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## Australian Horticulture grows by \$6.15B within a decade

NEW DATA released by Hort Innovation today shows the production value of Australia's horticulture industry has grown by \$6.15B since 2012/13.

The new data comes as the latest edition of the [Horticulture Statistics Handbook](#), developed by Freshlogic on behalf of Hort Innovation, is released today. The handbook includes information on 75 different horticulture categories across fruit, vegetables, nuts, and greenlife.

Hort Innovation Chief Executive Officer Brett Fifield said an analysis of the Horticulture Statistics Handbook since 2012/13 shows growth in both horticulture production volumes and values.

"Australia is producing 850,000 additional tonnes of produce than we were in 2012/13, and the annual value of horticulture production is up \$6.15B compared to the same period. This means the industry has added, on average, around \$680M in value every year for the past decade," Mr Fifield said.

"In 2021/22, the production value of Australia's horticulture industry grew to \$15.62B, with the total production value of Australian's horticulture industry growing steadily by \$381.3M (2.5 per cent)."

More data and insights from the 2021/2022 Handbook include:

- Vegetable production values reached an all-time high of \$5.54B in 2021/22, despite a modest decrease in volume from the previous year.
- There were value increases across the board in the vegetable category, including leafy salad vegetables, which increased by 19 per cent (+\$94.2M), and tomatoes, which increased by 15 per cent (+\$83M).
- Leafy salad vegetables also reached new production volumes, increasing by 5.3 per cent in 2021/22. This marked the highest year of supply of fresh leafy salad vegetables.
- Beans had the highest annual production value growth rate of all vegetables, up 64% in 2021/22 and recording its highest production value of \$134.4M
- Onions reached new production value highs, exceeding \$249M
- Mango volumes increased 10 per cent on last year and reached the highest year of production value, recording \$217.9M
- Several fruit categories experienced stronger values in 2021/22, including table grapes (increased \$90M), Watermelons (increased \$27M), Mangoes (increased \$17M), Mandarins (increased \$14M), Lychees (increased \$10M) and nectarines/peaches (increased \$8M).
- In nuts, almonds, pistachios and walnuts all experienced significant gains in production value.

AUSVEG CEO Michael Coote said that while the long-term growth in the vegetable industry has been impressive, the industry has recently been struggling with weather events, higher production costs and labour shortages.

"Weather events, labour shortages and supply chain issues have impacted production volumes of many vegetables, which has been challenging for growers," said Mr Coote.

"High production costs and challenges in sourcing labour have also significantly impacted growers' bottom lines, so while the overall production value of many lines is higher than previous years, the profitability of many growers is lower as these increases have not been enough to meet increases in costs."

“It is also important to put this data into perspective, with much of the publicised shortages and supply issues with many vegetable lines occurring late in the data period or in the subsequent financial year.”

“That being said, when looking at the longer-term growth of the sector, both production volumes and production values have grown strongly, which is a great sign for the ongoing viability of the vegetable industry and for Australian Horticulture more generally.”

Australian Table Grape Association Chief Executive Officer Jeff Scott said the increase in the table grape production value was a significant result given the challenges of the past couple of years.

“As an industry, we export around 70 per cent of our product. The past couple of years have presented huge challenges in getting our product to international markets, including transport and logistics issues, as well as lower consumer confidence in some international markets,” Mr Scott said.

“The industry has really defied the odds and I’m pleased we’re seeing an upswing in the industry’s value.”

Melons Australia Executive Officer Johnathon Davey said the latest figures highlight the opportunity for his industry to recover and boost production and sales in the wake of COVID-19.

“We have a real opportunity to grow and get production volumes back to where they should be (at least on par with pre-COVID production), and that means collaborating with like-minded organisations like Hort Innovation to help our growers reach local and international consumers,” Mr Davey said.

“For example, one project we have underway aims to improve the quality and taste of melons, making them a more attractive option at the checkout. We also have a new export strategy that strives to boost exports from around 8 per cent of melon production today, to 20 per cent.”

The Horticulture Statistics Handbook is released each February and captures the previous financial year's data. The user-friendly guide includes figures on national and state-level production values and volumes, exports and imports, processing volumes, fresh supply, retail and food service distribution. The full handbook (PDF and online tableau tool) is available at: [www.horticulture.com.au/hort-stats-handbook](http://www.horticulture.com.au/hort-stats-handbook)

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