meeting minutes	7 Meetings Conducted: 03 September, 12 September, 26 September, 24 October, 27 October, 11 November, 27 November.	See Appendix 2 - Meeting Summary with RDO and RSO
VegNET RDOs' monthly meeting	Attended: 5 Apologies: 1 (annual leave in April 2026) Ongoing: 2 (June and July 2026 meetings had not yet occurred at the time of reporting)	October 2025: Project introduction to VegNET November 2025: Update on Innovation Fund Bilingual Chemical Training Feb 2026: Soil Moisture Probe Trials, Drone Demo, OWL Demo March 2026: Carnarvon and Geraldton Roadshows April 2026: An update was provided to Vegnet WA RDO on my behalf, covering water use efficiency funding, input cost pressures, and support for Carnarvon growers recovering from Cyclone Narelle. May 2026: REAG meeting, Agri Technica ASIA
Grower engagement: Actively connecting with and supporting WA vegetable growers, especially the CALD grower community	• Direct supports • One-on-one farm visits • Bilingual Chemical Training, Perth • Carnarvon Roadshow • Geraldton Roadshow • Water Use Efficiency Grant Support • Soil Moisture Probe Trial	See Appendix 1 – Project records

	• Soil Amendment Trial	
Communications: Case study, articles, newsletters, event promotion, etc., targeted at WA vegetable growers, with the possibility of expanding to national audiences. This includes Vietnamese translation and interpretation support.	• Articles for WA Grower – Summer 2025/2026, Autumn 2026, and Winter 2026 edition. • Article for Australia Grower – Winter 2026 edition. • vegetablesWA’s newsletters • direct emails, text messages, an social media posts for information sharing and event promotion. • Review translation forms, documents for VegNET RDOs, AusVeg Biosecurity, Hort Innovation and stakeholders.	See Appendix 1 – Project records
Advisory – CALD: Provide ad hoc support to VegNET RDOs across Australia on engaging with Vietnamese growers	Attended VegNET WA’s REAG meeting on 23 October 2025 and 26 May 2026	See Appendix 1 – Project records

Outcomes

Table 2. Outcome summary

Outcome	Alignment to fund outcome, strategy and KPI	Description	Evidence
Strengthen VegNET engagement of CALD grower communities, particularly Vietnamese-speaking growers.	Vegetable SIP Outcome: Improve capability and develop an innovative culture that maximises investments in productivity and demand and builds a resilient Australian vegetable industry. Strategy: Increase access for culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) growers to tailored support and resources. KPI: Strengthen VegNET engagement of CALD grower communities, particularly Vietnamese-speaking growers.	The project increased engagement between VegNET and culturally and linguistically diverse growers through direct grower support, bilingual communication, translated resources, interpretation services, accredited training, regional roadshows and on-farm activities. The project improved accessibility to industry information and strengthened relationships between CALD growers and industry support organisations.	• 230 direct grower support interactions (47 emails, 115 phone calls, 68 text messages). • 60 one-on-one farm visits. • Vietnamese translation and interpretation support provided to growers and stakeholders. • Translated resources and presentation materials developed and distributed. • Participation of Vietnamese-speaking growers in training, roadshows and extension activities. • Grower feedback collected through event evaluations and direct engagement.
Engaged growers demonstrating an increase in knowledge, attitudes, skills and aspirations (KASA)	Vegetable SIP Outcome: Improve capability and develop an innovative culture that maximises investments in productivity and demand and builds a resilient Australian vegetable industry. Strategy: Use extension and communication processes to support industry adoption of sustainable production practices, food safety, biosecurity and data-driven decision making. KPI: Increased share of industry demonstrating positive change in knowledge, attitudes, skills and aspirations (KASA.)	Growers participating in project activities reported increased awareness, knowledge and confidence relating to industry issues including chemical stewardship, pest and disease management, water-use efficiency, technology adoption and business resilience. Practical demonstrations, training and extension activities provided opportunities for growers to learn from industry experts, researchers and peers.	• 100% of growers participating in the November 2025 Bilingual Chemical Training demonstrated an increase in KASA. • 70% of growers attending the Carnarvon and Geraldton Roadshows demonstrated an increase in KASA. • 100% of growers involved in the soil moisture probe demonstration reported an increase in KASA. • Event surveys, grower feedback, follow-up discussions and project records.
Enable growers to adopt new practices that improve safety, productivity, and profitability.	End-of-Project Outcome: Enable growers to adopt new practices that improve safety, productivity and profitability. Strategy: Build capacity and foster	The project increased grower exposure to new technologies, management practices and support programs through demonstrations, trials, training and direct	• Accredited bilingual chemical training supporting improved compliance and chemical management. • Soil moisture probe demonstrations supporting

	stronger connections between growers and industry support networks.	extension support. Activities improved awareness of opportunities relating to water-use efficiency, precision agriculture, chemical stewardship, pest management and emerging technologies.	improved irrigation decision-making. • Soil amendment trial investigating moisture retention and soil health improvements. • Drone, laser weeder and OWL demonstrations showcasing emerging technologies. • Water Use Efficiency Grant support provided to eligible growers. • Grower feedback and observations recorded through project activities.
Ensure that all growers, regardless of language or background, can benefit from industry advancements and participate fully in extension activities.	End-of-Project Outcome: Ensure that all growers, regardless of language or background, can benefit from industry advancements and participate fully in extension activities. Strategy: Increase access for culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) growers to tailored support and resources. networks	The project reduced barriers to participation by providing bilingual communication, translated resources, interpretation support and culturally appropriate engagement approaches. These activities improved accessibility of industry information and enabled greater participation by CALD growers in extension programs and industry events.	• Translation and review of technical resources, factsheets, surveys and biosecurity materials. • Interpretation support provided for grower meetings, farm visits, training and stakeholder engagement. • Bilingual promotion and delivery of extension activities. • Participation of CALD growers in roadshows, training and industry events. • Record of ad hoc translation and interpretation requests.
Support a more inclusive approach to grower engagement across Australia.	End-of-Project Outcome: Support a more inclusive approach to grower engagement across Australia. Strategy: Provide guidance to Regional Development Officers nationally on engaging with Vietnamese growers. KPI: VegNET RDO monthly meetings and advisory support delivered.	The project contributed knowledge, resources and practical experience to support more effective engagement with CALD grower communities across the national VegNET network. Lessons learned through delivery were shared with Regional Development Officers and industry stakeholders to improve understanding of culturally appropriate extension approaches.	• Participation in VegNET monthly meetings. • Provision of translation support and resource reviews for VegNET RDOs, Hort Innovation, AUSVEG Biosecurity, DPI Queensland and research organisations. • Attendance and contribution to REAG meetings. • Monthly WA extension delivery meetings and project planning discussions. • Record of ad hoc support requests and stakeholder engagement activities.

Monitoring and evaluation

Table 3. Key Evaluation Questions

Key Evaluation Question	Project performance	Continuous improvement opportunities
To what extent has the project achieved its expected outcomes?	The project successfully achieved its intended outcomes by strengthening VegNET engagement with culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) growers, particularly Vietnamese-speaking growers. The project delivered direct grower support, one-on-one farm visits, bilingual communication, roadshows, demonstration activities, training and advisory support. Monitoring data demonstrated positive changes in grower knowledge, attitudes, skills and aspirations (KASA), including 100% of participants in the November 2025 Bilingual Chemical Training and 70% of participants in the Carnarvon and Geraldton Roadshows reporting increased KASA. The project also improved access to industry information, support services and innovation opportunities for CALD growers.	Future projects could incorporate additional follow-up monitoring to measure longer-term practice change and adoption outcomes.
What legacy will the project leave?	The project has strengthened relationships between VegNET and CALD grower communities and established a stronger foundation for inclusive extension delivery in Western Australia. It has increased awareness of the importance of culturally appropriate communication and demonstrated practical approaches for engaging CALD growers. The project also generated resources, translated materials, stakeholder networks and extension approaches that can continue to be used by VegetablesWA, VegNET and other industry stakeholders. Learnings from the project have been shared nationally through VegNET network.	Future investment could focus on establishing more formal mechanisms for sharing CALD engagement practices across the national VegNET network. Additional investment in bilingual extension capability would further strengthen long-term industry capacity.
To what extent were methods successful to the target audience/s of the project?	The project delivery model was effective in reaching the target audience. Direct engagement through farm visits, phone calls, text messages and face-to-face events was particularly valued by growers. Bilingual communication, translated resources and interpretation support helped reduce language barriers and improved participation by Vietnamese-speaking growers. Demonstration activities, roadshows and training events provided practical and relevant learning opportunities that were well received by participants. The volume of grower enquiries, attendance at events and positive KASA outcomes indicate that the delivery methods were appropriate and effective.	Opportunities exist to increase the use of digital engagement tools and online resources to complement face-to-face extension activities.
Did the project deliver required outputs and outcomes on time and on budget?	The project successfully delivered all contracted outputs and milestones. Key activities included development of the monitoring and evaluation plan, monthly WA extension delivery meetings, participation in VegNET meetings, grower engagement activities, communication outputs, CALD advisory support and milestone reporting. Activities were delivered within the approved project timeframe and aligned with milestone requirements. Regular project planning meetings, progress reviews and stakeholder engagement supported efficient delivery and effective use of project resources.	Continued refinement of grower databases and customer relationship management systems would support more efficient tracking of engagement and outcomes.

Recommendations

1. Continue investment in culturally appropriate extension delivery

The project demonstrated that bilingual communication, translated resources and culturally appropriate engagement approaches can significantly improve participation and accessibility for CALD growers. Future extension activities should continue to incorporate multilingual communication and targeted engagement strategies where appropriate.

2. Expand the development of multilingual extension resources

Demand for translation and interpretation support extended beyond Western Australia, with requests received from VegNET Regional Development Officers, Hort Innovation, AUSVEG Biosecurity and research organisations. Future investment should consider developing a coordinated library of multilingual factsheets, training materials and extension resources that can be utilised nationally.

3. Strengthen capability across the VegNET network to engage CALD growers

The project highlighted opportunities to share knowledge and practical experiences relating to CALD engagement across Australia. Future VegNET activities should continue to facilitate knowledge sharing between Regional Development Officers and support the development of best-practice approaches for engaging culturally diverse grower communities.

4. Maintain a strong focus on relationship-based extension

The high level of grower engagement achieved through direct support, farm visits and personalised communication demonstrates the continued importance of relationship-based extension. Future programs should maintain opportunities for one-on-one engagement alongside broader communication and extension activities.

5. Continue practical demonstration and on-farm learning activities

Growers responded positively to demonstration activities, field events and technology showcases, including soil moisture monitoring, drone technologies and precision weed management demonstrations. Future investments should continue to utilise practical, on-farm learning approaches to increase awareness and encourage adoption of new technologies and management practices.

6. Improve monitoring of longer-term adoption outcomes

While the project successfully measured changes in knowledge, attitudes, skills and aspirations (KASA), future projects should incorporate additional follow-up monitoring to better understand longer-term practice change, technology adoption and business impacts resulting from extension activities.

7. Support stronger connections between growers and industry support programs

The project demonstrated the value of connecting growers with grant opportunities, training programs, researchers, government agencies and industry initiatives. Future extension programs should continue to facilitate these connections to maximise grower access to information, funding opportunities and innovation pathways.

Refereed scientific publications

None to report

Intellectual property

No project IP or commercialisation to report

Appendices

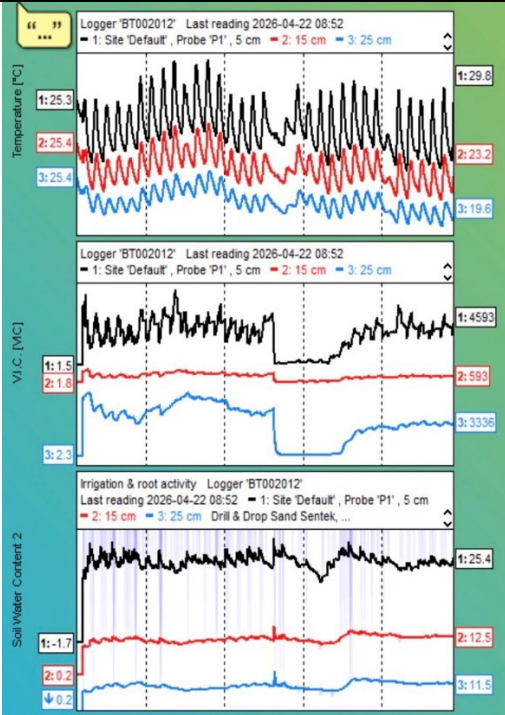
Appendix 1 - Project records

Appendix 2 - Meeting Summary with RDO and RSO

Appendix 3 – Record of ad hoc queries

Appendix 1 – Project records

Activities	Description
Direct supports	- Emails 47, Phone calls 115, Text messages 68: 230 - One-on-one farm visits: 60
2-day Bilingual Chemical Training, Perth 25-26 November	- Growers participated and successfully achieved certification: 16 100% Participated growers demonstrating an increase in knowledge, attitudes, skills and aspirations  
Water Use Efficiency Grant Support	- Continue to inform and support eligible growers to secure Gnamptara Water Use Efficiency Grant up to \$AUD100,000 per business, including: - Modifications to irrigation systems that increase the application of water uniformity - Installation of protected cropping options, which may include greenhouses, glasshouses, shade houses, windbreaks, or permanent netting
Soil Moisture Probe Trial	- Trial with Brussels Sprout Grower, continue through Summer, potentially move to another crop when the Brussels Sprout season completes - Tracking data through mobile app and website   Installing probe Crop checking in October 2025

	  Crop checking in November 2025 Crop checking in December 2025 Trial with brussel sprout farm completed, last data captured 30 December, removed probe and moved to trial with spring onion farm  14 January: Installing probe at spring onions farm  Data captured during March 2026	
Soil Amendment Trial	- Site check and soil sample test before amendment - Use clay (bentonite) for soil moisture retention	

			
	Site check after soil amendment in Nov 2025	Installing soil moisture sensors in Feb 2026	
			
	Installing soil moisture sensors in Feb 2026	Installing soil moisture sensors in Feb 2026	
Powdery mildew sample collection at a cucumber farm on 10 November 2025			

Melons Australia Roadshow 02 December 2025 Carnarvon DPIRD Melons Field day 03 December 2025		
Vietnamese Community in Carnarvon Christmas Party 03 December 2025		
Carnarvon farm visits with plant pathologists 04 December 2025	 	

Bushfire-affected areas inspection and checking with growers in the surrounding area 30 December 2025			
Capsicum nutrition issue and chili thrips in Bullsbrook 22 January 2026			
Drone demo in South Perth 03 February 2026			

			
Laser Weeder Demo on carrot farm in Lancelin on 25 February 2026			
OWL Demo in Manjimup on 26 February 2026			

Fall
Armyworm
farm visits in
Carnarvon on
17 March
2026



Carnarvon
Roadshow
presentations
on 17 March
2026



Fall
Armyworm
farm visit in
Geraldton on
19 March
2026



Geraldton
Roadshow
presentation
on 19 March
2026



Laser Weeder
Demo on cos
lettuce and
celery farms
in Gingin on
25 March
2026



vegetablesWA newsletters	• 11 September: Gnangara Horticulture Water Use Efficiency Grants Program WA • 26 September, 10 October, 31 October, 14 November, 23 January: Upcoming Chemical Training for WA Growers – Expression of Interest Now Open • 31 October, 14 November: Australian-Grown Innovation Program – WA Engage workshop • 31 October, 14 November: One-On-One Horticultural Business Sessions - Level Up Hort Program • 14 November: Carnarvon Field Day, Melons Roadshow • 19 December, 16 January, 13 February: Grower Database System Update • 16 January, 10 April: ChemClear Upcoming Collection in Western Australia • 23 January, 13 February: vegetablesWA Roadshow • 13 February: 2026 FarmElevate Workshops, Water Use Efficiency Grants • 27 February, 13 March: vegetablesWA Carnarvon and Geraldton roadshows • 27 March: Get Climate Ready workshop • 10 April: WA Blueberry grower field day • 10 April, 24 April: Cyclone Narelle Disaster Recovery Assistance • 24 April: Australian-Grown Innovation Engage Session • 22 May, 12 June: VegNET 3.0 Survey • 12 June: Recovery Support for Primary Producers Affected by Cyclone Narelle
Article for Australia Grower – Winter 2026	 Beyond extension Delivering real outcomes for WA growers Vegetable growers across Western Australia are facing increasing pressure from rising input costs, water constraints and pest challenges, reinforcing the need for practical, targeted extension that delivers real on-farm outcomes. Delivered as part of the Hort Innovation funded project Partnering with Vegetables Western Australia to strengthen VegNET engagement of culturally and linguistically diverse communities (VGC25002), these activities focused on improving engagement with culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) growers, particularly Vietnamese speaking communities. They also strengthened access to information, training and industry support through regional roadshows, on-farm engagement, trials and bilingual training. Turning engagement into action A key focus of the project is to move beyond information sharing and deliver practical outcomes for growers. Through ongoing engagement, growers have been connected with the WA Government's Horticulture Water Use Efficiency Grants, supporting investments in infrastructure and practices that improve water efficiency and resilience. With support from VegetablesWA, several growers have secured funding to implement changes such as installing permanent netting, upgrading irrigation systems, improving water quality and transitioning to protected cropping. For many growers, this was the first time accessing funding support, turning awareness into real on-farm change. These investments are already delivering results. One capsicum grower reduced water use by up to 60 percent after installing netting, while also improving crop quality. In another case, irrigation upgrades helped reduce heat stress and improve performance during summer. Alongside this, on-farm trials are supporting more informed, data-driven decisions on irrigation and soil management. A soil moisture probe demonstration trial is tracking moisture, salinity and temperature in real time, helping growers time-tune irrigation practices. Early results are promising. A Brussels sprouts trial improved irrigation efficiency over the summer, with the work now continuing in spring onions to extend learnings across crops. In parallel, a soil amendment trial in cherry tomatoes, delivered with DPIRD, is testing bentonite clay to improve soil health and moisture retention. The project is also strengthening grower capacity through bilingual training. Accredited chemical training delivered in English and Vietnamese has engaged 44 growers across Carnarvon and Perth, improving confidence in chemical use, safety and compliance. It has created a supportive learning environment where growers can share experiences and learn from each other. ABOVE: CHU NGUYEN during an on-farm trial.  "Prices keep going up, and it's getting harder to plan. But coming to events like this helps, we get the latest information and know we're not dealing with it alone." <i>CARNARVON GROWERS</i> Carnarvon and Geraldton roadshows VegetablesWA's Carnarvon and Geraldton roadshows, coordinated by Regional Development Officer Chu Nguyen in March 2026, highlighted the impact of targeted, inclusive extension, particularly for CALD growers. Delivered as a critical time for the industry, the roadshows provided an opportunity to connect with growers face-to-face while delivering practical, regionally relevant information. The program covered key topics including farm improvement (FAW) management, regional updates, vegetable research, crop nutrition, postharvest innovation and soil-borne pest management. Just as importantly, the events created space for open discussion, giving growers the chance to ask questions, share experiences and connect directly with the industry. A standout feature was the extension beyond the meeting room and into the paddock. On-farm visits focused on FAW, one of the most pressing pest challenges currently facing the sector. These visits enabled real-time identification and discussion, particularly around distinguishing FAW from similar pests such as cluster caterpillar and heliothis. This hands-on approach reinforces the value of the VegNET model, supporting growers not just with information, but with practical, on-ground application. Seeing pests in the field builds confidence, and accurate identification is the first step to effective management. Accessibility remained a strong focus throughout the roadshows. Vietnamese language resources were provided, along with translation and interpretation support during presentations and discussions. This ensured growers could fully engage with the content and participate in conversations. For many CALD growers, this removed a long-standing barrier to extension and helped build trust. Across both events, more than 70 people attended, with growers making up over 40 percent of participants. Despite ongoing uncertainty, the overall sentiment was one of resilience. Just as important as delivering information is listening. Across both regions, growers spoke openly about the pressures they are facing. While pest pressure, water availability and production costs were all raised, one issue stood out: rising fuel and fertiliser costs. These insights ensure extension remains relevant, responsive and grounded in the real needs of growers. LOOKING AHEAD As the vegetable industry continues to navigate rising input costs, water constraints and increasing pest pressure, the need for practical, well-connected extension has never been greater. This project highlights what effective extension looks like, bringing together on-farm support, access to funding, data-driven decision-making and targeted capability building to deliver real outcomes. It also reinforces the importance of a more inclusive approach, ensuring CALD growers are not only reached but actively engaged as part of the broader industry. Looking ahead, VegetablesWA will continue to build on this momentum through VegNET, strengthening regional engagement, expanding on-farm visits and scaling bilingual training. A key priority will be developing local capacity and partnerships to support a more sustainable, grower-led model of extension. Importantly, the learnings from this work extend beyond Western Australia, contributing to a broader national effort to support a more inclusive, responsive and effective approach to grower engagement across Australia. TOP & R: Bilingual training in progress. VegetablesWA's Carnarvon roadshow.
Article for WA Grower – Summer 2025/2026	Benchmarking for Better Decisions: How the Level Up Hort Program is Helping Growers Navigate Tougher Seasons https://wagrower.vegetableswa.com.au/collections/wa-grower-summer2025/benchmarking-for-better-decisions

BUSINESS benchmarking

Benchmarking FOR BETTER DECISIONS

How the Level Up Hort Program is helping growers navigate tougher seasons

As vegetable growers across Australia grapple with rising costs, shrinking margins, and increasing uncertainty, the Level Up Hort Benchmarking Program is giving them something invaluable: clarity.

Words Chi Nguyen, Regional Development Officer, vegetablesWA

BY turning farm data into practical business insight, the program helps vegetable and onion growers understand what drives profitability and where they can make measurable improvements.

Below: Staff Carstairs, Level Up Hort Program Manager.



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I spoke with **Staff Carstairs**, Level Up Hort Program Manager, about why benchmarking matters more than ever, what the 2024 results reveal, and how growers can use this knowledge to strengthen their businesses. I also caught up with **David Ellement** from Ellement Produce, who shared how

benchmarking has transformed the way he manages his business.

Born from necessity

Staff: The program really came out of necessity. The latest AUSVEG Sentiment Survey found that around 40 per cent of vegetable growers are considering exiting the industry within the next 12 months and that figure has been climbing for the past five years.

Growers' margins have been eroded considerably. Many can't see a clear way forward, and quite a few feel unsupported in their decision-making.

That's why the benchmarking program is more than a spreadsheet of numbers. It's a business development tool, knowledge and insight about how the vegetable and onion industries are performing, how costs behave, what drives income, and how to use inputs, including labour, more efficiently to maximise output and income.

benchmarking BUSINESS

From numbers to knowledge

Chi: Some growers tell me the data looks too technical. How can the messages be simplified so they can easily apply them?

Staff: That's a great question. Numbers alone don't mean much until you understand them in the context of your own business. That's exactly the role of the farm business consultants in the program.

We help individual businesses interpret their figures and use them to guide decisions. The goal is to promote simple, actionable messages about what to measure, how to measure it, and what to do with the information.

I love a quote I heard recently: "If you measure it, it will move". In fact, I'd take it further. If you measure it, it will improve. As soon as you start measuring something, you become conscious of it. The key is to collect data with purpose, not just for data's sake.

Once you've started collecting data and you can see areas that need improvement, focus your energy on what you can control. The benchmark results show where costs are high, then we look deeper into why they're high. It's not about slashing costs. It's about directing resources more effectively to improve outcomes.

Directing costs where they count

Chi: So instead of cutting costs, it's about targeting them?

Staff: Exactly. Look at what's behind the number. If a cost line in your business is double the benchmark, ask why. If that extra cost is producing more income or higher yields, it may well be justified.

What benchmarking does is highlight the areas where greater efficiency can be achieved, not necessarily through reduction, but through smarter allocation.



Season 2024: Key findings

Chi: The 2024 benchmark results were released recently. What are the standout messages growers should take note of?

Staff: First, the average performance across the industry isn't great. Margins are tight and profitability is under real pressure. That reflects what we're hearing on the ground and what AUSVEG's sentiment survey shows. But there are still businesses that are performing well, and it's important to understand why.

Profitability isn't simply about spending less. In fact, the most profitable businesses were spending more per hectare, but in targeted ways that directly contributed to income.

They invested more in the areas that drive returns, and that spending paid off. It's not "spend more to make more" for the sake of it. It's spending smarter.

Another key finding is that **crop type doesn't determine profitability**. The top 25 per cent of performing businesses in the benchmark weren't all growing the same crops or in the same regions. Success was linked to management strategy, culture, and business discipline rather than the crop itself.

Profitability spanned all types of farms, large and small, low-value and high-value crops, and mechanised and labour-intensive operations. There was no single "model" that guaranteed profit. Benchmarking includes large-scale, medium and small farms, the principles apply to all. Whether you manage ten hectares or a thousand, comparing performance and identifying improvements works the same way. What really stood out was **labour productivity**. The most profitable growers spent more dollars per hectare on labour, but they used that labour far more efficiently. Often, that's because they've invested in skilled staff and built a strong

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BUSINESS benchmarking

workplace culture that multiplies returns rather than adds to costs. Culture and leadership underpins performance.

Seeking advice from others, like accountants, agronomists, consultants, and even your bank, brings in that outside perspective. One grower called it "paying for brains." Sometimes you're too close to the day-to-day to see the bigger picture. As consultants, we often describe our role as offering the "bird's-eye view": from above, you can see what's coming down the track that might be invisible when you're on the ground.

Chi: What changes or trends did you observe between the 2023 and 2024 seasons?

Staff: We compared the same growers across both years and saw a general decline: lower returns on assets managed and reduced profitability. Margins fell on average from 2023 to 2024.

Some businesses improved, but overall, the downward trend is worrying. It's still early to draw hard conclusions, but it does ring alarm bells. If that trajectory continues, it won't be sustainable.

As an industry, we need to be proactive and flexible, ahead of the curve rather than chasing it. The same applies to individual businesses.

How to apply benchmarking insights

Chi: What's the best way for growers to apply these benchmarks to improve decision-making?

Staff: First and foremost, **join the program**. That gives you access to analysis tailored to your business.



But even outside the program, you can use the published benchmark figures. Start by calculating your per-hectare costs for key inputs and compare them with the benchmark averages.

If any cost line looks high or low, that's your signal to dig deeper. For example, if fertiliser costs are double the average, ask: Why? Is it delivering a yield or quality advantage? If not, maybe that's where efficiencies can be gained.

The idea isn't to shave costs, but to redirect them where they're most effective. Tackling the large cost lines first helps you see the quickest returns.

If income is low, ask: Why? Is it yield, nutrition, timing, harvest quality, or perhaps training in the packhouse? Benchmarking helps you peel back the layers of your business to understand what's really happening.

A higher cost line isn't automatically bad as long as it's generating higher income. But if it isn't, that's where you need to focus attention.

At the consultancy level, we can often look at four or five metrics and get a

The idea isn't to shave costs, but to redirect them where they're most effective.

clear snapshot of a business. But what the numbers don't show is the story behind the farm gate, and that's what benchmarking encourages growers to uncover.

Ultimately, it's maximising the saleable yield per hectare that sets successful growers apart. If it costs the same to grow a hectare of cauliflower, but you harvest 80 per cent of the crop instead of 60 per cent, that's a huge difference to your bottom line.

Even a 1 per cent improvement each year adds up, and those small, consistent gains are what keep a business healthy. The danger is the opposite trend: small 1 per cent declines that accumulate until the bank loses confidence.

So, it's about **continuous, incremental improvement**. Do not wait for that one "perfect" season that might never come.

Chi: For time-poor growers, what's the one thing they should focus on when reviewing business performance?

Staff: That's a tough one, because everyone's busy. But I'd urge growers to take a little time to start measuring something, anything, that feels under-performing.

Set targets and review them regularly, either with your business partner, your farm manager, or your team. Working on your business instead of just in it pays dividends.

If you can only focus on one thing, make **labour efficiency**. Track how many bins are picked per hour or how much is packed per day. Establish a baseline, set achievable targets, and bring your team on that journey.

Think of it like a sporting team. The coach doesn't just sit back and hope for results. They measure performance, review the match, and plan how to kick more goals next time. That's how improvement happens.

And never underestimate the value of **labour training**. It can shift the needle more than any other investment when it comes to efficiency and profitability.

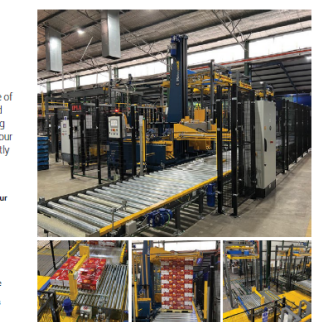
Getting involved

Chi: For growers who haven't joined Level Up Hort yet, how can they get started?

Staff: It's easy. Visit <https://leveluphort.com.au> or contact your VegNET Regional Development Officer, at chi.nguyen@vegetableswa.com.au or on 0457 457 559.

Key takeaway

Benchmarking isn't about numbers on a page. It's about understanding your business story, identifying what you can control, and making continual, measurable improvements that build resilience and profitability season after season.



We provide an exciting range of specialist automatic bag and box and RPP / tray palletising lines that help overcome labour shortage problems and greatly improve the presentation of stacked pallets.

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Article for WA Grower – Autumn 2026

RDO Update: Strengthening inclusion, innovation and resilience in WA

<https://wagrower.vegetableswa.com.au/collections/wa-grower-autumn2026/strengthening-inclusion-innovation-and-resilience-in-wa>

	BUSINESS training training BUSINESS RDO Update STRENGTHENING inclusion, innovation and resilience in WA We have commenced a new Hort Innovation-funded project to strengthen VegNET engagement with culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities, particularly Vietnamese-speaking vegetable growers across Western Australia. Words Chi Nguyen, Regional Development Officer, vegetablesWA RUNNING until July 2026, the project will deliver targeted extension, training, farm visits and bilingual communications to ensure growers can access information in their preferred language. The focus is practical and outcomes-driven, improving farm safety, productivity, profitability and business resilience. By making extension more accessible and culturally relevant, we aim to strengthen connections between growers and industry networks, ensuring everyone can fully participate in research, development and innovation opportunities. Bilingual chemical training continues to deliver Due to strong demand, we delivered another accredited bilingual chemical training session in Perth, funded through the VegNET Innovation Fund. Eighteen growers participated, gaining practical knowledge in the safe and effective use of agricultural chemicals. The bilingual delivery model continues to prove highly effective, breaking down language barriers and improving engagement and understanding. Interest is growing in further accredited training opportunities, including forklift licensing, Work Health and Safety (WHS), farm worker inductions, food safety and quality assurance. Carnarvon Melons Roadshow and on-farm support December saw a visit to Carnarvon for the Melons Australia Roadshow and DFFRD Melons Field Day, where growers viewed more than 120 melon varieties under local conditions. Farm visits with plant pathologists focused on addressing key disease pressures, including gummy stem blight, Fusarium and nematodes. These on-ground discussions are critical in supporting growers to respond quickly and effectively to emerging challenges. Trial updates – smarter irrigation and soil health On-farm trials continue to generate valuable insights for improving water and soil management. A soil moisture probe trial with a Brussels sprout grower tracked moisture, salinity and temperature throughout summer, helping fine-tune irrigation decisions and improve efficiency. The trial concluded in late December and will continue with a spring onion grower from mid-summer to late autumn. More information For assistance, contact Chi Nguyen, Regional Development Officer, at chi.nguyen@vegetableswa.com.au or on 0457 457 555. This project is funded by Hort Innovation using the vegetable research and development levy and contributions from the Australian Government. vegetablesWA Roadshow underway Our regional roadshow has commenced, with Carnarvon and Geraldton as the first stops. Topics include industry updates, pest management, nutrition strategies and crop protection solutions ahead of the growing season. If there are topics you would like covered in future events, please get in touch. vegetablesWA remains committed to supporting growers through practical extension, funding guidance, training and on-farm support. 10000  Bilingual chemical training continues to prove highly effective, breaking down language barriers and improving engagement and understanding. 44 WA Grower Winter 2026	BUSINESS roadshows roadshows BUSINESS BUSINESS roadshows FROM THE MEETING ROOM to the paddock strengthening connections through the Carnarvon and Geraldton Roadshows vegetablesWA's Carnarvon and Geraldton Roadshows, delivered in March 2026, brought growers and industry stakeholders together at an important time for Western Australia's vegetable sector. The focus was simple. Deliver practical, relevant information that supports real on-farm decisions. Words Chi Nguyen, Regional Development Officer, vegetablesWA WITH more than 70 participants across both regions, the roadshows provided a valuable chance to reconnect face-to-face, share knowledge, and hear directly from growers about the challenges they are dealing with this season. The program covered key topics including farm safety, pest management, regional updates, vegetable research, crop nutrition, post-harvest innovation, and soil health management. These on-farm discussions are actively managing, both now and for the future. From research to practice A notable feature of the roadshows was the shift toward practical, on-farm discussions. Growers have the chance to see post-harvest innovation, and share their own experiences with DFFRD Queensland scientists. This hands-on approach helped build confidence, particularly in identifying DFFRD and distinguishing it from similar pests such as Halimolopha and other caterpillars. Practical discussions focused on crop rotation, identifying key diseases, and using monitoring tools to better understand pest pressure. Updates from DFFRD highlighted the realities of growing in Carnarvon, a semi-arid climate, high pest and disease pressure, and significant water stress and variable weather all these low-growing species. Research is focused on practical responses. This includes water stress, improving heat tolerance, and managing soil health issues such as nutrient salinity and nematodes. Work to also develop on-farm pest trapping systems such as net houses and modified pheromone traps to reduce risk and improve consistency. New tools like drones and computer vision are being explored to support monitoring and decision-making on-farm. Post-harvest innovation and value-add Post-harvest management remains a key challenge, particularly in semi-arid regions like Carnarvon where distance to market impacts quality and income. Technologies such as electronic cold chain systems (ECCS) are being studied to extend shelf life and help maintain product quality during storage and transport. Early results show potential for some crops but also highlight the need to match the technology to the right product and system. There is also growing interest in reducing waste and creating value from second-grade produce. Frameworks such as Waste2Profit provide practical steps to identify waste streams and explore new product opportunities. The growers, this opens up growers to regions beyond the farm gate. Strengthening integrated pest management The roadshows reinforced the importance of integrated pest management and resistance management. In regions like Geraldton and Carnarvon, where there has been a strong reliance on conventional insecticides, there is increasing awareness of the need to take a holistic approach. This includes understanding pest biology, rotating chemical groups, and using multiple control strategies. Regular monitoring and timely action are critical to effective pest control. Area-wide management was also highlighted as a key part of reducing overall pest pressure. Listening to growers on the ground Just as important as sharing information was listening. Growers across both regions spoke openly about the pressures they are facing. Pest pressure, water availability, and seasonal conditions were all raised. However, one issue stood out clearly: strong local and national news, and it is getting harder to plan, this coming to us from the headlines. We got the latest information and know we are not dealing with a disaster. These conversations are critical. They help ensure extension stays practical and focused on what growers actually need. Acknowledging recent challenges The Carnarvon roadshow was delivered just one week before Tropical Cyclone Northy impacted the region. Since then, many growers have been dealing with destruction and are now focusing on recovery while continuing production. This adds to the ongoing pressure from rising fuel and fertilizer costs, making planning and decision-making even more challenging. vegetablesWA acknowledges the resilience of the Carnarvon growing community during this time. The roadshows built through even in this play a vital role, especially when growers are facing difficult conditions. Growers seeking support can access recovery information, assistance messages and updates through the Department of Fire and Emergency Services recovery portal for Cyclone Northy. Looking ahead The Carnarvon and Geraldton Roadshows shared the value of practical, regionally focused extension, bringing growers, researchers and industry together to help solve information gaps and build confidence. vegetablesWA will continue this momentum by supporting roadshows in Midland and Perth, focusing on connecting with growers to these regions and addressing local priorities. These events will provide further opportunities to share knowledge, hear directly from growers, and support on-farm decision-making. The focus remains forward in focus. Continue supporting growers with practical tools, relevant research, and strong on-ground engagement. Because in the end, effective extension is not just about sharing information. It is about helping growers make better decisions, improve outcomes, and stay connected as an industry. 10000 More information For more information, contact Chi Nguyen, Regional Development Officer, at chi.nguyen@vegetableswa.com.au or on 0457 457 555. edp Australia Bin Destacker Rollers The edp Bin Destacker was custom-built to automate the handling of empty fruit bins. It is built 2.1m high and automatically descends one or two bins. Controlled descent allows for repeat, stable bin movement. Individual bin space is constant, no impact. Bins advance automatically as gaps are created. Flashed design with angled plates for easy safe bin removal. Located near the flat grade for seamless full filling workflow. Driveway entry is turned turning the full length of the bin. Fully extendable length to suit your facility. Fully wired, installed, and electrically compliant. edp.com.au 03 5820 5337 edp is a full range of products. 45 WA Grower Winter 2026  vegetablesWA's Carnarvon and Geraldton Roadshows, delivered in March 2026, brought growers and industry stakeholders together at an important time for Western Australia's vegetable sector. The focus was simple. Deliver practical, relevant information that supports real on-farm decisions. 44 WA Grower Winter 2026
Article for WA Grower – Winter 2026	From the meeting room to the paddock – strengthening connections through the Carnarvon and Geraldton Roadshows https://wagrower.vegetableswa.com.au/collections/wa-grower-winter2026	
Direct emails, and text messages for information sharing and event promotion	• Bilingual Chemical Training • Gatton Ag Tech Showcase & Lockyer Valley Study Tour EOJ • Chemical Training • Drone demonstration • Geraldton Roadshow • Carnarvon Roadshow • Hort Connection	
VegNET WA's REAG meeting on 23 October	• Presented updates on the new Hort Innovation project VG25001 focused on strengthening VegNET engagement with culturally and linguistically diverse communities. Chi also shared findings from the recent Grower Needs Survey, which collected responses from 25 growers across WA's major vegetable-	

2025	growing regions.
VegNET WA's REAG meeting on 26 May 2026	• VegNET WA's priorities for the upcoming year: ▪ Business Tools, Capacity, Costs & Labour ▪ Input Use Efficiency ▪ Biosecurity, Pest & Disease Management
Increase participation rate in VegNET activities and initiatives.	• 1 grower from Carnarvon for the Gatton AgTech Tour • 16 growers for the Bilingual Chemical Training, bringing the total to 43 growers participating in this Innovation Fund Training Program. • VegetablesWA's Carnarvon and Geraldton Roadshows, delivered in March 2026, saw more than 70 people attend, with growers making up over 40 per cent of participants. • Encourage WA Grower Feedback - Future Vegetable Strategic Investment Plan
Increase in knowledge, attitudes, skills and aspirations (KASA)	• 100% of growers who participated in the Bilingual Chemical Training in Perth in November 2025 demonstrated an increase in knowledge, attitudes, skills, and aspirations. • 70% of growers who attended the Carnarvon and Geraldton Roadshows in March 2026 demonstrated an increase in knowledge, attitudes, skills, and aspirations. • 100% of growers participated in soil moisture trial on farm demonstrated an increase in knowledge, attitudes, skills, and aspirations.
Increase access for culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) growers to tailored support and resources	• Translated resources available for growers on pest and disease management • Offered one-on-one sessions on 20–21 November with a Planfarm Horticulture Business Consultant, supported by a Vietnamese-speaking consultant for the Level Up Hort Program • Translated handouts for Carnarvon and Geraldton roadshow presentations' slides • Interpretation on farm between growers and plant scientists. • Interpretation for MarketWest Pay Training day.
Build capacity and foster stronger connections between growers and industry support networks	• Western Australian Horticulture Update 22 October 2025  GinGin Palettes & Plates Fresh Produce Display 11 October 2025  APEN Conference – Gatton Smart Farm October 2025



• Vietnamese Spring Fest 23 November 2025

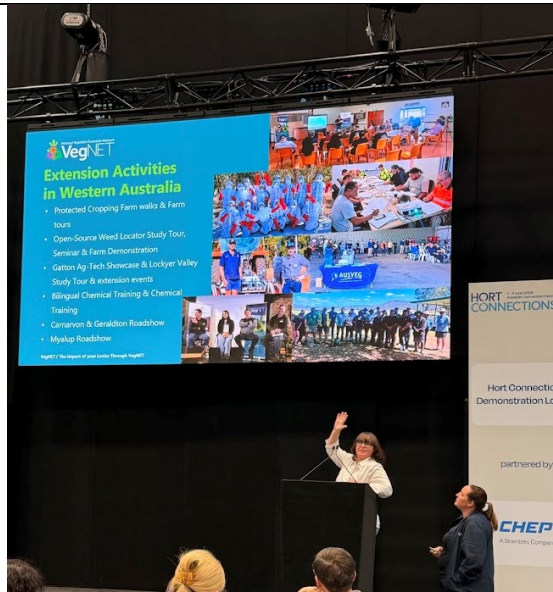


• Crop Research Centre in Lam Dong, Vietnam
May 2026

- Agritechnica Asia Thailand May 2026



- Hort Connection June 2026



VegNet WA demonstration



VegNet RDOs training

Appendix 2: Meeting Summary with RDO and RSO

September 2025

Key discussion items

- Planning and development of the Innovation Fund Bilingual Chemical Training program.
- Development of EOI process, grower communications and recruitment strategy.
- Discussion of trainer options, grower co-contributions and minimum participant numbers.
- Development of Train-the-Trainer Scholarship framework and eligibility criteria.
- Engagement strategy for Vietnamese-speaking growers.

Actions

- Finalise EOI and communication materials.
- Confirm training provider and November delivery dates.
- Progress scholarship application process and promotion.

October 2025

Key discussion items

- Confirmation of bilingual chemical training delivery.
- Venue selection and event logistics.
- Grower registration and payment arrangements.
- Initial planning for Carnarvon Roadshow 2026 and future regional extension activities.

Actions

- Confirm venue bookings.
- Finalise participant registrations and event administration.
- Develop roadshow concept and budget framework.

November 2025

Key discussion items

- Delivery of the Bilingual Chemical Training program.
- Grower registrations, payments and event logistics.
- Scholarship communications and participant feedback collection.
- Post-training reporting and case study development.
- Initial planning for future demonstration activities.

Actions

- Complete Innovation Fund reporting.
- Collect grower feedback and testimonials.
- Develop case study and extension materials.

December 2025

Key discussion items

- Planning and delivery preparation for Tech Talk events.

- Grower database and CRM updates.
- VG24002 grower survey activities.
- Fall Armyworm grower trial support.
- Development of Energy Efficiency and Spray Optimisation Innovation Fund proposals.
- Water Use Efficiency Grant support for growers.
- Planning for Carnarvon and Geraldton Roadshows.
- REAG recruitment and compliance workshop concepts.

Actions

- Finalise roadshow planning framework.
- Continue grant application support and grower engagement.
- Progress extension strategy and database improvements.

January 2026

Key discussion items

- Train-the-Trainer Scholarship EOI and approvals.
- REAG endorsement process for Innovation Fund projects.
- Spray Optimisation Roadshow planning and budget revisions.
- Development of Food Safety Risk Assessment Tool.
- Participation in water-use efficiency and industry reference groups.
- CRM improvements and grower enquiry follow-up processes.
- Water Use Efficiency Grant updates.
- Drone demonstration preparation.

Actions

- Secure REAG endorsement.
- Finalise roadshow budgets and logistics.
- Progress food safety and scholarship initiatives.
- Continue grower support and stakeholder engagement.

February 2026

Key discussion items

- Carnarvon and Geraldton Roadshow preparation.
- Quality and supply chain project discussions.
- Fall Armyworm extension and communication activities.
- Event promotion and stakeholder engagement.

Actions

- Finalise speakers, logistics and communications.
- Continue grower engagement and event registrations.

March 2026

Key discussion items

- Delivery of Carnarvon and Geraldton Roadshows.
- Drainage water recycling opportunities.
- Carbon Robotics and emerging technologies.
- Pest and disease management priorities, including ToBRFV.
- Fuel and fertiliser cost pressures.
- OWL project development.
- Roadshow debrief and evaluation.
- Planning for Myalup roadshow and Lean Leadership workshop.

Actions

- Review roadshow outcomes and grower feedback.
- Progress OWL proposal and future extension activities.
- Develop demonstration and workshop plans.

April 2026

Key discussion items

- Myalup Roadshow planning.
- Grant readiness support for growers.
- Water Use Efficiency Grant opportunities.
- Cyclone Narelle recovery support.
- WA Berry Field Day participation.
- Physical Weed Technologies and OWL proposals.
- Fuel and fertiliser industry impacts.
- Soil moisture monitoring and weed management initiatives.

Actions

- Continue grower recovery support and grant assistance.
- Progress weed management and demonstration projects.
- Finalise Myalup event planning.

May 2026

Key discussion items

- REAG meeting planning and priority setting.
- Hort Connections preparation and participation.
- Upcoming extension activities and stakeholder engagement opportunities.

Actions

- Finalise REAG agenda and extension priorities.
- Coordinate Hort Connections participation.

June 2026

Key discussion items

- Grower database improvements.
- Review of grower engagement KPIs.
- Spray Optimisation Roadshow planning.
- Gingin Roadshow development.
- Regenerative agriculture workshop planning.

Actions

- Implement database and KPI improvements.
- Finalise delivery plans for upcoming extension events and workshops.

Appendix 3 – Record of ad hoc queries

Translation and review of translation forms, documents for VegNET RDOs, AusVeg Biosecurity, Hort Innovation, DPI QLD and Research Institute for Northern Agriculture

- 21 September: Vietnamese Flyer for Bilingual Chemical Training
- 27 October: Translation Review for Research Institute for Northern Agriculture – Nematode Biosecurity Booklet (10,638 words, 34 pages)
- 04 November: Translation Review for AusVeg Biosecurity – Tomato Potato Psyllid Monitoring Guide (865 words, 6 pages)
- 10 November: 3 Translation Review for VegNet NT - Compost Case Study (430 words, 2 pages), IPM Case Study (755 words, 2 pages), Soil Moisture Probe Case Study (850 words, 2 pages)
- 14 November: Translation Review for Hort Innovation: Vegetable growers questionnaire (780 words)
- 19 November: Translation Review for Hort Innovation: Melons growers questionnaire (750 words)
- 02 February: Vietnamese flyer translation for VegNet NT - Plant Nutrition Testing Support on Farm (593 words)
- 04 March: Vietnamese notes translation for DPI QLD: Fall Armyworm (*Spodoptera frugiperda*) Biology and Management (1575 words)