

TOMATO TOPICS

**Hort
Innovation**
Strategic levy investment

**PROCESSING
TOMATO FUND**



**NEWS and INFORMATION
FOR THE PROCESSING TOMATO INDUSTRY**

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Annual APTRC Forum—Face to Face again, after a 2 Year Absence!

By Matthew Stewart

We successfully held our Annual Industry Forum 'In Person' on Thursday 26th May at the Moama Bowling Club 'Venue'.

The forum was attended by 56 delegates and the follow-on drinks and dinner, catered by Junction Restaurant was attended by 44 members and partners.

The day hosted 15 different and interesting speakers, presenting on a range of topics over three sessions, which were categorised 'RD&E', 'Industry Insights' and 'Into the Future'.



There were three technical stalls at the forum this year; IPL Fertilisers, I K Caldwell's and MAIT Industries, who we are grateful to, for making themselves available to answer questions from delegates and for networking throughout the day about their respective areas of expertise.

The evening dinner at the Junction Hotel was enjoyed by all and made for a great social and networking event, where growers, processors, suppliers, and academics got a chance to re-connect socially, after a far too long period of social isolation.

Although everyone extracted different messages and ideas from the day, below is a brief list of my key personal takeaway messages from what was presented and discussed.

Chairman's Report — Charles noted that the season had a promising start, however due to ongoing labour issues and consequent rain delays and losses, the tonnages haven't met our earlier, optimistic expectations.



The turnout of a full room of delegates was a welcome sight and Charles thanked everyone for supporting the industry's biggest annual event, which was a great chance to re-connect with fellow members of industry.

<u>Also in this edition:</u>	<u>Page:</u>
Hort Connections Brisbane	3
Toowoomba Nursery Visits	4
WPTC Production Estimate	5
Cultivar Trials 2021/22	6, 7, 8
Climate Outlook	9, 10
Industry News	10, 11



Cultivar Improvement Program – Ann and Bill noted that there are some promising mid-season cultivars that have performed very well in the APTRC field trial program, displaying higher yield and brix than the industry standard. These should be strongly considered by growers in the coming seasons for larger commercial plantings (see trial notes section).

It was also highlighted that we need more, reliable early season cultivars however, that can support the limited existing options being utilised by industry.



Irrigation Management – We heard from Stuart at Kagome and from John at Swan Systems on different irrigation and nutrition monitoring systems currently being trialled on commercial field scales.

These systems offer potential solutions for large-scale irrigation management and potential labour savings.



Sam North from NSW DPI also presented on sensor-based scheduling as a potential management tool to improve matching irrigation application to soil type and crop demand.

Interestingly, Sam pointed out that a sensor for ‘stopping’ irrigation may be one major technological advantage for growers, which has not yet been incorporated within irrigation management systems.



Water Supply Outlook – Guy Ortlipp from GMW outlined how a high amount of water storage going into winter and a wetter than average outlook was predicted in most models in the coming months. This meant water allocations will likely be high at

the start of the coming season with cheap supply available to fill additional on-farm requirements.

Seed Importation – Jana Hatzis (from Plant Health Australia) gave a thorough run through of the how and why of the seed testing process that must occur before customs can approve its release to industry. Jana also clarified some of the reasons for current testing methodologies, such as why 20,000 seeds are required for analysis from a consignment to ensure a 99% chance of detecting of viroids.



University of Melbourne – The pathology team of Paul, Niloofar, and Hanyue from Melbourne University presented on the progress of Hanyue’s current PhD into root disease.



Also discussed were some future R&D ideas, and also why bio-controls for root disease have worked well in petri dish studies but not in the field.

Deakin University – Van and Dilshan presented on the work they’ve done on creating a computer-based algorithm, using Ann Morrison’s extensive (>2000 strong) photographic record to assist ‘deep learning’ for tomato flower identification. This is the first step toward a potential future robotic pollination system for hybrid seed production.



Hort Innovation – Adrian Englefield outlined the current TM20000 project that is currently underway for industry, and how a 5-year project funding period will benefit the tomato industry. Also, Adrian indicated that there was a ‘Frontiers’ project out for tender

that related directly to imported seed, which we will be keeping a watching brief on.

SPC – Jordan Jamieson outlined the current retail landscape for Australian tomato products and how COVID had increased the importance of tomato products for Australian consumers keen to cook healthy meals at home.

SPC also indicated that they saw product innovation and longer-term planning as their pathway for improving their market share.



IDM Report – In the IDM report, I outlined what the APTRC team of Ann, Bill and myself have been working on over the past 12 months, and what the committee have approved as priority R&D projects in the past couple of years.

As best we can, the aim is to tackle the issues of seed supply, root disease and sustainable farming systems, which were the top 3 priorities identified in our industry strategic plan.

All presentations are now available for review on our website by following the [Information for Industry](#) tab and clicking on the Industry Forums tab, then the 2022 icons.



Hort Connections — Brisbane QLD



During June 6th – 8th, I was fortunate to represent the processing tomato industry at Australia’s largest annual horticultural conference and trade show, known as Hort Connections. This year’s event was held at the Brisbane Exhibition & Convention Centre with the theme “Growing Together”.

With delegates numbering in the thousands (including over 800 grower representatives) and over 200 trade exhibitors, there was certainly a strong sense of togetherness for Australian horticulture business through networking and sharing of ideas.

For the processing tomato industry, the conference was an opportunity to learn about the latest industry research and innovations. It seemed clear to me that the agronomic challenges faced by other horticulture industries are very similar to our own. Therefore, the potential answers to these issues in the future may be better realised through collaboration with other horticultural industries.

There seemed to be a strong focus on re-thinking the way horticulture manages weeds and how to better protect and manage young seedlings or transplants through adoption of cover cropping and more minimal tillage practices. The [soil wealth project](#) has done tremendous work in this area, and at the conference, we heard from [Mulgowie Farms](#) amongst others on how these ideas are being put into practice on commercial scale farming systems.

The labour woes of the processing tomato industry this season were felt across all horticulture sectors in 2022 and a presentation by [Bernard Salt](#) gave an excellent summary of the “*post COVID outlook for horticulture through a demographic lens*”. I’d recommend viewing this and other presentations that may be of interest, now available online via the [Hort Connections wrap-up website page](#).





I believe the challenge for the processing tomato industry and the APTRC regarding agronomic advances, is to get a ‘seat at the table’ on some of these larger industry initiatives and help identify practices from these long-term agronomic projects which can be adapted to our own unique systems.

The APTRC are following up several leads from this event, which will hopefully be communicated in the coming season.

The Hort Connections conference next year is set to take place

between **June 5th–7th 2023**, in Adelaide SA, and I’d encourage any growers or industry members considering attending to get in touch with me if they wish to discuss the conference in more detail.



Toowoomba Nursery Visits

To capitalise on the trip north to attend Hort Connections in Queensland, on Thursday 9th June, APTRC joined forces with Chris Taylor and Darcy Kirchhoffer from Kagome to visit two of the industries major commercial



partners, [Boomaroo Nurseries](#), and [Withcott Seedlings](#), who between them supply almost the full complement of seedlings used annually by our industry.

Boomaroo Nurseries’ Southbrook facility is the newer of their 2 facilities (the historical site being based in Lara, Victoria) and we were grateful to be given a walkthrough by owner Theo Jacometti and Queensland Business Manager, Ian Willert.

At Withcott Seedlings, we were similarly fortunate to be hosted by CEO Mike Hindle and founder Graham Erhart, as well as key members from their management and growing teams.



It was an excellent opportunity to see the technological advances that are constantly being adopted and applied to the nursery side of the processing tomato production system. Personally, it was valuable to hear what an important relationship the processing tomato industry has with Boomaroo and Withcott historically, and the high value that these businesses put on their relationships with our growers.

APTRC would like to sincerely thank both Boomaroo Nurseries and Withcott Seedlings for their time and patience answering the many questions relating to how our seedlings are being produced and dispatched for industry and how they’re helping to adapt to the changing varieties and industry requirements.



WPTC World production estimate of tomatoes for processing
(in 1000 metric tonnes)

Date of last update: 22/07/2022

		2019	2020	2021	2022	AVERAGE	VARIATION	
		FINAL	FINAL	FINAL	FORECAST	2019-2021	2022 vs 2021	
NORTHERN HEMISPHERE*	MEMBERS IN MEDITERRANEAN AREA (AMITOM)	Algeria*	800 Mem.	800 Misc.	1 000 Misc.	n/a	867	n/a
		Egypt	400 Mem.	420 Mem.	440 Mem.	440 Mem.	420	0%
		France	154 Mem.	136 Mem.	164 Mem.	155 Mem.	151	-5%
		Greece	400 Mem.	420 Mem.	420 Mem.	370 Mem.	413	-12%
		Hungary**	100 Mem.	82 Mem.	115 Mem.	90 Mem.	99	-22%
		Iran*	1 650 Mem.	1 300 Mem.	1 300 Est.	n/a	1 417	n/a
		Israel	200 Mem.	200 Mem.	200 Est.	200 Est.	200	0%
		Italy	4 801 Mem.	5 166 Mem.	6 059 Mem.	5 400 Mem.	5 342	-11%
		Malta**	8 Est.	8 Est.	7 Mem.	7 Mem.	8	0%
		Portugal***	1 410 Mem.	1 262 Mem.	1 596 Mem.	1 450 Mem.	1 423	-9%
		Russia**	552 Mem.	515 Mem.	523 Mem.	600 Mem.	530	15%
		Spain***	3 200 Mem.	2 650 Mem.	3 185 Mem.	2 385 Mem.	3 012	-25%
		Syria**	42 Mem.	42 Est.	40 Est.	40 Est.	41	0%
		Tunisia	815 Mem.	961 Mem.	940 Mem.	600 Mem.	905	-36%
		Turkey	2 200 Mem.	2 500 Mem.	2 200 Mem.	2 100 Mem.	2 300	-5%
Ukraine**	720 Mem.	800 Mem.	800 Mem.	180 Mem.	773	-78%		
Subtotal AMITOM		17 452	17 262	18 989	14 017	17 901	-26%	
of which members in EU		10 073	9 724	11 546	9 857	10 448	-15%	
NORTHERN HEMISPHERE*	OTHER MEMBERS	Brazil	1 200 Mem.	1 421 Mem.	1 525 Mem.	1 600 Mem.	1 382	4,9%
		Canada	434 Mem.	438 Mem.	399 Mem.	500 Mem.	424	25%
		California	10 144 Mem.	10 258 Mem.	9 761 Mem.	10 614 Mem.	10 054	9%
		China	4 600 Mem.	5 800 Mem.	4 800 Mem.	5 800 Mem.	5 067	21%
		Japan	27 Mem.	23 Mem.	28 Mem.	29 Mem.	26	4%
		Subtotal Other Members	16 405	17 940	16 513	18 543	16 953	12,3%
NORTHERN HEMISPHERE*	NON MEMBERS	Algeria	n/a	n/a	n/a	800 Misc.	867	-20%
		Bulgaria	40 Misc.	40 Est.	40 Est.	40 Est.	40	0%
		Czech Republic	25 Est.	25 Est.	25 Est.	25 Est.	25	0%
		Iran	n/a	n/a	n/a	1 300 Est.	1 417	0%
		Morocco	130 Est.	100 Misc.	100 Est.	100 Est.	110	0%
		Poland	175 Misc.	175 Est.	175 Est.	175 Est.	175	0%
		Slovakia	20 Est.	20 Est.	20 Est.	20 Est.	20	0%
		USA excluding California	370 Misc.	463 Misc.	462 Misc.	450 Misc.	432	-3%
		Subtotal Non Members	760	823	822	2 910	802	254%
Total Northern Hemisphere		34 617	36 025	36 324	35 470	35 655	-2,4%	
of which WPTC members		33 857	35 202	35 502	32 560	34 854	-8,3%	
of which European Union		10 333	9 984	11 806	10 117	10 708	-14,3%	
SOUTHERN HEMISPHERE*	MEMBERS	Argentina	395 Mem.	454 Mem.	596 Mem.	626 Mem.	482	5,0%
		Australia	212 Mem.	210 Mem.	233 Mem.	227 Mem.	218	-2,6%
		Chile	1 100 Mem.	907 Mem.	1 174 Mem.	971 Mem.	1 060	-17,3%
		Peru	100 Mem.	100 Mem.	120 Mem.	125 Mem.	107	4,2%
		South Africa	140 Mem.	150 Mem.	125 Mem.	120 Mem.	138	-4,0%
		Subtotal members	1 947	1 821	2 248	2 069	2 005	-8,0%
	NON MEMBERS	Dominican Republic	258 Est.	181 Misc.	227 Misc.	227 Est.	222	0,0%
		India	154 Misc.	152 Misc.	162 Misc.	162 Est.	156	0,0%
		Mexico	40 Est.	40 Est.	40 Est.	40 Est.	40	0,0%
		New Zealand	50 Est.	50 Est.	50 Est.	52 Misc.	50	4,0%
		Subtotal non members	642	556	612	614	603	0,3%
Total Southern Hemisphere		2 589	2 377	2 860	2 683	2 609	-6,2%	
GENERAL TOTAL		37 206	38 402	39 184	38 153	38 264	-2,6%	
of which members of the WPTC		35 804	37 023	37 750	34 629	36 859	-8,3%	
WPTC as percentage of total production		96%	96%	96%	91%	96%	-5,8%	

Sources:

Mem.= WPTC members, Off.= Official data, Misc.= Other sources (industry contacts, press, ...), Est.= WPTC estimate, in the absence of reliable data

Notes:

Hemispheres are not defined in the strict geographic sense but as Northern Hemisphere: crop period mainly July to December & Southern Hemisphere: crop period mainly January to June

* Have now left AMITOM ** AMITOM associate members *** Tomatoes produced in Portugal but processed in Spain are reported in Spain

DISCLAIMER:

WPTC does not guarantee or assume any liability for the accuracy of the contents of this report and shall not be responsible for any losses sustained as a result of relying on the contained information.

For more information, contact Sophie Colvine, WPTC General Secretary at colvine@tomate.org - www.wptc.to

APTRC 2020-2021 Mid-Season Cultivar Trials

Ann Morrison & Bill Ashcroft

Screening Trials

APTRC ran two transplanted screening trials, one at Strathallan (Site 1) approximately 8 km north of Rochester Victoria and the other (Site 2) 6 km east of Rochester. Cultivars were visually assessed by Bill Ashcroft in early March and given a rating score out of 10 (*Table 1*). Site 1 was assessed after 125 days in field and Site 2 after 130 days.

Table 1. Field notes and scores from mid-season screening trials

Cultivar	Comments	Rating (/10)
H3402 Standard site 1	Medium/vigorous vine sitting well on the bed. Fruit firm with good colour, blocky egg-plum shaped and generally good size. High yielding with good concentration. A little bit of leaf disease and bleach evident at site 1.	7.5/8 (Avg 7.8)
H1311 Standard site 2	Grown at S2 only. Medium-vigorous vine falling open a bit with some fruit breakdown. Leaf disease also appeared more prevalent in this. Fruit firm with good colour (Hi-lycopene). Blocky egg/pears (some points) of variable size – some small. Yield and conc. ok.	-/6.5
H1307	Site 2 only. Medium-vigorous vine on the bed. Medium foliage providing reasonable cover. Firm, medium blocky plums showing a hint of breakdown. Colour ok and yield good. Some big bud. Breakdown the main question mark.	-/6.5
H1996	Medium-vigorous vine a bit upright and may open up a bit. Leaves a bit smaller and darker. Cover ok generally. Plum fruit very firm with good colour. Size variable with some small. A bit of breakdown at S2. Yield and concentration ok.	7/6 (6.5)
H3406	Site 2 only. Medium-vigorous vine sitting well on the bed but growing into the gutters and opening up a bit. Plum-egg fruit of variable size – mainly medium. Some bleach and splitting evident but looks to be holding. Firm with some good colour and good yield.	-/6.5
H5408	Spreading medium/vigorous vine with dark foliage. Very firm blocky plum-egg fruit with some dimpled. Some good colour and yield also looks good. Some breakdown at both sites with splitting also. Holding the main concern, particularly at S1.	5.5/7 (6.3)
SVTM9008	Medium-vigorous vine on the bed with medium-dark smaller leaves on top providing good cover. Fruit very firm blocky plum-eggs – a few pointed - of good size but a bit puffy. Some bleach and colour average-poor at both sites. Medium-good yield. Fruit quality?	6/5 (5.5)
SVTM9023	Spray-row at S2. Vigorous-medium vine at S1, with dark leaves providing good cover. Blocky egg-pear fruit of good size (some large at S1) – a few puffy. Firm, colour and yield ok although a bit of yelloweye and grey wall seen at S2. A bit of bleach but holding ok.	6.5/6.5 (6.5)
SVTM9024	Medium-vigorous vine with lighter foliage and smaller leaves on top. Good cover and concentration. Firm blocky plum-egg fruit of good size. Colour ok but a few puffy and bleached fruit plus a couple split. Good yield.	7/7 (7)
HM 4885	Medium/vigorous vine – a bit upright - on the bed with medium-dark foliage not showing much disease. Medium sized egg-elongated fruit, firm with good colour. A bit of bleach, yellow eye and fence-posting at S2. Yield medium.	6/6.5 (6.3)
HM 58811	Upright medium-vigorous vine – might be floppy - with medium/dark foliage. Cover ok and not much foliar disease. Blocky egg-pear shaped fruit with good size (some large) and a few pointed. Very firm but a bit puffy. Colour and yield ok.	6.5/6.5 (6.5)
HM Nava	Site 1 only. Medium vine, a bit upright but on the bed – with dark foliage providing mainly good cover. Medium-large, firm, egg-pear fruit showing breakdown. A bit puffy and with medium colour (some greywall and core). Yield ok but breakdown a problem this season.	5/-
UG 16112	Medium/compact vine on the bed with large rolled purple leaves on top. Cover ok. Medium-large blocky egg-pear shaped fruit. Very firm, colour ok-good, a few puffy. Quite a few bleached fruit at S2. Good concentration and yield. Holding.	7/6 (6.5)

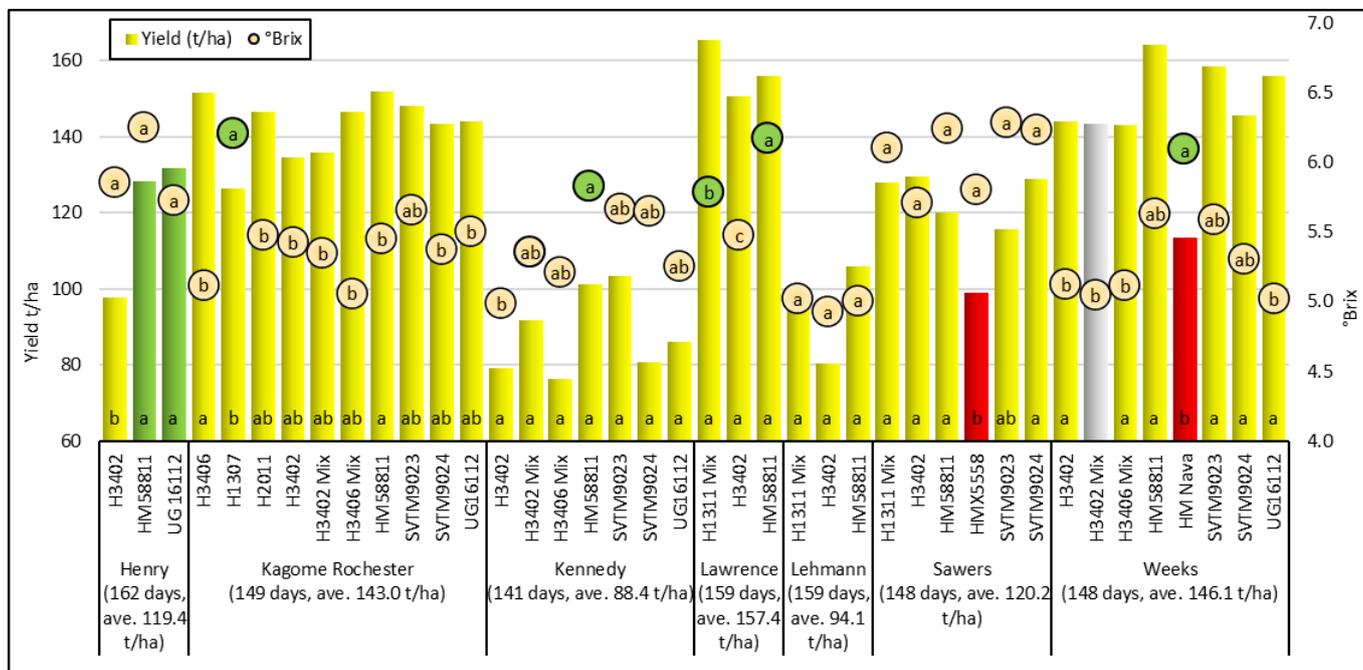
Scores are shown for each site in order, then (where appropriate) averaged.

Not all lines were grown at all sites and seed mixes were not assessed.

Mid-Season Machine Harvest Trials

Seven mid-season replicated trials were successfully machine harvested in the 21-22 season. There were three transplant trials (Kagome, Kennedy and Weeks) and the rest were direct seeded. The late arrival of some seed lines into the country and/or limited seed availability meant some cultivars were restricted to a smaller number of trials.

Figure 1. Mid-season yield and °Brix



Comments: The seasonal conditions and delayed trial harvest saw an increased prevalence in fruit breakdown especially in the later crops, the mid-season trials were harvested between 141 and 162 days in the field.

Analysis of variance was performed on the results and are shown in Figure 1, where results significantly better than H3402 are highlighted green and results significantly worse are coloured red (grey results were excluded from analysis).



In the trial at Henry’s (harvested at 162 days in the field) HM58811 and UG16112 (green bars in Figure 1) had significantly higher yields than H3402, which appeared to show more breakdown.

In both the Sawer’s and Weeks’ trials, two HM Clause varieties, 5558 and Nava (which was listed as a 120-125 day variety), had significantly lower yields. These varieties showed more breakdown, however the trials were harvested in very late March after 148 days in field.

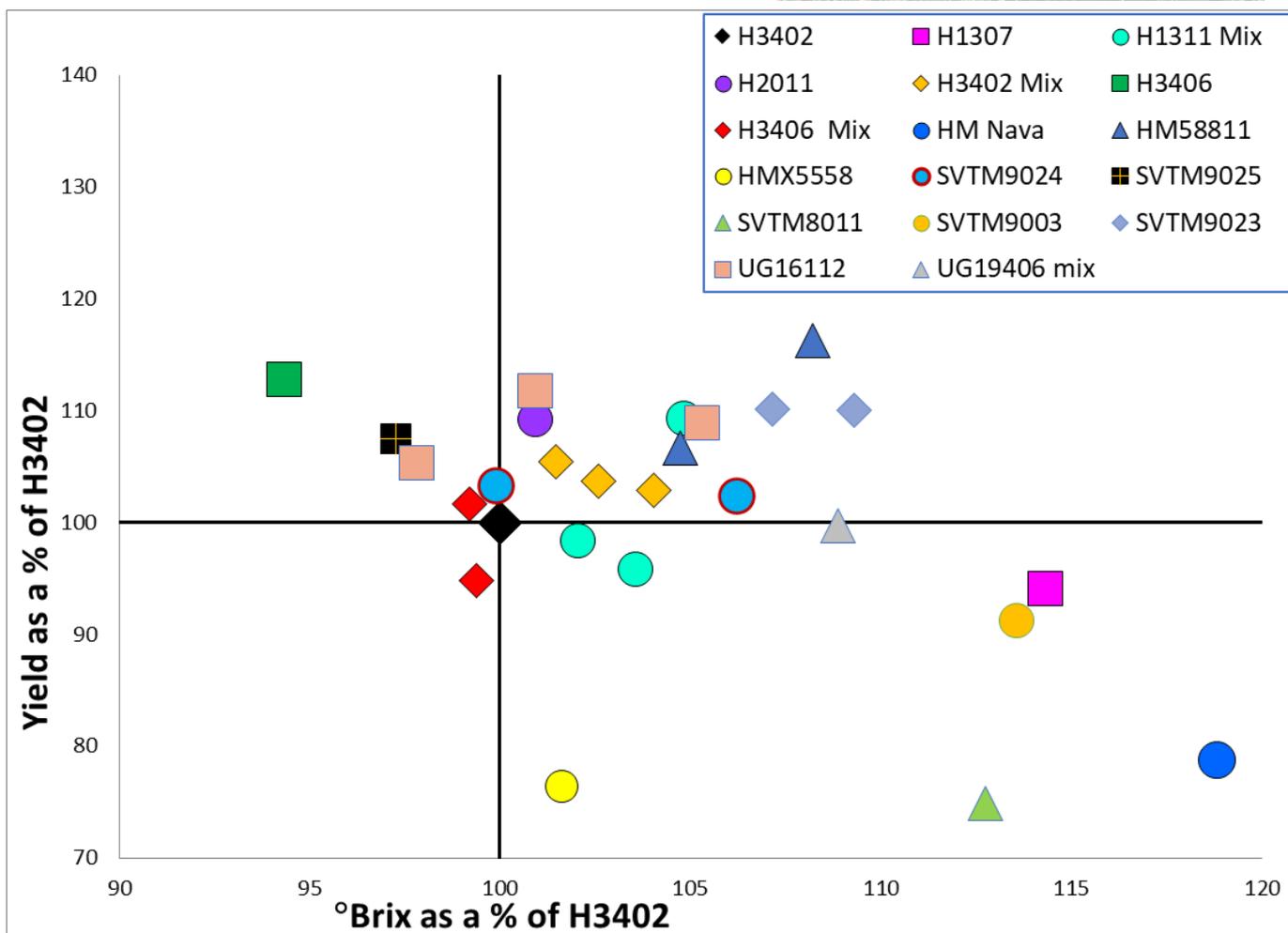


Average Yearly Trial Results as a % of H3402 (2020-2022)

Figure 2 below, shows average yearly trial results for yields and °Brix over the past three seasons as a percentage of H3402 (represented as the black diamond in the centre of the cross hairs). Ideally, we want cultivars in the upper right quadrant i.e., to have both higher yields and higher brix than H3402.



Figure 2. Yield and °Brix as a percentage of H3402 over three growing seasons



Comments: Several cultivars such as HM58811, UG16112, SVTM9023 and 9024 fall into the desirable upper right quadrant.

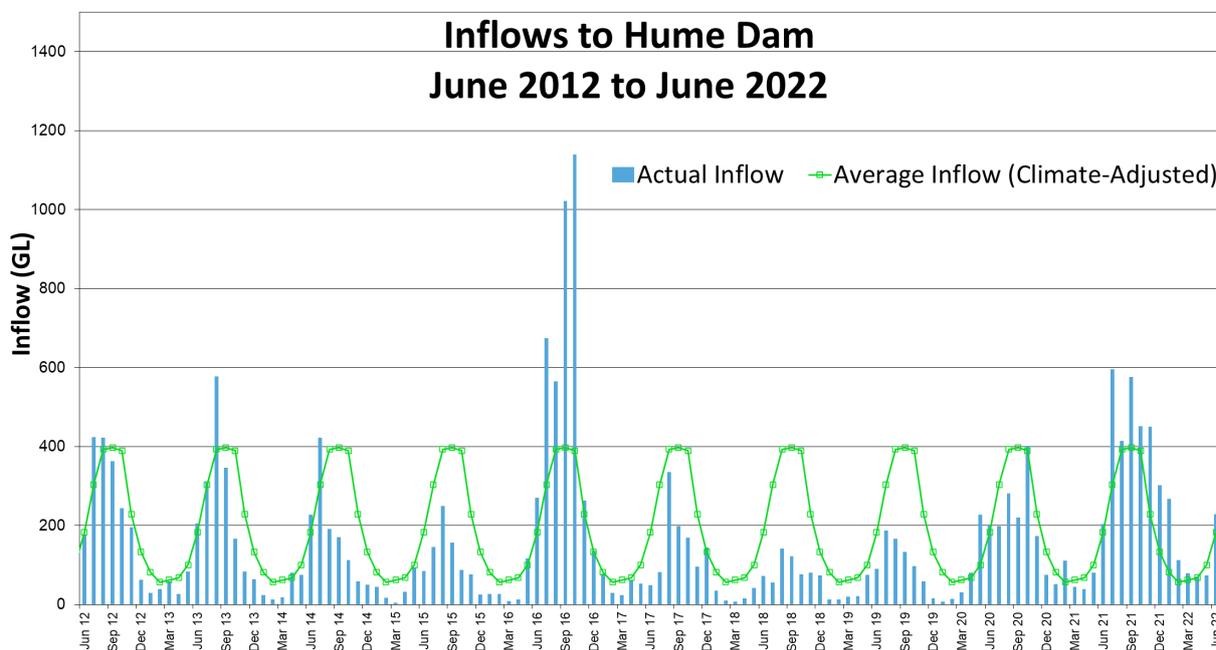
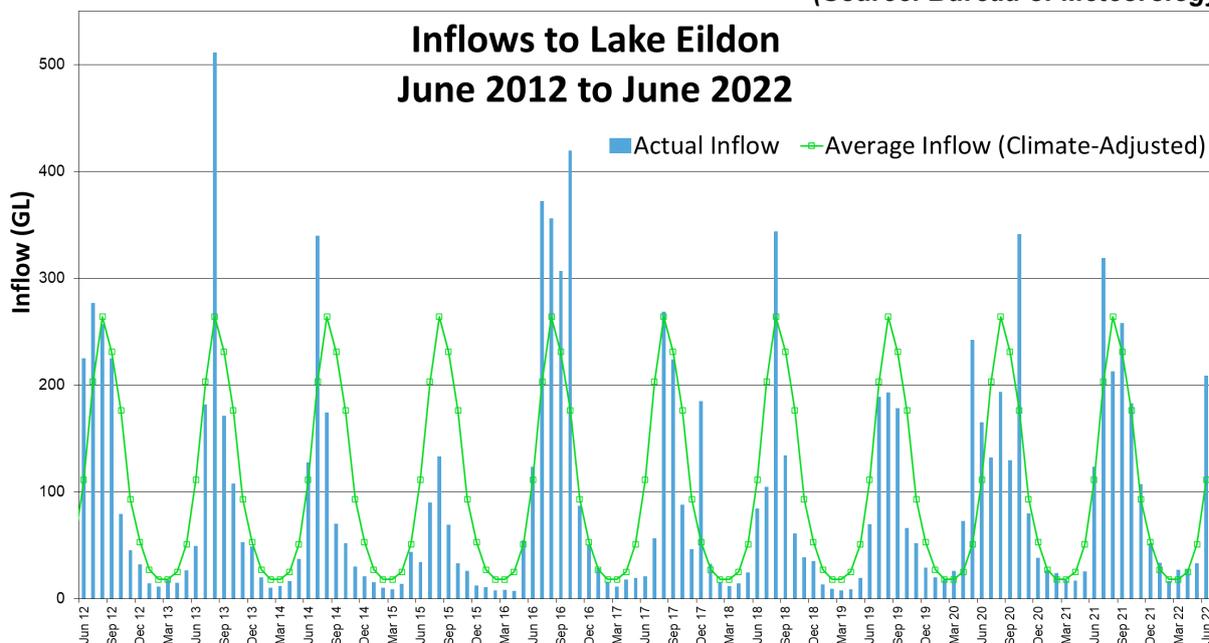
While these differences are not necessarily statistically significant, they show that there are cultivars producing yields and °Brix “as good” as the industry standard cultivar (H3402).

This demonstrates that they are consistently performing at commercially required standard or better over one or more years and under a range of growing locations and conditions.

Climate Outlook

The current outlook for the period from July to September is for wetter conditions, cooler maximum and warmer minimum temperatures for much of South-Eastern Australia. The likely development of a negative Indian Ocean Dipole, the weakening La Niña event, and warmer than average waters around northern Australia are all influencing this outlook. The 2021/22 La Niña event has ended, although some models predict the likelihood of another La Niña developing later in the year. The accuracy of model predictions increases during winter, so it will be interesting to see if this eventuates, as it could produce another cooler, wetter season.

(Source: Bureau of Meteorology)

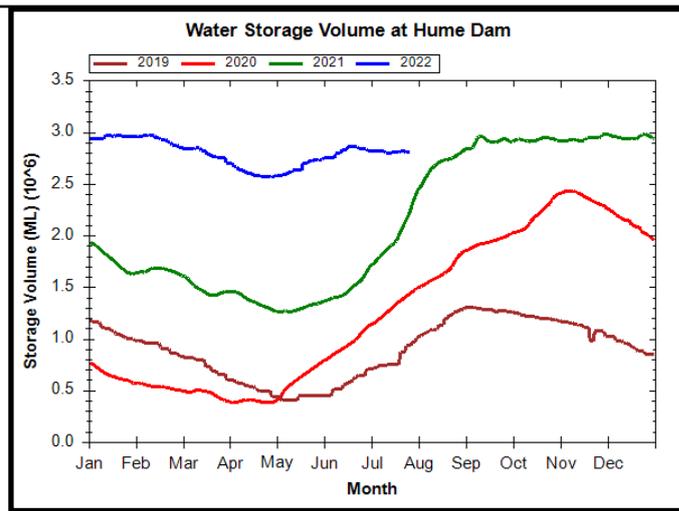
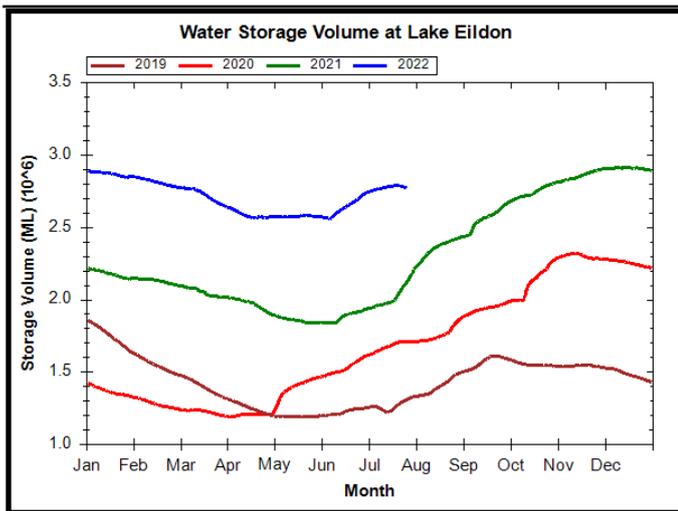


(Source: Goulburn-Murray Water)

Comments: You may notice that the 'Average Inflow' is now stated as (Climate Adjusted).

In essence GMW are now reporting a more recent reference period for our "average" inflows, (1975 to current), which takes better account of the changing climate.

The impact of this historic climate reference period is an overall reduction in average and peak streamflow, which is consistent with observations.



Paper-based ketchup bottle from Heinz



Kraft Heinz Co. has created a paper-based ketchup bottle in conjunction with Pulpex Ltd., a sustainable packing company that also created Johnnie Walker's paper whisky bottle, based in the United Kingdom. The

renewable and recyclable bottle is made from sustainably sourced wood pulp. Kraft Heinz next will test prototypes to assess performance before testing with consumers and eventually bringing the bottle to market.

WPTC crop update as of 3 June 2022

The latest figures collected from World Processing Tomato Council members set the early June world production estimate for 2022 at about 38.8 million metric tonnes, nearly one million tonnes lower than the initial March forecast, and with some uncertainty as to whether the current figure will be achieved.

(Source: Tomato News)

Latest AG Chemical Update Available from Hort Innovation

Keep up to date on any developments in the regulatory oversight of crop protection chemicals via the Ag Chemical Updates that are produced as part of the Hort Innovation-funded project Regulatory support and coordination (pesticides) (MT20007).

[You can download the latest update \(June 2022\) from the Hort Innovation website here.](#)

How tomatoes could help battle droughts in California

Ingomar is "set to become the first company to grow plant-based drinking water in America." Up to one billion litres of freshwater squeezed from tomatoes could be used to alleviate water shortages in drought-prone areas such as California.

Spearheaded as part of a partnership between Ingomar Packing Company and Botanical Water Technologies (BWT) - a sister company of the revolutionary Australian plant-based bottled water brand AquaBotanical - the scheme hopes to tackle the growing agricultural and urban needs for water in the state.

Set to be delivered to Merced, Fresno, Stanislaus, and Madera counties, some of the areas worst affected by droughts, the two firms may plan an expansion into other hard-hit areas in the US' most-populous state.

The water is produced as a bi-product of the concentration process when tomato fruit is "squeezed" to make juice. This water is normally discarded, sometimes impacting the local environment.

The product will be distributed to customers through a number of schemes, such as community water sources for schools and mobile homes, water tanks for private homes, used as an ingredient by mineral water companies, groundwater and municipal water replenishment and even used for agricultural or hygiene needs.

(Source: Tomato News)

Potato Spindle Tuber Viroid detected in Western Australia

The Western Australian Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) is working with horticulture growers to contain the spread of the serious disease Potato spindle tuber viroid (PSTVd), following confirmation of two recent detections.

PSTVd was confirmed in samples from tomato and capsicum crops from two properties just north of Perth.

Growers have been asked to support DPIRD's surveys by monitoring their crops and reporting both the absence of signs or any suspect symptoms to the department.

Women & Leadership Australia professional development scholarships

Women & Leadership Australia (WLA) is offering professional development scholarships for women across all areas of the farming and agriculture sector.

WLA believes that advancing gender equity, especially in leadership, is central to creating a more fair and inclusive society. Its leadership programs bring together a focus on applied learning with the latest in leadership theory and practice.

Scholarships of \$1,000-\$5,000 per person are available and applications close 9 September 2022.

For further information go to:

<https://www.wla.edu.au/farmingagriculture.html>

(Source: AusVeg)

Grochem Permit for Fall Army Worm

Grochem have a **permit to allow emergency use** of a registered AgVet chemical product for control of Fall Army Worm in various crops; including fruiting vegetables. For more information, please visit the [APTRC website](#) and contact your local agronomist.

(Source: Ben Coombe, Grochem)

UPCOMING EVENTS

General APTRC Committee Meeting: Wednesday 10th August

Hort Connections: Adelaide SA, July 5th-7th 2023

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Opinions expressed in "Tomato Topics" are not necessarily those of the APTRC unless otherwise stated.