

MEDIA RELEASE
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Innovation and productivity high in horticulture

Australian horticulture, as an industry, is highly productive, entrepreneurial and innovative, according to a study by Horticulture Innovation Australia (Hort Innovation) and the University of Queensland (UQ).

The study included a survey of over 500 horticulture growers, ranging from micro producers to larger-scale operations. The rich suite of responses indicated how growers innovate and seek to improve farm productivity.

The results of the study suggest the horticulture industry tends to outperform the average business in Australia when it came to innovation – with almost 80 percent of horticultural producers reporting some form of innovation, whether it was new to the farm or new to the industry.

Additionally, the study found that producers perceived increasing profit as the most important motive for innovation and the most important benefit that they gain from it. The most likely types of innovation identified in the study included new crop types or cultivars, new equipment, soil and pest management practices, and fertiliser applications.

Some 64 percent of producers indicated that they engaged in Research and Development (R&D) activities. Of these producers, 55 percent were small to medium enterprises and 26.5 percent were micro growers.

The study concluded that that innovation is a prime determinant of competitive advantage and productivity across Australia's horticultural producers.

Hort Innovation CEO, Mr John Lloyd said the aim of the study was to provide an analysis of the level of innovation and productivity currently occurring across the industry.

"We can take the results of this study to create a meaningful benchmark for future innovation in Australian horticulture," Mr Lloyd said.

"We will be able to use these findings to shape future investments appropriately and increase the rate of innovation where needed to keep driving innovative solutions for our growers."

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