



VEGETABLE AGRICHEMICAL PEST MANAGEMENT NEEDS & PRIORITIES



National Vegetable Extension Network

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

SUMMARY

Growers of some horticultural crops suffer from a lack of legal access to crop protection products (pesticides). The problem may be that while a relatively small crop area is valuable in an agricultural sense, it is not of sufficient size for AgChem companies to justify the expense of registering a product to use on that crop. Alternately, the disease, pest, or weed problem may be regional or spasmodic, making AgChem companies unwilling to bear the initial high cost of registering suitable pesticides.

Growers may at times be in a situation where they face severe losses from diseases, pests and weeds if they do nothing to protect their crops, or face penalties if they use a product that is not registered or available via a permit. The vegetable industry is aware of the possible consequences of the use of unregistered or non-permitted pesticides.

Pesticides have always been an important tool in the production of vegetables. They control the various diseases, weeds and insects that affect the crop and can cause severe economic loss in modern, high intensity growing operations.

To establish direct grower interaction and ensure that the agrichemical needs of the vegetable sector are accurately recorded and understood, AUSVEG has commenced coordination of the project Vegetable Agrichemical Pest Management Needs and Priorities (VG16060), a strategic levy investment under the Hort Innovation Vegetable Fund. The project's objective is to coordinate vegetable industry agrichemical pest needs by identifying and prioritising potential gaps through implementation of an effective prioritisation process for the vegetable industry.

WHATS INVOLVED

Coordinating this project is Patrick Arratia, who joined AUSVEG in July 2017. Patrick previously worked at Bayer Crop Science in South Australia as a breeding agronomist managing the

canola contra season program. He has experience in agronomy, qualifications in agricultural engineering and a passion for the agricultural industry.

The most meaningful method of engagement for this project will be through regional workshops, at least twelve workshops will be held each year to discuss Australian vegetable growers agrichemical needs/gaps and priorities. At these workshops, in conjunction with existing Strategic Agrichemical Review Process (SARP) reports from the vegetable industry, Patrick will capture direct input from growers relating to individual crop commodities, this input is then to be categorised by crop and region. The Project Coordinator will work in conjunction with Hort Innovation and regions Industry Development Officers (IDO's) and will engage and consult extensively with vegetable growers and other industry stakeholders.

Priority agrichemical gaps identified in this three-year project will inform industry actions at the annual AgChem Collaborative Forum, aid in updating industry SARPs and identify potential solutions to address these gaps.

The successful rollout of this project will result in an effective agrichemical prioritisation process for the vegetable industry through a high level of industry engagement and input, which will direct R&D funding for crop protection purposes.

By working together with growers the main goal of this project is to ensure a productive vegetable industry for generations, so keep an eye out for Patrick as he visits our vegetable growing regions and stay tuned for upcoming project consultation workshops.

For further information on the program contact the Project Coordinator – Agrichemical Pest Management Needs and Priorities, Patrick Arratia at patrick.arratia@ausveg.com or on 03 9882 6722.

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