

Onion Fund

Annual Investment Plan

2025/26



September 2025

**Hort
Innovation** **ONION
FUND**

Proposed investments in 2025/26

A list of proposed R&D and marketing investments in the Onion Fund in 2025/26 can be found below. Each year, onion industry representatives meet as an advisory panel to discuss investment recommendations in line with the Onion Strategic Investment Plan (SIP). At these meetings, the panel is provided with a financial forecast and an investment analysis of current investments. Based on this information, they provide Hort Innovation with advice on priorities for investment for the upcoming year.

The Onion Strategic Investment Advisory Panel (SIAP) met on November 27, 2024 and May 1, 2025 to discuss, provide advice on, and prioritise recommendations on investments in 2025/26. The R&D investment recommendations are listed in order of priority in Table 1 and the marketing investment recommendation is listed in Table 2.

Note: Investments will be aligned to form multi-industry projects where possible, and all investments are subject to funding availability. If investments do not occur in this financial year, they will be reconsidered and reprioritised for the onion Annual Investment Plan (AIP) 2026/27. Any investments not endorsed by June 30, 2025, will not be included in this report.

Table 1. Onion production R&D advisory panel prioritised new investment recommendations in 2025/26

Priority	Investment	Outcome	Strategy
1	Addressing herbicide resistance and control failures in ryegrass management for onions, carrots and rotational crops	2. Industry supply, productivity and sustainability	2.1 IPDM
1	Rapid test and fungicide resistant screening for <i>Stemphylium</i> leaf blight in onion	3. Extension and capability	3.1 Extension capability
1	Future-proofing onion health management of rot diseases of onions	2. Industry supply, productivity and sustainability	2.1 IPDM
2	Onion industry biosecurity strategy – Phase I	2. Industry supply, productivity and sustainability	2.2 Biosecurity preparedness
2	Accelerating early access to emerging tech for vegetable and onion growers	2. Industry supply, productivity and sustainability	2.1 IPDM
3	Proof of concept and validation of physical weed technologies for the onion and vegetable Industry in Tasmania, South Australia and Western Australia	2. Industry supply, productivity and sustainability	2.3 Soil management
4	National co-ordination for agrichemical access and risk management for Australian vegetables	3. Extension and capability	2.2 Biosecurity preparedness
5	Quantum scan tracking FY25/26: Vegetable and onion	2. Industry supply, productivity and sustainability	2.4 Optimised inputs
5	Accelerating adoption of area-wide integrated crop management in vegetable, onion and potato growing regions	1. Industry supply, productivity and sustainability	3.1 Extension capability
6	Printing and futureproofing key vegetable, onion, potato and sweetpotato industry resources	4. Business insights	3.2 Engagement to innovate

Table 1. continued

Priority	Investment	Outcome	Strategy
*	Measurement and evaluation dashboard and assessments	2. Industry supply, productivity and sustainability	2.1 IPDM
**	Consumer usage and attitude tracking 2025/26	3. Extension and capability	1.3 Biosecurity preparedness

Notes:

* This is a foundational investment required to address principle 5 of the Statutory Funding Agreement Guidelines, by conducting an ongoing ex-post evaluation of Hort Innovation's R&D investment program, sampled across all horticulture levy funds to inform the overall impact of the investment program and therefore does not require advice.

** This is a foundational investment required to support data generation of agricultural permits and therefore does not require advice.

Table 2. Onion production marketing advisory panel prioritised new investment recommendation in 2025/26

Priority	Investment	Outcome	Strategy
1	Onion domestic marketing plan July 2025 to December 2026	1. Demand creation	2 Consumer demand



Current contracted R&D and marketing projects

Current contracted projects in the Onion Fund as at July 1, 2025, which are aligned to the respective outcomes and strategies in the Onion SIP, can be seen in Tables 3 and 4. More information about these projects is available on the Hort Innovation website where the projects have a hyperlink.

Table 3. Current contracted onion R&D project actuals at 2024/25 and forecast to 2027/28

Project code	Project title	2024/25 Actual \$	2025/26 Forecast \$	2026/27 Forecast \$	2027/28 Forecast \$
HN22003	The nutritional advantage of fresh produce: a focus on bioactive nutrients and their role in consumer demand	-	15,000	15,000	15,000
MT20007	Regulatory support and response co-ordination (pesticides)	3,120	-	-	-
MT21004	Consumer behavioural data program	18,028	12,980	15,631	-
MT21006	Australian Horticulture Statistics Handbook	7,583	-	-	-
MT21008	National Bee Pest Surveillance Program: Transition program	31,175	-	-	-
MT21009	Multi-industry export program (Vegetables, onions and melons)	77,011	77,011	154,023	-
MT21015	Horticulture Impact Assessment Program 2020/21 to 2022/23	1,631	-	-	-
MT22003	Nuffield scholarships	-6	11,440	-	-
MT22005	Horticulture trade data	1,803	-	-	-
MT22009	National vegetable and onion benchmarking program	34,967	34,967	34,967	122,385
MT22011	Horticulture National Lean Leaders Program	1,178	1,502	-	-
MT23001	Strategic Agrichemical Review Process (SARP) 2023 updates	5,004	-	-	-
MT23005	One Basin CRC - partnering on behalf of horticulture industries	30,000	25,000	25,000	25,000
MT23006	Independent mid-term review of VG21000, MG21002 and BA20002	5,784	-	-	-
MT23007	M&E dashboard automation test	70	-	-	-
MT23201	Consumer usage and attitude tracking 2023/24	3,611	-	-	-
MT24001	Optimising trade in the Australian vegetable industry	9,350	-	-	-

Table 3. continued

Project code	Project title	2024/25 Actual \$	2025/26 Forecast \$	2026/27 Forecast \$	2027/28 Forecast \$
MT24002	Mid-term evaluation of project MT21009	8,500	-	-	-
MT24003	Valuing the sustainability story of the Australian vegetable and onion industries	40,507	9,619	-	-
MT24005	Horticulture Impact Assessment Program 2023/24 to 2025/26	1,970	1,313	1,642	-
MT24007	Chemical residue report to support Australia's Country Recognition Arrangement (CRA) with Indonesia (2024-2029)	3,570	1,890	1,967	2,048
MT24008	Regulatory support and response co-ordination (pesticides)	5,185	3,456	3,456	5,185
MT24012	Accelerating adoption of Area Wide-Integrated Crop Management in vegetable, onion and potato growing regions	10,200	40,800	-	-
MT24013	Accelerating early access to emerging tech for vegetable growers	11,996	32,989	14,995	-
MT24015	One Survey for vegetable, onion and potato levy funded projects	1,688	11,772	1,585	1,585
MT24023	National agrichemical management program		26,177	13,088	13,088
MT24201	Consumer usage and attitude tracking 2025/26	1,366	2,732	2,732	-
VG21000	VegNET 3.0	288,459	288,459	144,230	
VG23002	Vegetable Industry study tours	42,753	32,055	32,055	26,725
VG23009	Growing Leaders	27,067	54,134	54,134	54,134
VNI6000	Onion industry minor use program	700	-	-	-
VN20002	Onion nutrition education program for health professionals and the foodservice industry	183,240	-	-	-
VN20006	Epidemiology and management of fusarium basal rot in onions	200,000	-	-	-
VN20007	Optimising chemical and cultural management of onion white rot	66,640	141,660	-	-



Table 3. continued

Project code	Project title	2024/25 Actual \$	2025/26 Forecast \$	2026/27 Forecast \$	2027/28 Forecast \$
VN21000	Accelerating the adoption of best management practice in Australia's onion industry through integrated grower-led communications and ext	76,879	60,956	-	-
VN23001	Understanding and managing the impacts of climate change on Australian onion production	60,838	121,676	60,838	-
VN23910	Industry and grower consultation including SIAPs and EAPs	1,322	-	-	-
VN24002	Future proofing onion health: management of rot diseases of onions	168,364	168,364	168,364	168,366
VN24910	Industry and grower consultation including SIAPs and EAPs	12,387	-	-	-
VN24001	Horizon Scholarships	-	16,000	16,000	16,000
Total		1,443,941	1,191,956	759,708	449,516

Table 4. Current contracted onion marketing project actuals at 2024/25 and forecast to 2027/28

Project code	Project title	2024/25 Actual \$	2025/26 Forecast \$	2026/27 Forecast \$	2027/28 Forecast \$
VN23910	Industry and grower consultation including SIAPs and EAPs	126	-	-	-
VN24501	Onion domestic marketing FY25 – Website maintenance (Expenses only)	3,981	19	-	-
VN24502	Onion domestic marketing FY25 – Program maintenance (Expenses only)	10,249	751	-	-
VN24601	Onion domestic marketing plan FY25	170,000	-	-	-
VN24910	Industry and grower consultation including SIAPs and EAPs	1,899	-	-	-
VN25601	Onion domestic marketing campaign (July 2025 to December 2026)	-	157,500	52,500	-
Total		186,255	158,270	52,500	-

Financial statements

Financial statements for the onion R&D levy funds can be seen in Table 5 below, and the marketing levy funds can be seen in Table 6.

Table 5. Onion R&D funds actuals at 2024/25 and forecast to 2027/28 (as of July 1, 2025)

	2024/25 Actual \$	2025/26 Forecast \$	2026/27 Forecast \$	2027/28 Forecast \$
Opening balance	2,393,610	2,380,194	1,672,234	1,197,448
Levies from growers	771,282	775,000	775,000	775,000
Commonwealth funds	860,228	1,521,794	1,272,033	1,093,922
Other income	92,729	56,549	40,493	30,091
Total income	1,724,239	2,353,343	2,087,527	1,899,012
Project funding ¹	1,443,941	2,354,484	1,535,235	1,236,257
Available for investment	-	200,000	600,000	600,000
Service delivery	276,515	489,105	408,831	351,586
Total matched expenditure	1,720,456	3,043,589	2,544,066	2,187,843
Federal Government levy collection costs	17,199	17,715	18,246	18,794
Annual levy cash movement	-13,416	-707,960	-474,786	-307,625
Closing balance	2,380,194	1,672,234	1,197,448	889,823

Note:

1. Project funding includes committed projects and projects supported by the advisory panel and currently in the process of procurement.

Table 6. Onion marketing funds actuals at 2024/25 and forecast to 2027/28 (as of July 1, 2025)

	2024/25 Actual \$	2025/26 Forecast \$	2026/27 Forecast \$	2027/28 Forecast \$
Opening balance	36,229	68,504	66,823	71,280
Levies from growers	265,960	267,000	267,000	267,000
Other income	856	1,370	1,336	1,426
Total income	266,816	268,370	268,336	268,426
Project funding ¹	186,256	215,179	109,909	5,000
Available for investment	-	-	100,000	210,000
Service delivery	42,354	48,942	47,743	48,901
Total expenditure	228,610	264,121	257,652	263,901
Federal Government levy collection costs	5,931	5,931	6,228	6,539
Annual levy cash movement	32,275	-1,681	4,457	-2,014
Closing balance	68,504	66,823	71,280	69,265

Note:

1. Project funding includes committed projects and projects supported by the advisory panel and currently in the process of procurement.

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