

Wednesday 5 August

GETTING THE FACTS ON POLLINATION

Pollination season has begun.

Hort Innovation is helping growers by determining key pollinators across a range of crops and providing pollination management recommendations to maximise yields.

The research and development project – *Strengthening and enabling effective pollination for Australia* - is improving the understanding of pollination requirements of different crops. It is also looking at key threats to honey bees and provides [crop-specific resources](#) to encourage growers to improve their pollination practices.

One of the outcomes of this project is the development of [pollination manuals](#) which can guide day-to-day pollination practice on farms. These were developed by pollination ecologists and bee scientists from Plant and Food Research New Zealand with the Help of Plant Health Australia to combine current best practice and new research for the best pollination outcomes.

Hort Innovation Research and Development Manager, Ashley Zamek said, “Information regarding best practice is currently limited for many crops and, in particular, little is understood about the degree to which crops are dependent on managed versus feral honey bees or other, unmanaged pollinators.

“Honey bee pests and diseases, including Varroa mite, have the potential to dramatically alter the free crop pollination that occurs from feral honey bees. This research program aims to determine key pollinators across a range of Australian crops and provide our growers with resources to help promote all different types of pollinators and reduce the risk of pollination failure.”

The project has three main research areas:

- Determining current pollination hive requirements for honey bees as managed pollinators
- Identifying and developing management options for alternative pollinators
- Developing tools to aid honey bee health and honey bee behaviours that help fight Varroa mite

The project is conducting field work involving the following crops: avocado, blueberry, lychee, macadamia, melon, and papaya.

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Pollination manuals:

- <https://www.horticulture.com.au/growers/help-your-business-grow/research-reports-publications-fact-sheets-and-more/avocado-pollination-brochure/>

- <https://www.horticulture.com.au/growers/help-your-business-grow/research-reports-publications-fact-sheets-and-more/blueberry-pollination-brochure/>
- <https://www.horticulture.com.au/growers/help-your-business-grow/research-reports-publications-fact-sheets-and-more/lychee-pollination-brochure/>
- <https://www.horticulture.com.au/growers/help-your-business-grow/research-reports-publications-fact-sheets-and-more/macadamia-pollination-brochure/>
- <https://www.horticulture.com.au/growers/help-your-business-grow/research-reports-publications-fact-sheets-and-more/melon-pollination-brochure/>
- <https://www.horticulture.com.au/growers/help-your-business-grow/research-reports-publications-fact-sheets-and-more/papaya-pollination-brochure/>