

Final Report

Churchill Fellowships

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Public summary

Hort Innovation and the Churchill Trust have been working together since 2018 to develop tomorrow's leaders of the Australian horticulture industry.

Churchill Fellowships offer an opportunity for people from all walks of life, to travel overseas for four to eight weeks to explore a topic or issue they're passionate about.

The Hort Innovation sponsored Churchill Fellowships were available to applicants from a registered levy-paying Australian horticulture business in that industry, or with a project that benefited the horticulture industry in general.

Churchill Fellows are required to publish a report on the findings of their travel and how they plan to deliver their findings for the benefit of their particular community.

The final Hort Innovation-sponsored Fellowships were awarded in 2023, taking the total number of Fellows to five. Their biographies, project summaries and Fellowship reports are available at the links below:

- Belinda Hazel (TAS, 2018) – The Hort Innovation Australia Churchill Fellowship to investigate the use of horticultural QA standards to stay ahead of social license demands
- Stuart McGruddy (QLD, 2020) – The Hort Innovation Churchill Fellowship to build on the knowledge, experience and technology of used in the freezing of whole soft berry fruits
- Anita Long (TAS, 2020) – The Hort Innovation Churchill Fellowship to investigate development programs for young beekeepers that are scalable to an Australian context
- Kim Syrus (SA, 2023) – The Hort Innovation Australia Churchill Fellowship to research the propagation and growing of cutting-grown roses versus traditional budded types
- Melissa Smith (QLD, 2023) – The Hort Innovation Australia Churchill Fellowship to investigate approaches for reduction of on-farm food waste in horticulture

Keywords

Churchill; community benefit; Fellowship; shared knowledge; travel

Belinda Hazel: agriculture; agroecological; agroecology; farmer; grower; horticulturalist; #howandwhywefarm; producer; quality assurance; QA; reverse sensitivity; social license; sustainable sustainability; true-cost

Stuart McGruddy: berry; blackberry; boysenberry; freeze; individual quick freezing; IQF; raspberry; rubus berry; silvanberry

Anita Long: bee keeping; bee keeper programs; young bee keeper

Kim Syrus: budded rose; cutting-grown rose; own-root rose; rose; rose growing, rose propagation

Melissa Smith: farm food waste; food loss; food rescue organisations (FRO); food security; food waste; gleaning; horticulture; measurement and reporting; on-farm food waste; product specifications; retail collaboration; supply chain; value-added processing; whole crop purchasing

Introduction

The Winston Churchill Memorial Trust was established in 1965 after the death of Sir Winston Churchill, with the primary objective of perpetuating and honouring Sir Winston's memory by awarding Fellowships known as 'Churchill Fellowships'.

The Churchill Trust is to provide an opportunity for Australians to travel overseas to conduct research in their chosen field of study that is not readily available in Australia.

There are no qualifications required to apply for a Churchill Fellowship and there are no limits on proposed projects, provided there will be a benefit to Australia and your community by you sharing your new knowledge and skills. It is a requirement of a Churchill Fellowship, and a written report must be submitted for publication on return.

Almost 5,000 Churchill Fellowships have been awarded since the Trust began in 1965, across a diverse range of disciplines and fields of interest. Approximately 100 Fellows are awarded each year.

By providing Churchill Fellowships for horticulture sector-related projects, this project aims to help address the Australian horticulture sector's capacity challenge by increasing coordinated support for ongoing research that drives transformation and builds leadership skills.

This project was undertaken to provide a platform for the Australian horticulture sector to grow its pool of leaders through participation and international research on cross-sectoral issues that will benefit the Australian horticulture sector and ultimately, the wider community.

Each year, there was an opportunity for three Hort Innovation Churchill Fellowships, specifically for projects relating to the horticulture sector.

On average, Churchill Fellows spend about five years delivering the findings of their research for the benefit of their community. Some find that their Fellowship creates opportunities that enable them to still be working on areas of their Fellowship projects decades later.

In addition to the ongoing work that the Churchill Trust does to support all its Fellows, this sponsorship was also an opportunity for Hort Innovation to:

- identify gaps and opportunities within the horticulture industry;
- promote the Fellowship application round each year and encourage people working in these priority areas to apply;
- communicate and market the Churchill Fellowships in the context of their Leadership Fund activities, using their strong industry connections and intelligence.
- take a long-term approach to supporting their sponsored Fellows through strategic dissemination of report findings, general communications activities, panels or committees, conferences etc.

Methodology

The aim of this partnership project between the Churchill Trust and Hort Innovation was as a complimentary delivery of Churchill Fellowships for overseas research on horticulture-related matters and an industry-specific leadership and development program.

Three Fellowships were made available each year for projects relating to the horticulture sector. The Trust's key activities were related to administering the Fellowships, including the publishing and dissemination of each Fellow's report and seeking other opportunities to support the work of Fellows.

Under the agreement, Hort Innovation's role was to work actively with the Churchill Fellows to share and promote their findings. Hort Innovation would communicate and market Churchill Fellowships in the context of their Leadership Fund activities, utilising their strong industry connections and intelligence. Hort Innovation's role was also to drive the dissemination of the sponsored Churchill Fellows' reports and adoption of their recommendations within the Australian horticulture sector peak bodies, businesses and individual members.

The key activities were:

- At the commencement of the contract, Hort Innovation determined the general scope of Fellowship projects they were interested in supporting
- Each year, the Churchill Trust conducted promotional activity in the lead-up to, and during the application round. The Trust provided Hort Innovation with promotional material and invited them to promote the round within their networks.
- The Churchill Trust conducted the selection process in the usual way, including shortlisting and interviews in each state and territory.
- The Churchill Trust provided a list of successful horticulture-related applications to Hort Innovation for their consideration. Hort Innovation reserved the right to select the projects they wanted to support – up to three projects from each round.
- Hort Innovation selected a total of five Fellowship projects to support. A summary of each selection round is provided in Appendix 1. This appendix is confidential.
- The Churchill Trust shared contact details between Hort Innovation and sponsored Fellows, to enable Hort Innovation to work directly with Fellows to deliver the industry-related aspects of the contract.
- The Churchill Trust administered the Fellowships, completed Hort Innovation milestone reports as required, and shared Fellowship reports with Hort Innovation so they could promote the work of their sponsored Fellows within their networks.
- The Churchill Trust and Hort Innovation had meetings in September 2019 and August 2021 to discuss how more horticulture-related applications could be encouraged.
- The Churchill Trust invited Hort Innovation to attend Trust events held in Brisbane to support their local, sponsored Fellow, Stuart McGruddy.

Results and discussion

Hort Innovation Churchill Fellowships

The five Hort-Innovation-sponsored Fellowships have undertaken their Fellowship travel and submitted their reports. The Trust promoted the reports at time of publication, and we will continue to work with Fellows when opportunities arise to include them in Trust activities or to generally promote their work.

The final part of our program, once the report has been published, is the presentation of a Churchill Fellowship medallion. There is usually one event in each state and territory each year.

The most recent Fellows to have their reports published, Kim Syrus (SA, 2023) and Melissa Smith (QLD, 2023), are still to receive their medallions.

The next medallion ceremony in SA is planned for Friday 14 November, and Kim will be invited to receive his medallion at

this event, which involves a ceremony at Government House in Adelaide and a celebration dinner where Fellows have an opportunity to speak about their projects. A representative from Hort Innovation may wish to attend and we will ensure you receive an invitation.

A date for this year's medallion ceremony in QLD is yet to be arranged, and we will include you on the invitation list for this event as well.

The work of Churchill Fellows is ongoing and long-term

Churchill Fellowships cover a very broad range of projects. Once a report is published, there is no ongoing requirement for a Fellow to provide additional updates to the Trust. Given the breadth of topics, there is no practical way for the Trust to oversee delivery of tasks, report on the outcomes, or measure the impact of all our Fellows.

Research we conducted in 2022 found that more than 80% of Fellows achieve the aims of their Fellowship, most of them within five years. Others are still actively following the path their Fellowship has opened for many years into the future.

The research found that Churchill Fellows experience four main areas of growth and learning:

- increased knowledge: their real-world experience brings a stronger and broader knowledge base;
- collaboration and networking: the experience provides global connections and a two-way exchange of knowledge and ideas
- inspiration: they inspire others
- recognition and respect: people who complete a Churchill Fellowship have reported that others recognise their expertise and experience, which creates greater credibility.

As all five Fellows completed their topics at different times, are working in different fields, and have unique opportunities and barriers, they will be at different stages in delivering their recommendations.

We look for opportunities to promote and support the work of all our Fellows, including those sponsored by Hort Innovation, through our communication and promotional activities, Churchill Fellowship Association activities in each state and territory, post-Fellowship programs, and stakeholder networks.

- The Churchill Trust arranged and paid for two Fellows, Belinda Hazell and Anita Long, to travel from Tasmania to speak at the Hort Connections conference in Brisbane in 2022. Belinda and Anita joined the Hort Innovation booth for the afternoon to answer questions about their Churchill Fellowship experience.
- Stuart McGruddy spoke at the Trust's online information session in February 2025 to promote the upcoming application round. This session was specifically for people interested in agriculture, horticulture and land production projects. Stuart spoke about his Fellowship journey, including mentioning his Hort Innovation-sponsored Fellowship, and answered questions from potential applicants about his experience. The recording of this presentation is available on the [Trust's YouTube channel](#) (see the 00:18 minute mark).
- 20 May is World Bee Day. The Trust will invite Anita Long to take part in our social media activity to promote the day.
- Kim Syrus has advised that he's planning to host an event in spring 2025 to talk about his Churchill Fellowship. The event will be supported by the Churchill Trust and the Churchill Fellows Association in South Australia.

Working with the Churchill Trust

The aim of the Churchill Trust is to provide an opportunity for Australians to travel overseas to conduct research in their chosen field.

There are no academic qualifications to apply for a Churchill Fellowship – Australian citizens and permanent residents from all walks of life can apply. There is no limit to the topics of proposed projects, provided there is a clear benefit to Australia and a willingness to share findings with the Australian community.

The Churchill Trust team is small and we award approximately 100 Fellows each year. We welcome the opportunity to work with organisations and individuals wanting to support and inspire someone's Churchill Fellowship journey.

Sponsoring a Fellowship is currently valued at \$35,000 per recipient, per year. This is based on the average Fellowship cost in last years' selection round and reviewed annually.

The Trust does not charge an administration fee to manage sponsored Fellowships – all sponsorship funds go towards the Fellowship:

- international travel (4-8 weeks)
- accommodation
- living allowance
- insurance.

In addition to your sponsorship funds, the Trust may contribute extra funds for eligible Fellows such as a dependent's allowance or other financial support.

The Trust's expertise lies in running a Fellowship program that covers a broad range of sectors and topics. Our partners and sponsors are experts in their respective areas, and as such are better placed to consider industry opportunities for further engagement.

Opportunities for Hort Innovation

The work that goes into completing a Churchill Fellowship and delivering recommendations is long-term. Ongoing opportunities for Hort Innovation with their five sponsored Fellows include:

- Building a relationship with their sponsored Fellows to see how Hort Innovation can learn from their experience and support what the Fellows learned
- Promoting the work of Fellows – general promotional opportunities, panels, committees, conferences etc.

The benefit of these Churchill Fellowships for horticultural businesses or other industry stakeholders are:

- Belinda Hazell's Churchill Fellowship has identified examples in the Netherlands, United Kingdom, New Zealand of where industry has sown proactive leadership in where and how they farm. Belinda's report outlines how industry leaders use QA standards to influence community expectations, and where the right to farm is balanced with local land use and environmental plans.
- Stuart McGruddy's Churchill Fellowship has enabled him to investigate business partnerships, costs, technologies, and processes to meet the growing demand to turn soft berry waste into a profitable product and reduce on-farm food waste. Stuart's Churchill Fellowship can change the tide on food waste in fresh berry industries, by bringing the world's best processes, including automation, to Australia to increase home-soil processing of locally grown berries.
- Anita Long's Churchill Fellowship has Anita investigated the processes and criteria used to establish industry standards, and how youth beekeeping entities align with accreditation bodies. Anita's work aims to investigate development programs for young beekeepers that are scalable to an Australian context. Anita is working to benefit amplifying learning capacities, fostering community engagement, establishing industry standards, integrating beekeeping into the school curriculum, raising awareness, harnessing technology, creating growth and assessing overall effectiveness.
- The horticulture sector will benefit from Melissa Smith's Fellowship findings, by looking at ways to reduce on-farm food waste. Melissa studied diverse approaches overseas to identify adaptable solutions for the Australian context. This included exploring technological innovations, policy frameworks, measurement protocols, commercial processes and collaborative models that have demonstrated success this important field.
- Kim Syrus' Churchill Fellowship will benefit the nursery industry as the budding process for roses is time sensitive and there has been a steady decline in access to local and overseas professional budders. Growers are looking for alternative and reliable propagation options. Kim's Fellowship findings will help to secure the Australian rose industry generally, and benefit producers, retailers, and rose societies specifically.

Outputs

Table 1. Output summary

| Output | Description | Detail |
|--|---|---|
| Belinda Hazell (TAS, 2018) Hort Innovation Australia Churchill Fellowship. | Belinda conducted a Churchill Fellowship to investigate the use of horticultural QA standards to stay ahead of social license demands. She travelled to Ireland, the Netherlands, New Zealand and the United Kingdom. | Belinda's Churchill Fellowship report was published in September 2019 and is available on our website. It was shared with Hort Innovation at the time of publication for dissemination with relevant industry networks. |
| Stuart McGruddy (QLD, 2020) Hort Innovation Churchill Fellowship. | Stuart conducted a Churchill Fellowship to build on the knowledge, experience and technology used in the freezing of whole soft berry fruits. He travelled to Chile, Poland, Spain, USA | Stuart's Churchill Fellowship report was published in October 2012 and is available on our website. It was shared with Hort Innovation at the time of publication for dissemination with relevant industry networks. Stuart spoke at the online 2025 Churchill Fellowship information session for people interested in agriculture, horticulture and land production. (https://youtu.be/JJz0LgkCmLU?si=BDnfv14droY-MeEr see 18:00 minute mark) |
| Anita Long (TAS, 2020) Hort Innovation Churchill Fellowship | Anita's Churchill Fellowship was to investigate development programs for young beekeepers that are scalable to an Australian context. She travelled to Czech Republic, Poland, Slovenia, United Kingdom | Anita's Churchill Fellowship report was published in January 2024 and is available on our website. It was shared with Hort Innovation at the time of publication for dissemination with relevant industry networks. |
| Kim Syrus (SA, 2023) Hort Innovation | Kim's Churchill Fellowship was to research the propagation and growing of cutting-grown roses versus traditional budded types. He travelled to France, Germany, Spain, USA | Kim's Churchill Fellowship report was published in March 2025 and is available on our website. It was shared with Hort Innovation at the time of publication for dissemination with relevant industry networks. |
| Melissa Smith (QLD, 2023) Hort Innovation Churchill Fellowship | Melissa's Churchill Fellowship was to investigate approaches for reduction of on-farm food waste in horticulture. She | Melissa's Churchill Fellowship report was published in March 2025 and is available on our website. It was shared with Hort Innovation at the time of publication for dissemination with your industry networks. |

| | | |
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| | travelled to Italy, Netherlands, Spain, United Kingdom, USA | |
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Outcomes

Table 2. Outcome summary

| Outcome | Alignment to fund outcome, strategy and KPI | Description | Evidence |
|---|---|---|---|
| <p>Belinda Hazell (TAS, 2019)</p> <p>Individual benefit: Belinda’s Churchill Fellowship enabled her to investigate the use of horticultural QA standards for the benefit of a business she owns and operates.</p> <p>Industry benefit: this project aimed to identify examples in the Netherlands, United Kingdom, New Zealand of where industry has shown proactive leadership in where and how we farm.</p> <p>Community benefit: the successful combination of compliance standards and marketing tools to bridge the ‘expectation gap’ and stay ahead of consumer and community demands.</p> | <p>The Churchill Trust is unable to report on horticulture industry outcomes, but Hort Innovation may wish to provide input about their activities.</p> <p>As part of the arrangement between the Churchill Trust and Hort Innovation, Hort Innovation’s role was to drive the dissemination and adoption of recommendations from Churchill Fellows within the Australian horticulture sector peak bodies, businesses and individual members; and aspects of the project that related to horticulture industry fund activities.</p> <p>See methodology.</p> | <p>More information about the outcomes of Belinda’s Churchill Fellowship is provided in Appendix 2.</p> | <p>Belinda’s Churchill Fellowship report, see link above.</p> |
| <p>Stuart McGruddy (QLD, 2020)</p> <p>Individual benefit: Stuart’s QLD berry business, My Berries, was ready to scale up and be more competitive. Stuart’s Churchill Fellowship allowed him to investigate frozen berry industries in Chile, France, Serbia and the USA.</p> <p>Industry benefit: Stuart’s Fellowship enabled him to investigate business partnerships, costs,</p> | <p>See above.</p> | | <p>Stuart’s Fellowship report, see link above.</p> |

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| <p>technologies, and processes to meet the growing demand to turn soft berry waste into a profitable product and reduce on-farm food waste.</p> <p>Community benefit: Stuart's topic, which aims to turn second grade fruit into a profitable product and reduce food waste, is important to the community due to the rising costs of living and distribution of food.</p> | | | |
| <p>Anita Long (TAS, 2020)</p> <p>Individual benefit: Anita's Fellowship has helped her understand how youth beekeeping organisations expand their learning capacities. She explored methods for effective knowledge transfer and skill development amongst members through training programs, mentorship initiatives, and collaborative learning approaches.</p> <p>Industry benefit: Anita investigated the processes and criteria used to establish industry standards, and how youth beekeeping entities align with accreditation bodies.</p> <p>Community benefit: Anita explored ways of improving the learning experience for young beekeepers through modern educational resources: online platforms, interactive tools, and mobile applications.</p> | <p>See above.</p> | | <p>Anita's Fellowship report, see link above.</p> |
| <p>Melissa Smith (QLD, 2023)</p> <p>Individual benefit: Fellowship has given</p> | <p>See above.</p> | <p>More information about the outcomes of Melissa's Churchill Fellowship is</p> | <p>Melissa's Fellowship report, see link above.</p> |

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| <p>Melissa greater knowledge to perform her role with Food Waste Australia.</p> <p>Industry benefit: the horticulture sector will benefit from Melissa’s Fellowship findings, looking at ways to reduce on-farm food waste.</p> <p>Community benefit: Melissa’s topic, which aims to reduce food waste, is important to the community due to the rising costs of living and distribution of food.</p> | | <p>provided in Appendix 3.</p> | |
| <p>Kim Syrus (SA, 2023)</p> <p>Individual benefit: Kim’s Fellowship has helped him understand cutting-grown rose propagation methods and programs, growing techniques, and distribution channels.</p> <p>Industry benefit: The budding process is time sensitive, and there has been a steady decline in access to local and overseas professional budders. Growers are looking for alternative and reliable propagation options. Kim’s Fellowship findings will help to secure the Australian rose industry generally, and benefit producers, retailers, and rose societies specifically.</p> <p>Community benefit: flow-on benefit for general public who buy roses.</p> | <p>See above.</p> | | <p>Kim’s Fellowship report, see link above.</p> |

Monitoring and evaluation

Table 3. Key Evaluation Questions

| Key Evaluation Question | Project performance | Continuous improvement opportunities |
|-------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------------------|
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| The Churchill Trust does not have a Monitoring and Evaluation Plan in relation to this project. | | • |
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Recommendations

- The five Churchill Fellows who were sponsored by Hort Innovation have a broad range of topics and will likely be delivering the recommendations of their projects for many years to come. There is an opportunity for Hort Innovation to engage with these Fellows and develop a relationship with them, look for opportunities to share their findings, and further invest in their expertise for the benefit of the horticulture industry.
- The Trust will continue to update Hort Innovation on the key achievements of their five sponsored Fellows
- The Trust will invite Hort Innovation to collaborate on Trust promotional activity that relates to their five sponsored Fellows.
- The Trust will support activities arranged by Hort Innovation to promote and support the work of the five sponsored Fellows.

Refereed scientific publications

None to report

References

Not applicable

Intellectual property

No project IP or commercialisation to report

Acknowledgements

Not applicable

Appendix 1. Summary of application rounds
Confidential – provided separately

Appendix 2. Belinda Hazell (TAS, 2018)

Hort Innovation Churchill Fellowship outcomes

Belinda Hazell was awarded the Hort Innovation Churchill Fellowship in 2018. Her project was to investigate the use of horticultural QA standards to stay ahead of social license demands. She travelled to New Zealand, Ireland, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom.

In addition to her Fellowship report, Belinda has provided the following additional detail on the benefit her Fellowship has provided to her and her industry.

Why did you focus on QA standards, and how is that benefiting your industry?

I'm particularly interested in QA standards because they are a practical tool for farmers to demonstrate responsible, safe, and sustainable production to customers and the broader community. With over 30 years in horticulture, I understand how strong QA systems build market access, protect social licence, and give farmers the confidence to meet rising expectations around food safety, sustainability, and ethical practices.

How has your project strengthened capability or resilience in your specific sector?

My Fellowship has helped strengthen capability and resilience by bringing back practical ideas, global insights, and proven approaches that can be applied locally. Whether it's improving how we work, adapting to new challenges, or building stronger communities and industries, the Fellowship is a unique opportunity to explore what works and bring that learning home to make a real difference.

What difference has the Fellowship made to your leadership journey?

The Fellowship has given me the time and space to step back, think more strategically, and explore how global approaches can support Australian growers. It's expanded my thinking beyond compliance to leadership — helping me connect and also reinforce thought leadership about QA standards to broader issues like trust, sustainability, and social licence. It's reinforced my role in guiding others and given me new confidence to influence positive change across the industry.

How has it benefited your sector of the horticulture industry?

The Fellowship has helped show how QA standards can support the industry to actively build trust and authenticity with their customers and community. Report findings provide case studies on how featured growers are using their systems as business assets and share their *#howandwhywefarm* story with confidence and clarity. The insights from the Fellowship are already influencing how standards evolve and are being used to develop practical resources that support growers to meet rising expectations around sustainability, transparency, and ethical production.

What stakeholders have you engaged with, and how have outcomes been shared or implemented?

I engaged with a wide range of stakeholders across the horticulture sector — including growers, Hort Innovation, key Peak Industry Bodies, State and Federal government representatives, supply chain partners, Standard owners, retailers, and community groups. The findings have been shared through presentations, meetings, and resource development, ensuring all key stakeholders had the opportunity to reflect on the outcomes. This has helped shape ongoing discussions around QA standards, sustainability, and how the industry can continue to meet community and market expectations.

How do you see your work contributing to a more innovative, resilient, or globally competitive horticulture sector?

My work contributes to a more innovative and resilient horticulture sector by helping assurance systems evolve to reflect what matters most — not just to markets, but to communities and future generations. By connecting QA standards to real-world challenges like sustainability, ethical production, and social licence, we're building the foundations for global competitiveness and long-term industry trust. There's still work to do, and I welcome the opportunity to be part of conversations that shape the next phase of assurance and sustainability for Australian horticulture.

Appendix 3. Melissa Smith (QLD, 2023)

Hort Innovation Churchill Fellowship outcomes

Melissa Smith was awarded the Hort Innovation Churchill Fellowship in 2023. Her project was to investigate approaches for reduction of on-farm food waste in horticulture. She travelled to Italy, Netherlands, Spain, United Kingdom, USA

In addition to her Fellowship report, Melissa has provided the following additional detail on the benefit her Fellowship has provided to her and her industry.

What difference has the Fellowship made to your leadership journey?

The Fellowship provided extensive learning opportunities through meetings with inspiring people working to reduce food waste, allowing first-hand experience with successful initiatives across multiple countries including the Netherlands, England, Spain, Italy and the USA. Specific leadership expansion included presenting at the UN's Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) headquarters in Rome and participating in a panel on global food waste solutions at the Global Produce & Floral Show in Atlanta (over 3,000 attendees from 70 countries). I have now been invited to represent Australia in the International Fresh Produce Association's Sustainability Council.

How did your Churchill Fellowship benefit your sector of the horticulture industry?

The research identified several profit-boosting strategies, such as Ripe Revival's whole crop purchase approach, that increased sweet potato farmers' revenue by \$700 per acre, and Driscoll's flexible specifications that increased grower sales by 10-15%. The Fellowship explored sustainable solutions like Boxford Suffolk Farms' anaerobic digestion plant, which generates heat, electricity, and fertiliser while managing waste.

What stakeholders have you engaged with, and how have outcomes been shared or implemented?

To date, my "Growing Solutions" report has been shared by End Food Waste Australia via their website, newsletter and social channels including LinkedIn, Hort Innovation have also shared it on their channels.

I will be sharing learnings on the Food Waste matters podcast soon.

The Fellowship involved diverse stakeholders including farmers, processors, food rescue organizations, and retailers. The study included the following stakeholders:

Research and academic Institutions

- Wageningen University - Food & Biobased Research Centre
- World Resources Institute
- FAO HQ

Retailers and suppliers

- Ahold Delhaize HQ
- Marks & Spencer
- Driscoll's
- Worldwide Fruit
- Peake fruit
- Mansfield & Son Packhouse

Wholesale markets

- Centro Agro-Alimentarie
- Mercabarna

Farmers and producers

- Boxford Suffolk Farms
- Middle Pett Farm
- Van Rijsinger Green
- Howell Farming
- Espigolador partner tomato/lettuce farms

Non-profit organisations

- WRAP
- FareShare
- Espigoladors
- World Wildlife Fund
- Society of St. Andrew

Industry organisations

- International Fresh Produce Association
- Samen Tegen Voedselverspilling

Commercial solution providers

- No Waste Army
- Ripe Revival
- De Verspillingsfabriek

Financial institutions

- Rabobank Loss & Waste Hub
- Rabobank Headquarters

How do you see your work contributing to a more innovative, resilient, or globally competitive horticulture sector?

The work contributes to innovation through identifying successful international approaches like value-added processing initiatives, technology integration for precision agriculture, and collaborative models that could be adapted for Australian conditions. The findings align with Australia's commitment to halving food waste by 2030 and address the significant challenge of horticultural waste, which accounts for over 50% of all food waste in Australia.