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Packed programme at Hort Connections

A preview of the events and sessions to look out for in Brisbane this year



Alice Zaslavsky will speak about how the fresh produce industry can boost consumption p.p1 {margin: 0.0px 0.0px 0.0px 0.0px; line-height: 23.0px; font: 7.0px Ronnia}

Hort Connections 2021 will reconnect industry leaders, recognise excellence and provide insights into the latest trends shaping the Australian fresh produce industry.

The trade show and conference event, a joint initiative between Ausveg and PMA Australia-New Zealand (PMA A-NZ), takes place at the Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre on 7-9 June.

This year's event will celebrate the International Year of Fruits and Vegetables, which recognises the important role fresh produce plays in human nutrition, health and wellbeing.

Nathan McIntyre, national marketing manager of Ausveg, is confident the event will reassert its status as the place to be for the Australian fruit and vegetable industry.

"It was a difficult decision to postpone

the event last year, but feedback we are hearing from industry is that people are keen to meet up in person to celebrate the International Year of Fruits and Vegetables and reconnect after a tumultuous 18 months that has resulted in significant hardship for many growers and their businesses and tested the industry's resolve," said McIntyre.

Conference sessions and speakers

Hort Connections 2021 brings together a comprehensive programme of speakers spread across two days and multiple tracks.

On day one (Tuesday 8 June), the trade show speaker sessions, held on the trade floor, deliver a diverse agenda for visitors.

These include the likes of Neil McSkimming of Agriculture Victoria, who will talk about modernising market access pathways for export growth; Andrew Steele of GS1 Australia, who will

delve into the future of product identification for fresh produce; and Marsha Aralar of Fair Farms, who is set to cover ethical employment practices.

In a preview to the Hort Connections National Awards for Excellence, the finalists for the PMA-Produce Plus Marketer of the Year Award (p8) and the PMA A-NZ Tech Innovation Award are showcased in the afternoon.

On day two (Tuesday 9 June) Hort Connections' speaker programme expands even further, with the morning divided up into two tracks.

The Vegetable Industry Seminar held in meeting rooms M1 and M2 combines a raft of expertise from across the industry in a series of panels. Topics include: 'classroom to career', 'advanced crop protection', 'building strong category brands' and 'can kids learning to love vegetables drive future demand?'

Running concurrently in meeting room

M4 is the Supply Chain and Consumers stream, which is set to provide insights to opportunities right along the supply chain. This stream is capped off with the PMA A-NZ State of Industry (SOI) panel.

Hort Connections' plenary sessions round out the programme with four can't-miss presentations.

Cookbook author and broadcaster Alice Zaslavsky will speak to 'what consumes the consumer', and how the industry can help boost consumption and connection.

Thomas King, founder and chief executive of think-tank Food Frontier, shares expertise on alternative proteins and their emergence.

Exploring the topics of mental fitness and burnout prevention is Peak Performance's Adele Spurgin, while Nielsen's Lew Stevens will delve into the produce consumer trends of 2021.

Events

Hort Connections is bookended with the Perfection Fresh Breakfast at 8am on 8 June and the Hort Connections Gala Dinner at 7pm on 9 June, with pre-dinner drinks at 6:30pm. The breakfast features keynote speaker and leadership coach Rob Redenbach. Drawing from experiences that include working with Nelson Mandela's bodyguard team in South Africa, Redenbach provides powerful insights into reducing risk in business and everyday life.

Held at the Brisbane Convention

and Exhibition Centre's Great Hall, the Gala Dinner will celebrate outstanding achievements from across the industry with the presentation of the Hort Connections National Awards for Excellence, including the prestigious Marketer of the Year Award (p8).

All information correct at the time of publishing. Programme subject to change.

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