

Persimmon

INDUSTRY ANNUAL REPORT 2009/10

Persimmon industry continues to grow

This report provides a snapshot of the main persimmon industry project activities funded via the persimmon R&D and marketing levies, as well as voluntary contributions and matched funding for research projects from the Australian Government through Horticulture Australia Limited (HAL).

The persimmon industry is in its fourth year of collecting levies and continues to leverage activities within the R&D and marketing program with diligence and input from Industry Advisory Committee (IAC) members. The levy income is tracking ahead of budget by approximately 30 per cent putting the 2009/10 year just under the good season of 2006/07.

The levy program is managed in partnership with the persimmon industry and these projects are supported by a strong industry communication and

consultation strategy funded through a partnership agreement with HAL.

The IAC understands their industry and contributes to good industry data, enabling informed decisions to be made at the strategic level.

The Persimmon IAC meets with HAL at least twice a year to advise HAL on what industry priorities should be addressed, based on the industry strategic plan. All levy payers are able to provide input into this process, and can contact their regional Persimmons Australia Inc (PAI) representative/IAC member at any time to discuss what they feel the industry's priorities should be.

Market access and industry development remained important priorities within the 2009/10 R&D program. Key projects are detailed in this report.

A multi-industry project continued to provide residual data to support continued pre-harvest use of fenthion and dimethoate. The use of these chemicals is currently being reviewed by the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA). The potential loss of these chemicals represents a serious threat for persimmon market access on both domestic and export levels. Residue data will potentially help support pre-harvest use, for at least the short term. Longer term control strategies need to be identified. The investigation of irradiation treatment as an effective alternative to dimethoate and fenthion was researched, finding the treatment effective and it can be incorporated into the supply chain.

Ongoing access to current markets and the ability to access new markets is a main focus for the Australian persimmon industry.

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Climate change research is not new, but the urgency of information for growers to understand and be able to respond to the threats of climate change is. Since 2007 HAL's climate RD&E investment, through industry levies, voluntary contributions and matched Federal Government funds, has increased by 30 per cent. Achievements include: empowerment of industry leaders, through forums and presentations; partnerships, through cross-collaborative programs; and adoption, through grower workshops and fact sheets.

Further climate RD&E is planned in 2010, including generation of information on the critical temperature thresholds of a number of horticulture crops, identification of best management practices on-farm for reducing emissions and linkages with the Climate Change Research Strategy for Primary Industries (CCRSPI). Information on Climate RD&E and links to various tools for industry are available at www.horticulture.com.au/climate.



These projects have been funded by HAL using the persimmon levy and/or voluntary contributions from industry with matched funding from the Australian Government for all R&D activity.



Know-how for Horticulture™

Persimmon industry continues to grow continued from page 1

To increase the productivity and profitability of persimmon growers, the development of the Australian sweet persimmon industry was continued. Key achievements are detailed in this report and the breadth and results of activities already undertaken is a credit to the expertise of researchers involved.

Key activities undertaken within the 2009/10 marketing program included:

- A comprehensive public relations campaign including a media familiarisation tour
- Merchandising aimed at driving sales and awareness
- In-store demonstrations and recipe cards
- Supply chain qualitative research to identify future strategies.

The 2009/10 year has been a challenging yet productive year for the persimmon industry. The levy program activities have achieved positive results for the industry within grower, retail, consumer, and even market access sectors. Despite the size of the levy program, significant benefits have been accomplished, thanks largely to the 'extra mile' approach of your diligent researchers and an industrious IAC that volunteer so much of their time towards supporting the persimmon industry.

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Market access R&D projects and alignment of R&D Plans

Gaining and maintaining market access continues to be a key priority for Australia's horticultural industries and a science based strategic approach to market access R&D is essential to support these market access initiatives.

In support of market access, horticultural industries and government invested \$3.2 million for market access related R&D projects as part of the 2006 HAL Market Access R&D Plan. There are currently 13 projects underway as a result of this funding. It is anticipated that the majority of these projects will be completed by the second half of 2010. Project results will then be compiled, analysed and distributed to industry.

The plan has now been revised under a Strategic Framework termed Pathways to Market 2009–2014 to better align with the recommendations of the National Fruit Fly Strategy (NFFS) and to keep pace with changes in the international market access environment.

The dynamic nature of domestic and international market access requirements clearly indicate that both pre and

postharvest projects remain essential to gain and maintain markets. Development and refinement of pest free areas, pest monitoring and surveillance techniques, alternative pest management and treatment techniques and alternatives to some chemical treatments have been identified as key market access R&D investment areas.

The 2009–2014 Market Access R&D Plan outlines proposed projects to the value of \$15 million over five years. Importantly, the Plan provides even greater focus on direct market access outcomes through a multi-industry approach and has been endorsed by the recently established Office of Horticultural Market Access.

Copies of the 2009–2014 HAL Market Access R&D Plan are available on request.

Project MT06020

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Overcoming constraints to the use of irradiation

Persimmons require a disinfestation treatment to access domestic and export markets with a phytosanitary barrier to fruit flies. Currently the insecticides fenthion and dimethoate are used but are likely to be withdrawn, or their use restricted, in the near future.

This project investigated the feasibility and key constraints to the use of irradiation for both domestic and export market access.

Agri-Science Queensland, DEEDI, prepared and submitted an application to FSANZ on behalf of the Australian persimmon industry. An extensive compilation of data was carried out to address all issues of concern to consumers, with a particular focus on the technical requirements for treatment and their effect on food safety and nutrition. A draft Interstate Certification Assurance (ICA) is being developed to allow the

use of irradiation on persimmons and interstate biosecurity legislation has been modified to allow for the use of irradiation.

The current persimmon supply chain from Kumbia, QLD, to Melbourne was mapped and monitored, identifying the steps and length of time it took to deliver persimmons to consumers in the Melbourne market. Handling conditions were also recorded along the supply chain.

A commercial simulation of the supply chain incorporating irradiation treatment was conducted. The persimmons were given a dose of 150Gy and then stored at 13 and 20°C until the fruit softened. Quality was assessed regularly during storage.

The project found that persimmons can be successfully treated with low doses of gamma irradiation with no quality loss.

Commercially incorporating this treatment into the persimmon supply chain, to access markets with quarantine barriers, can be achieved with minimal impact on efficiency and profitability of the supply chain. Initial consultation has indicated that consumer resistance to irradiation is unlikely.

A validated list of pests, diseases, viruses and nematodes recorded in persimmon crops in Australian was also compiled for export market access negotiations for new markets or existing markets reviewing market access protocols.

Project PR08006

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Maintaining dimethoate and fenthion use

Dimethoate and fenthion were registered many decades ago and existing registrations may be based on residue data that is now considered insufficient, out-dated, or inconsistent with current use patterns.

Efforts are progressing to maintain as many registered uses of dimethoate and fenthion as possible following a review by the APVMA.

The review requested that extra data be generated for most of the crops that appear on the label of products that contain dimethoate or fenthion to ensure that pesticide products meet improved safety and performance standards.

The review generated data on the residues that remain in produce following pre-harvest sprays and postharvest dips.

Agronico Research Pty Ltd was engaged by HAL to conduct a large, multi-industry project aimed at generating the data that APVMA require, which began in 2007 and was completed in June 2010.

A Good Laboratory Practice (GLP) residue report was submitted to the APVMA so that they can complete their review.

Once the APVMA completes this process, the maximum residue level (MRL) of these pesticides for each crop will be determined. The acceptable MRL will then determine which uses will remain registered on product labels.

Project MT06022

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Improving persimmon management techniques

This project is evaluating a range of pre- and postharvest factors affecting fruit quality and storage life, to assist with the ongoing development of a sustainable sweet persimmon industry.

During 2009/10 the project team undertook a series of trials and identified some key findings.

Soft fruit disorder appears to be caused by soil moisture stress, short-term waterlogging and soil hypoxia. This leads to ethylene release in the calyx followed by autocatalytic release of ethylene in the fruit. A series of pre- and postharvest recommendations for handling have been developed to reduce the problem.

Reflective mulch field studies over three seasons have shown Extenday® reflective mulch increases fruit size by 15–20 per cent, while also improving intensity and evenness of fruit colour and reducing blemishing. Although some growers are currently using the mulch, the economics of this approach still needs to be determined.

Based on data from three seasons, the growth retardant Uniconazole reduces shoot extension growth by up to 40 per cent, significantly increasing yield and/or fruit size.

Fruit softening is reduced with increasing fruit and leaf calcium concentrations at fruit set, with the optimum concentration appearing to be 30–40 per cent higher than currently recommended. Studies using calcium applied both with and without mycorrhizae have shown



Scoring tool developed in South Africa being tested in commercial persimmon orchards in Australia.

mycorrhizae alone can significantly enhance calcium uptake.

Preliminary research has shown girdling or scoring at 30 per cent full bloom is effective in increasing both fruit set and size. A South African scoring tool is currently being trialled, although longer-term trials are needed to determine if this is a commercially acceptable practice.

Ethylene inhibitor 1-MCP (Smartfresh™) increases the storage life of fruit held at 0°C for one month and reduces internal gelling and soft fruit by about 90 per cent. The study treated commercial export shipments and found grading was needed three to four days later to remove any fruit that started ripening prior to treatment. A usage protocol has been developed.

Project PR09000

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Australian persimmon fruit being treated with Smartfresh™ (1-MCP) in a reefer sea-freight container.



Persimmon industry and HAL partnership agreement

The partnership agreement between Persimmons Australia and HAL sets out the tasks each organisation will perform to enable the other to discharge its responsibilities related to levy payers and industry services.

Partnership agreement activities are funded by HAL using the Persimmon R&D levy and matched funds from the Australian Government as well as Persimmon marketing funds.

These funds enable Persimmons Australia to undertake the Annual Levy Payers Meeting, conduct IAC meetings, attend HAL Industry Forums, attend HAL/Persimmons Australia Executive Board to Board consultation meetings, and other formal and informal consultation between personnel of Persimmons Australia and HAL.

These costs are reviewed by Persimmons Australia and HAL at least annually.

Project PR08900/10

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Perceptions of persimmons

Understanding the perceptions held by consumers, retailers and wholesalers towards persimmons is a vital step in the development of an effective and targeted marketing program for the industry.

During 2009/10, three qualitative research projects were undertaken to uncover these views.

Research Report (Australian Produce Group)

This study of four Melbourne wholesaler agents and five retailers found wholesalers had a strong preference for non-astringent persimmons as they are harder and well coloured, with most referring to the fruit as persimmons.

Among retailers, non-astringent persimmons were the most popular, with both their European and Asian customers preferring softer fruit. Retailers believe sampling is the best way to move the product.

Persimmon Study (Newspoll)

This national study investigated whether Australians are able to correctly identify the different types of persimmons and how often they are consumed.

The results indicate just over one in five Australians eat either non-astringent or astringent persimmons at least once during the local persimmon season. Almost one in ten eat either fruit once a month during the season.

There seems to be confusion between the naming of the two types of persimmons. Respondents are just as likely to use the names sweet persimmon, Fuji fruit and fuyu fruit for both fruits suggesting that there is confusion regarding the names and difference between astringent and non-astringent persimmons.

Supply Chain Research (HAL)

While it has always been assumed the availability of astringent persimmons was limited and made up less than 10 per cent of the market, new research has found 12 out of 17 Sydney retailers sell both varieties.

Interviews with the supply chain in Sydney found most retailers agree non-astringent persimmons are more popular with customers of Australian descent but that this group is not the core customer base. It also found that no retailers used the name Sweet Persimmons for the non-astringent variety, they used Fuyu or Fuji fruit. Since the research was

completed, some Woolworths stores in Queensland and SA are using the name Sweet Persimmons.

The research findings above are currently being analysed by HAL and the IAC, the results will be used to develop a strong, professional approach to the retailers and supply chain that demonstrates the potential of Australian persimmons.

Project PR09003

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Subtropical and tropical fruits industry profile publication

A publication profiling subtropical and tropical fruit industries is being developed to create a better understanding of the collective value of these industries.

Currently there is no single point of reference containing detailed information on each industry and the potential growth and value of this industry group as a whole.

Subsequently, the true size, farm gate value and potential growth of these industries is frequently undervalued, which may affect their ability to attract future state agency R&D resources.

This lack of understanding by state and federal agencies may also prevent a clear view of their collective marketing, R&D needs and biosecurity threats.

Encompassing the pineapple, mango, melon, custard apple, lychee, persimmon, papaya, and passionfruit industries, the publication will provide information on this growing sector of Australian horticulture. It will include collective and individual industry production values and predicted growth for 2010–2030, main growing regions, key varieties, grower numbers and industry trends, issues, current domestic and export markets and their indicators.

The project is collating existing industry data (ABS and recent industry representative body statistics/data, sales data and consumer research) and strategic review information from each industry group. The publication will be made available electronically to relevant federal and state agencies and stakeholders.

Project MT09049

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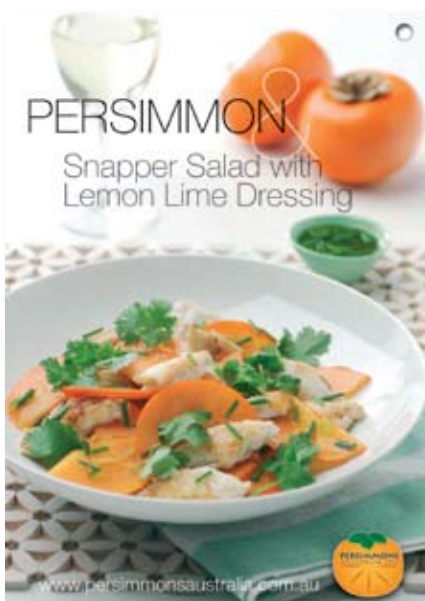
2009/10 marketing program

Developed in conjunction with the Australian persimmon industry, the 2009/10 campaign is packed full of exciting activities aiming to increase the domestic consumption of Australian persimmons.

Public relations

Warren Turnbull, Assiette's Head Chef is the ambassador for the domestic marketing campaign. Assiette, awarded two Chef's Hats in 2010, opened in 2005 and quickly earned a reputation for high quality at affordable prices. Assiette has also been ranked in Australian Gourmet Traveller's Top 100 Australian Restaurants. By being pitched to the media as the persimmon ambassador, Warren Turnbull will help generate further media coverage and will also provide serving suggestions to encourage consumer purchase.

A tour was held at Kathleen Haven farm in Cobbitty, Southern Sydney to inspire and educate the media about persimmons. The tour allowed people from various media organisations to have hands on experience with persimmons. Warren Turnbull prepared a beautiful three-course persimmon-inspired lunch plus a delicious canapé. During the lunch, Warren Turnbull spoke to the



media about how versatile persimmons are and how they can be used in anything from an entrée to dessert.

Point-of-sale and photography

Fresh, exciting new images of persimmons were taken as part of this year's program and distributed to key media along with materials announcing the start of the season.

A new recipe, persimmon and snapper salad with lemon lime dressing, was developed into an A6-sized recipe card and distributed to national markets and key independent stores.

The backroom poster developed in conjunction with the custard apple industry was also reprinted and distributed along with the recipe cards.

In-store demonstrations

In-store demonstrations were held in independent stores in NSW and Victoria for eight weeks during from March to May 2010 to reach consumers at point of purchase, encouraging them to try persimmons. In NSW Harris Farm stores, a cross promotion was conducted where consumers were encouraged to try a slice of persimmon with tasty cheese. This was a great opportunity to showcase a simple serving suggestion.

Merchandising

A three-week merchandising campaign was also held in independent stores in NSW and Victoria during Autumn 2010. The program is aimed at driving sales, awareness and assisting the in-store demonstrations.

Website

A new content management system is being developed for the current Persimmons Australia site, www.persimmonsaustralia.com.au. The new system will allow changes and updates to be made to the current site more easily and effectively.



Research projects

Supply chain qualitative research was undertaken as part of the 2009/10 marketing program, as recent retailer activity suggested that there is a gap in our knowledge on the availability of original and sweet persimmons in Australia.

Qualitative consumer research was also undertaken to determine whether Australians are able to correctly identify the different types of persimmons and how often they are consuming them.

The findings are currently being analysed by HAL and the IAC and the results will be used to help develop a strategic marketing plan.

Project PR09500

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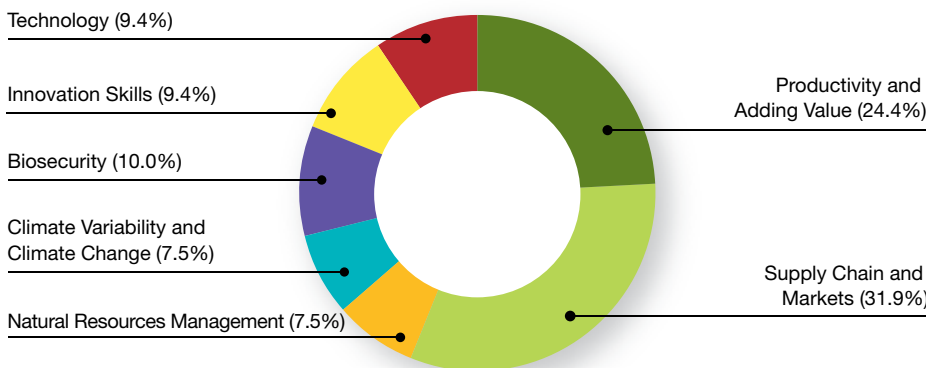
Investing in Australian horticulture

Australian Government priorities

As part of the Australian Government's commitment to rural research and development, horticulture industries can access matching Commonwealth funding through HAL for all research and development activities.

The Australian Government's Rural Research and Development Priorities aim to foster innovation and guide R&D effort in the face of continuing economic, environmental and social change. HAL's operations are closely aligned with these priorities.

This chart shows the percentage of expenditure in HAL's persimmon R&D program against each of the Australian Government priorities for rural research and development. Full details of expenditure across all industries is available in HAL's annual report at www.horticulture.com.au



Productivity and Adding Value

Improve the productivity and profitability of existing industries and support the development of viable new industries.

Supply Chain and Markets

Better understand and respond to domestic and international market and consumer requirements and improve the flow of such information through the whole supply chain, including to consumers.

Natural Resource Management

Support effective management of Australia's natural resources to ensure primary industries are both economically and environmentally sustainable.

Climate Variability and Climate Change

Build resilience to climate variability and adapt to and mitigate the effects of climate change.

Biosecurity

Protect Australia's community, primary industries and environment from biosecurity threats.

Innovation Skills

Improve the skills to undertake research and apply its findings.

Technology

Promote the development of new and existing technologies.

Consultation funding

Consultation funding is paid by HAL to cover costs for IAC meetings, annual levy payers' meetings and costs within the partnership agreement between HAL and the member industry that are specified as consultation, for example R&D program consultation. In 2009/10 \$24,076 of consultation funding was budgeted to be provided to Persimmons Australia.

In 2009/10 Persimmons Australia acted as the service provider on one project.

Full details can be found on page nine of this report.

Relationships and roles relating to HAL

Horticulture Australia Limited (HAL) is a not-for-profit industry owned company. Its role is to manage the expenditure of funds collected by the Australian Government on behalf of horticulture industries.

In 2009/10 HAL will invest more than \$82 million in projects to benefit horticulture industries.

An Industry Advisory Committee (IAC) is established for each industry with a statutory levy and annual income exceeding \$150,000. Each IAC is a subcommittee of the HAL Board.

It makes recommendations to HAL on the expenditure of funds.

The Industry Representative Body (IRB) for an industry is responsible for recommending to HAL the establishment of, and any changes to, statutory levies. The IRB for an industry with a statutory levy recommends membership of the IAC to HAL and must demonstrate how the skills required on an IAC are met by the persons they recommend for appointment to the committee.

For more information please visit www.horticulture.com.au

Across Industry Program

The persimmon industry contributes funding towards an across industry program that addresses issues affecting all of horticulture. Details of the current program are listed below. A full report of the program can be found at http://www.horticulture.com.au/industries/across_industry_program.asp

Project No.	Project title	Levy or VC	Project start	Project completion	Organisation	Contact
Objective 1: To enhance the efficiency, transparency, responsiveness and integrity of the supply chain						
AH09009	Food security discussion paper	Levy	1 Apr 10	28 May 10	Horticulture Australia Limited	Richard Bennett 03 5825 3753
MT09043	Enhancing confidence in product integrity in domestic and export markets	Levy/VC	30 Sep 09	31 May 11	Horticulture Australia Limited	Richard Bennett 03 5825 3753
Objective 2: Maximise the health benefits of horticulture products						
AH07006	Promoting the health advantage of fruit and vegetable to increase their consumption	Levy	1 Jul 07	30 Jun 10	Horticulture Australia Limited	Chris Rowley 02 8901 0329
Objective 3: Position horticulture to compete in a globalised environment						
AH09011	Market Access support program	Levy	2 Nov 09	28 May 10	Horticulture Australia Limited	Warwick Scherf 02 8295 2300
AH09012	Codex participation 2009/10	Levy	1 Oct 09	28 May 10	Horticulture Australia Limited	Richard Bennett 03 5825 3753
Objective 4: Achieve long term viability and sustainability for Australian horticulture						
AH04007	Pesticide regulation coordinator	Levy	5 Jul 04	31 Jul 09	AKC Consulting Pty Ltd	Kevin Bodnaruk 02 9499 3833
AH09003	Plant protection: Regulatory support and coordination	Levy	1 Jul 09	30 May 14	AKC Consulting Pty Ltd	Kevin Bodnaruk 02 9499 3833
AH09005	Horticulture Water Initiative – 2009/10 program	Levy	1 Sep 09	30 Jun 10	Horticulture Australia Limited	Alison Turnbull 02 8295 2300
AH09014	Across-industry climate research, development and extension (RD&E) activities	Levy	13 Apr 10	31 Mar 11	Horticulture Australia Limited	Alison Turnbull 02 8295 2300
MT07029	Managing pesticide access in horticulture	Levy	1 Jul 07	30 Jun 10	AgAware Consulting Pty Ltd	Peter Dal Santo 03 5439 5916
Objective 5: Other						
AH09015	Contingency allocation – for key issues as they arise	Levy	1 Feb 10	28 May 10	Horticulture Australia Limited	Warwick Scherf 02 8295 2300
AH09016	Across industry annual report	Levy	26 Feb 10	28 May 10	Horticulture Australia Limited	Barbara Knezevic-Marinos 02 8295 2300
AH09017	Across industry program admin	Levy	1 Jul 09	30 Jun 10	Horticulture Australia Limited	Warwick Scherf 02 8295 2300

Persimmon Program 2009/10

Project No.	Project title	Levy or VC	Project start	Project completion	Organisation	Contact
MT06020	Improving market access R&D for the Australian horticultural industries	Levy	1 Jul 06	31 May 12	Horticulture Australia Limited	Kim James 08 6389 1407
MT06022	Generation of dimethoate and fenthion residue samples to maintain market access	Levy/VC	6 Jun 07	30 Mar 10	Agronico Research Pty Ltd	Dale Griffin 03 5976 4511
MT09037	FSANZ approval for irradiation of fruit fly host produce for domestic market access – Stage 1	Levy/VC	31 Mar 10	30 May 11	Agri-Science Queensland	Patricia Chay-Prove 07 4064 1179
MT09049	Subtropical and tropical fruits collective industry profile publication	Levy/VC	29 Mar 10	30 Jul 10	Horticulture Australia Limited	Astrid Hughes 07 3211 5920
PR06002	Australian sweet persimmon industry development	Levy/VC	1 Jul 06	16 Jul 09	Agri-Science Queensland	Roger Broadley 075 444 9610
PR08006	Overcoming constraints to the use of irradiation for domestic market access	Levy	1 Aug 08	31 Aug 09	Biosecurity Queensland	Jodie Campbell 07 3896 9865
PR08900/10	Persimmon 2008–2011 Partnership Agreement	Levy	1 Jul 08	15 Aug 11	Persimmons Australia Incorporated	Jeanette Wilsonry 07 5483 3734
PR09000	Australian sweet persimmon industry development – Phase 2	Levy	1 Sep 09	31 May 12	Agri-Science Queensland	Alan George 07 5453 5984
PR09003	Persimmon research project 2009/10	Levy	1 Oct 09	30 Jun 10	Horticulture Australia Limited	Alena Swinbourne 02 8295 2372
PR09500	2009/10 persimmon marketing program	Levy	1 Jul 09	30 Jun 10	Horticulture Australia Limited	Alena Swinbourne 02 8295 2372



Persimmon Investment Summary

Year ended 30 June 2010

	Marketing 2009/10 \$	R&D 2009/10 \$	Combined 2009/10 \$
Funds available 1 July 2009	56,502	149,725	206,227
INCOME			
Levies Received	48,508	72,761	121,269
Commonwealth Contributions		119,869	119,869
Other Income	1,519	3,523	5,042
Total Income	50,027	196,153	246,180
Budget	49,499	188,306	237,805
Variance to Budget	528	7,847	8,375
PROGRAM INVESTMENT			
Levy Programs	61,208	208,323	269,531
Service Delivery Programs by HAL	9,230	31,415	40,645
Across Industry Contribution		2,417	2,417
Levy Collection Costs	2,971	4,455	7,426
Total Investment	73,409	246,610	320,019
Budget	69,207	236,068	305,275
Variance to Budget	(4,202)	(10,542)	(14,744)
Annual Surplus/Deficit	(23,382)	(50,457)	(73,839)
Closing Balance 30 June 2010	33,120	99,268	132,388

Persimmon Industry Advisory Committee (IAC)

Kent Andrew (Chair)
 Jeanette Wilson (Secretariat)
 Stephen Jeffers
 Nick Hobbs
 Geoff Patteson
 Colin Temby
 Astrid Hughes (Ex-Officio)



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