

For fresh fruit and vegetable marketing and distribution in Asia



By Liam O'Callaghan

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## Forward thinking at Hort Connections



The future of the Australasian horticulture industry is set to be one of the hottest topics among the thousands of delegates attending this year's Hort Connections

The Melbourne Convention Centre will become the nexus of the Australasian horticulture industry when it hosts Hort Connections 2019 on 24-26 June.

The trade show and conference is a joint initiative between Ausveg and the Produce Marketing Association Australia-New Zealand (PMA A-NZ). It features more than 3,000 local and international delegates and hundreds of trade booths on the trade show floor.

Every corner of the horticulture industry will be represented at the event, including the vegetable, fruit, nut, cut floral and nursery sectors. This offers extensive networking and business opportunities for everyone across the horticulture supply chain.

Delegates have access to extensive resources such as conference sessions, tours and more, with the theme for this year's event, 'Growing our Food Future'.

"We're proud that Hort Connections has become such a huge event for the horticulture industry, thanks to support from growers and other delegates who are returning year after year to take advantage of the opportunities on offer," says Nathan McIntyre, national marketing manager of Ausveg.

"It has been designed to deliver as much value as possible for growers and everyone else in the horticulture supply chain, from presenting world-leading research to offering a huge range of business opportunities on the trade show floor."

### Trade show

A record number of exhibitors have signed up to this year's trade show, with the industry's leading agribusinesses and industry groups manning more than 300 stands.

It provides a rare opportunity for

delegates to gain access to all areas of the horticulture industry under one roof.

Delegates can network with growers, retailers, government departments and more while the latest, cutting edge products and technology from across Australia and around the world will be on show.

### Conference sessions and speakers

There will be no shortage of discussion points, with more than 60 leading local and international agricultural experts speaking.

Conference sessions will take place continually throughout the second and third days. Topics are wide ranging, and include on-farm and supply chain practices, consumer behaviour and consumption trends, the future of food production and more.

Prominent speakers, including former

reception marks the official start of the

The three-day event concludes with the

<http://www.fruitnet.com/americafruit/article/1474/parts-of-san-diego-quarantined-as-psyllid-count-mounts>

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Masterchef winner Adam Liaw, and Samantha Gash, athlete and inspirational speaker, will take the stage for the Plenary Sessions on 25 June.

Meanwhile, Brianna Casey, CEO of Foodbank Australia, will speak at the popular Perfection Fresh breakfast on 25 June.

The PMA A-NZ Fresh Perspectives: Diversity & Inclusion Workshop and the Women in Horticulture session are among the highlights on 26 June.

## **Events and tours**

The Hort Connections welcome

event on 24 June. Following the reception is the opening of the trade show.

For those who can't wait that long, a series of tours will be held earlier in the day.

The retail tour visits some of Melbourne's top retailers from 11am.

Alternatively, the horticulture field day runs from 6am. Past popularity means there are two field tours this year, one going east and one to the west. Both begin with a breakfast and a tour of the Melbourne Market in Epping. These tours must be booked in advance.

Hort Connections Gala Dinner at the Crown Palladium. Be sure to get there for the pre-dinner drinks at 7pm in the foyer before the dinner gets underway at 7.30pm.

The dinner will celebrate outstanding achievements over the past 12 months through the presentation of several awards, including the prestigious PMA-Produce Plus Marketer of the Year Award.