



An aerial photograph of a vast almond orchard. The rows of trees are densely packed and stretch across the landscape, separated by narrow dirt roads. The sky is overcast with soft, grey clouds. The overall tone is professional and agricultural.

A RECORD CONFERENCE

We are part of history this morning

Nearly 800 registered: the biggest Australian Almond Conference yet

Four pillars of a new strategic plan

Advocacy

Provide a trusted, influential voice to advance the interests of the Australian almond industry

Governance

Embed strong leadership accountability and compliance structures that support a high-performing industry body

Productivity

Improve farming and industry outcomes through innovation, research and best practice

Market development

Grow demand, value and market access for Australian almonds



SUPPLY AND DEMAND

The long-term fundamentals look sound

\$1.3b

in sales generated each year

85%

of the crop is exported, all traded
in US dollars

75,492

tonnes to China in 2025/26: 58%
of exports

Demand remains strong. Buyers value certainty of supply and price.

Prices have recovered. The Stratamarkets Almond Index has risen from about 1.75 in early 2023 to above 3.0 in 2026.



MARKET DEVELOPMENT · KEY MARKETS

China and India anchor our exports

Exports in 2025/26, tonnes

China	75,492
India	14,875
Vietnam	12,314
Türkiye	7,942
Germany	3,767
Spain	3,060
New Zealand	2,093



Established: China, India, Türkiye, Australia and Europe.

Emerging and new: South-East Asia and the Middle East. Vietnam is already our third-largest export market.



Health, versatility and taste

Health

Heart health and vitamin E. No weight gain reported, even at 100 g a day.

Versatility

Eaten whole, baked, blended and cooked. Sold inshell and as kernel.

Taste

CRUNCH, the cookbook made with Poh, shows what almonds do in a kitchen.



Ambassadors. Poh Ling Yeow and athlete Kyle Chalmers.

Dietitians. Jemma O'Hanlon and Simone Austin.



GROWTH

More are gravitating to almonds

Perfect almond country

The southern Murray–Darling Basin. The footprint has doubled, much of it in the Riverina and the Goulburn Valley.

The nut for all occasions

Non-perishable, tasty, good for you and versatile, with no market access issues.

We have a great story to tell.



THE SCOREBOARD · PLANTINGS

Plantings are up 15% in three years

71,900

hectares mapped in 2026, up from 62,400 in 2023

+9,500

hectares added in three years

20×

the 3,500 hectares planted in 2000

Riverina

Up 4,090 ha to 19,030 ha

Riverland

Up 2,430 ha to 14,370 ha

Goulburn Valley

Emerging: other regions up from 214 ha to nearly 2,000 ha



LandIQ now maps the national orchard

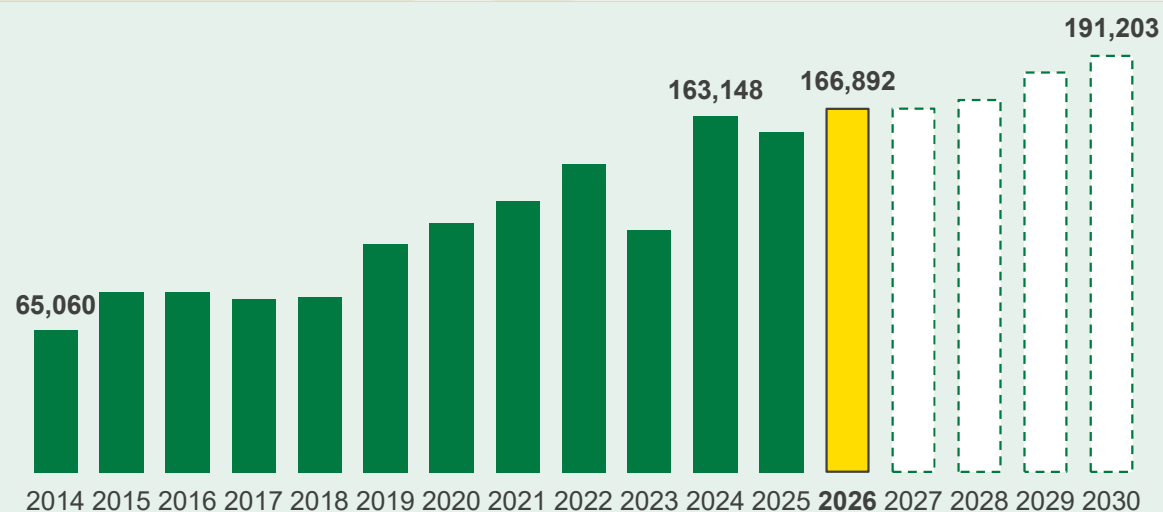
Region	2023 ha	2026 ha	Change
Sunraysia, Victoria	25,890	25,690	-200
Riverina	14,940	19,030	+4,090
Riverland	11,940	14,370	+2,430
Sunraysia, NSW	7,892	8,430	+538
Other, incl. Shepparton	214	~2,000	~+1,800
Western Australia	818	818	steady
Adelaide Plains	506	449	-57

71,900

hectares mapped block by block: variety, rootstock, tree density and irrigation.



A record forecast met a wet harvest



Tonnes of kernel. Green: actual. Yellow: 2026 forecast. Dashed outline: projection.

166,892 t was forecast for 2026: a record.

A generational rain event hit harvest, with 100 to 300 mm falling in March.

Inshell potential fell in about 75% of orchards.

Final 2026 intake announced in November



The cost of production

\$12,270

a hectare each year to run a mature orchard, in a 2014 budget

\$3.43 a kilogram of kernel, at 3.58 t/ha

Where the money went, per hectare

Harvesting		\$4,578
Water		\$3,900
Crop inputs		\$1,687
Other costs		\$1,167
Wages		\$934

Water is leasing at \$190/ML plus supply and delivery, on 12.7 ML/ha. Finance costs are excluded.



PRODUCTIVITY · COST OF PRODUCTION

What has moved since 2014

Per-hectare driver	2014	Today
Hive hire, per hive	about \$70	\$250+
Pollination a hectare, at 5 hives	about \$350	\$1,250+
Budgeted lease water/megalitre	\$190	Est \$400
Budgeted operating cost/ha	\$12,270	Est \$20,000+*
Diesel per litre	\$1.57	\$2.84



THE HERE AND NOW

Other challenges ahead

REPLANTS

What do we plant?

An estimated 40% of plantings need replacing in the next 5 to 10 years. Which variety and rootstock?

POLLINATION

What is the future of commercial hives?

The long-term security and affordability of pollinating the crop.

WATER

Will we lose more water?

More water leaving the consumptive pool, and a social licence to grow that we must defend.

YIELDS

Why is the industry so low?



THE SCOREBOARD · YIELD

The yield gap: 3.2 against 2.5

Tonnes of kernel a hectare

The standard  3.2

Delivered, 2025  2.5

155,697 t of intake in 2025 across about 62,000 bearing hectares.

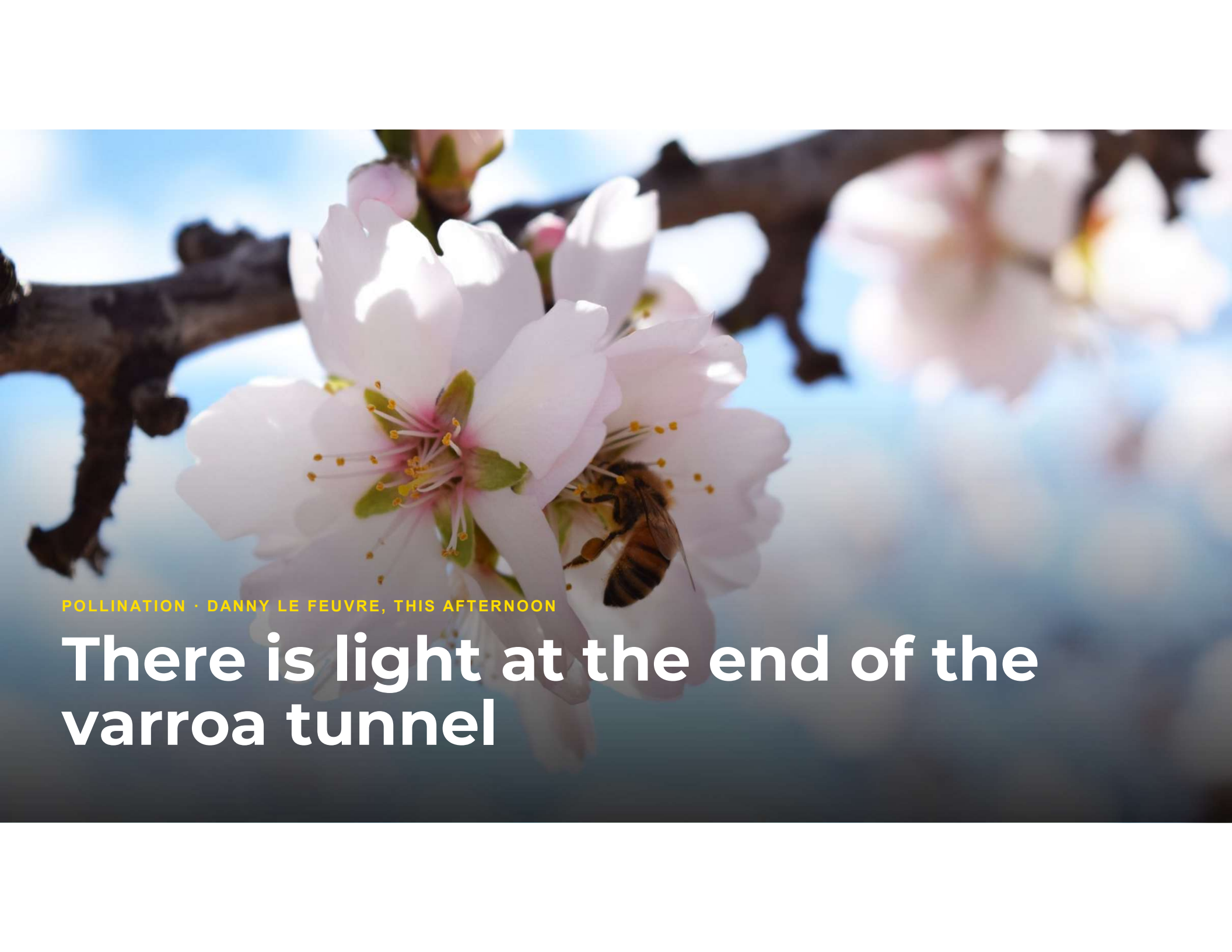
43,000 t

the gap between the 2025 intake and 3.2 t/ha on the same hectares

Tomorrow. Professor Abe Padilla on the almond economics showing up in California.

In development. A customised industry course on price modelling and logistics.





POLLINATION · DANNY LE FEUVRE, THIS AFTERNOON

**There is light at the end of the
varroa tunnel**

POLLINATION

Pollination: the pressure and the light

The pressure

300,000+ hives needed in orchards each August

\$60m+ spent on pollination this season

\$250+ a hive in 2026, up from about \$70 in 2014

The light

2 to 7 Average frames a hive at the ACE self fertile... 25 v 26

7.5% Plantings of self-fertile up

25%+ of new trees in three years are self-fertile



Our ask: policy clarity and consistency

Stop the government-induced uncertainty. Australian agriculture deserves the respect of policy clarity and consistency.

Farmers manage climate, costs, labour and markets every day. They should not have to manage policy that shifts without warning.

2026 ADVOCACY PROGRAM

April	Production figures establish the value of almonds
May	Submission to the Basin Plan Review
July	A united cross industry position developed (NIC)
Aug–Sep	The Every Drop Counts public campaign
October	Today: consolidate and lead



ADVOCACY · SOCIAL LICENCE

Are almonds thirsty?



Almonds are a long-lasting, no-waste crop.



In the Murray-Darling Basin, 72% of water is allocated to the environment and 28% is used to support food production and communities.



Australian almond producers are world leaders in water-use efficiency.



Water use statistics don't tell the full story of water's value.



**ALMOND BOARD
OF AUSTRALIA**

ABA pub lines on beer coasters, September 2026



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Answer a question with a fact-filled question

Do you know 72% of Basin water is for the environment?

28% is for food production and communities. A ratio we are proud of.

Do you know who the biggest owner of water is?

The Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder.

Do you realise water statistics don't tell the whole story?

Count the nutrition, the economic value and the regional jobs as well.

Do you know who leads the world in water-use efficiency?

Australian almond producers. Nearly all use drip irrigation, with advanced monitoring. Metered.



Knocking on the doors of parliament

Resource hungry. Advocacy has grown as our social licence has been challenged, especially in dry times.

At the table. In parliament, and at water management roundtables wherever possible.

The job. To re-educate and to advocate on behalf of growers.

The value of water, for all

Those who sell it, those who use it and those who live in the surrounding communities.

The socio-economic benefits of almonds continue to grow.



We face a tough year ahead

December 2026 Murray–Darling Basin Plan Review recommendations.

2027 Water Act Review recommendations.

The politics The answer lies in the middle, with common sense and pragmatism. We risk standing in a crossfire.



The plan

- Build a war chest
- Lobby where necessary
- One narrative: communities, councils, allied industries and growers



Provide sensible solutions

If carbon credits and reef credits can reward better behaviour, the Basin could follow suit.

Tax dollars alone will always fall short. Work that earns a credit can start to fund itself.

WHAT COULD EARN A BASIN CREDIT

Planting trees to sequester carbon

Installing fish screens

Eradicating carp

Reducing run-off

Watering for the environment on private land



BIOSECURITY · PRO-ACTIVE APPROACH

Biosecurity

Incursions increase and so do costs

38 plant and pest incursions in
last 10 years.

- **Varroa mite**
- **Marmorated Stink Bug**
- **Red Leaf Blotch**
- **Xylella**



Biosecurity Plan for the Australian Tree Nut Industries

A shared responsibility between government and industry

Version 4.0 May 2026



A planting boom is coming

40%

of plantings are due to be replaced in the next 5 to 10 years

What sets it off

If it turns dry, big old trees come out to cut water use.

At today's prices, no one pulls a productive tree.

Cash is king after three or four lean years.

What goes in

Not the Board's call. Science will play its part.

Seven self-fertile varieties in a single-block trial at our experimental orchard.

Cost of bees favours self-fertile, but many are untested here.



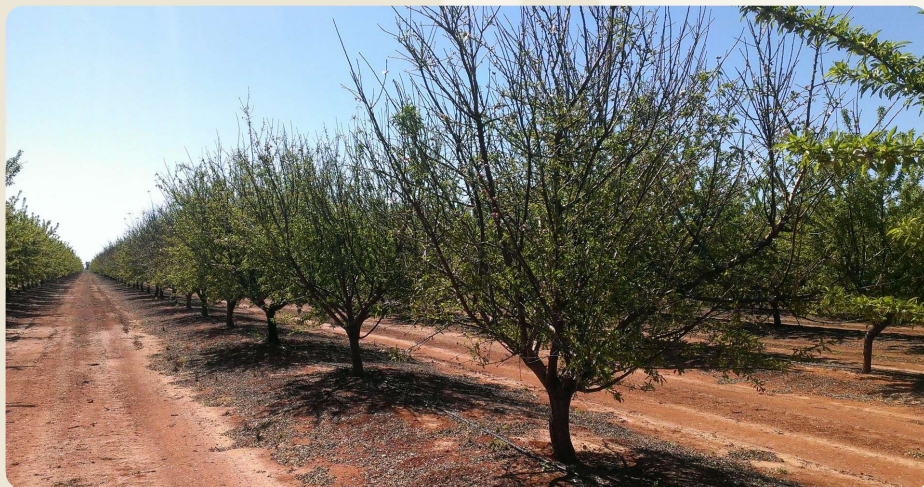
WHAT TO PLANT

Self fertile trial – what is Aussie tough?



PRODUCTIVITY · BUDWOOD

Cheap trees are cheap for a reason



Carmel: a sparse canopy and bare wood



Carmel: a full, even canopy

Virus-free budwood is the single biggest risk to get right, whatever the variety or rootstock.



An infected tree is infected for life

25%

average crop loss across 12 major almond cultivars with almond mosaic in Italy. The range was 2% to 50%.

No cure in the field. There is no practical way to remove a virus from an infected tree.

It travels in the wood. Viruses pass readily through budwood and rootstock at propagation.

Four viruses tested. PNRSV, PDV, ApMV and ACLSV in high-health almond material.

Prevention is the best cure. Healthy trees are contents insurance for the orchard.



PRODUCTIVITY · CERTIFIED BUDWOOD

ABA certified, virus-tested budwood

92c

a bud from the ABA program

20+

years of an industry-wide, cost-recovery budwood program

80%+

of trees planted once came from ABA budwood. That share has dipped.

A 25-year investment. For the sake of a few cents, what is lost in yield and tree health?

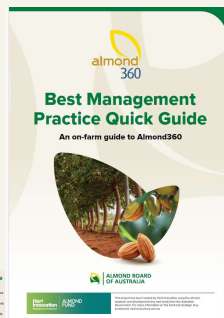
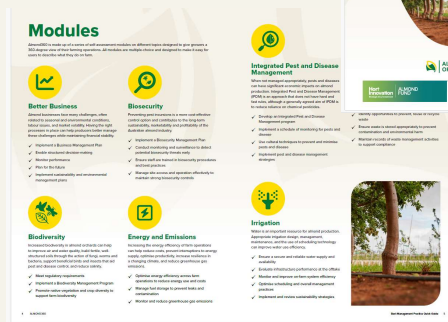
The revamped program. Each tree carries a virus-tested ABA certification, with traceability and validation.



almond360 How do you measure up?

Resources

2027 Almond360 calendar
Quick Guide – Module by Module



Best Management Practice Portal

Track your performance



almonds.hort360.com.au

Direct enquiries to ehenson@australionalmonds.com.au

Goal: 75% of plantings covered

PRODUCTIVITY · BENCHMARKING

You cannot manage what you can't measure

The grower

Specialist feedback from an experienced benchmarker.

The region

Its own geographic benchmarks, built from more growers than we had hoped for.

The industry

Aggregated data to defend and promote at the highest levels of government.

Starts this week with RMCG. The first industry-wide project. Two RMCG representatives are at the ABA booth.

Your data is guarded. The better the data, the better the industry for everyone.



COLLABORATION

Side by side with California

Welcome, Clarice Turner

President and CEO of the Almond Board of California, and the Californian delegation with us this week.

- Greg Browne
- Dr Z
- Astrid Volder
- Abe Padilla
- Joel Kimmelshue
- OMC
- Flory
- Bonsai. Etc...



The same challenges. Carpophilus, and other pests and diseases.

Two seasons in one year. Research networks that team up can gather two seasons of data in a calendar year.

Faster answers. To the burning questions on both sides of the Pacific.



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PRODUCTIVITY · RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

Our R&D alliance with Hort Innovation

\$9.76m

invested in almond R&D through
the Almond Fund in 2025/26

29

projects under way: 18 almond-
specific, 11 shared with other
industries

10

of those projects are delivered by
the ABA

How it works. Growers' 2c/kg R&D levy is invested with
Australian Government contributions.

Who delivers. The ABA with Plant & Food Research,
SARDI, the University of Adelaide and Agriculture Victoria.



Five research priorities

Eradicating pests

1. **Carpophilus beetle.** Eradication, built on more than 500 monitoring traps and life-cycle research.
2. **Carob moth.** Eradication, including a global scan for treatments not yet available in Australia.

The right tree in the right place

3. **Rootstock and variety.** The optimal pairing for each region.
4. **Tree density.** The right density for each orchard.
5. **Nutrition.** The nutritional needs of these varieties.



ACE – key role.



Carpophilus beetle: a red-hot issue

In the millions

We cannot yet quantify the cost.
Growers say it could be that high.

The AgVic trap

Already a stunning success for monitoring. The hope is attract-and-kill, but it will not be a silver bullet.

What else it takes

- Targeted chemical control
- Knowing the beetle's life cycle
- Biological controls

A fighting fund. Perhaps a first in our history, to get results sooner rather than later. More to come.



GOVERNANCE · OUR PEOPLE

Thank you to the ABA team

A small, dedicated team that goes above and beyond.



The Almond Board of Australia team

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Better data and a stronger organisation

Data

Data collection. Monthly Position Reports and the annual Almond Insights.

Planting survey. Completed for 2025.

LandIQ. National orchard mapping, ground-truthed in January.

Benchmarking: National project has started to set production and economic outcomes for growers, regions, industry.

Organisation

Inclusiveness. Women in Almonds, student places, Growing Almond Leaders.

Staff. Lean team that punches above its weight across a myriad of issues and areas to deliver value.

Extension. Irrigation and nutrition workshops, field days, the ACE orchard.

Levies. 2c/kg R&D, 0.5c/kg biosecurity, 2c/kg voluntary marketing.



GOVERNANCE · ONE VOICE

One industry, one representative body

70

representative bodies in the Australian wine industry, by our count

1

representative body for Australian almonds. When we speak, we speak for all of you.

8 grower directors

Active and engaged

4 marketers

On the Board alongside them

4 offices

Griffith, Mildura, Loxton and Adelaide



The value of being a member is clear

Nearly

800

people registered for this conference: far more than the ABA has members.

Mutually beneficial

A voice. Vote for the Board, stand for it, and shape submissions and ministerial meetings.

A seat at the table. Nine committees, from water and pollination to plant improvement and markets.

Support those who support you. CEO updates on critical issues, chemical alerts and national data on request.

Work the current levy system does not fund. Advocacy, labour issues (eg: visas) biosecurity awareness and career education sit outside levy funding.

