



National Agricultural Traceability Grants Program – Regulatory Technology Research and Insights Grant Round: Horticulture Innovation Australia Limited grantee summary

Author: Hort Innovation is the grower-owned, not-for-profit research and development corporation for Australian horticulture.

Project outcomes

This project set out to understand and address the challenge of overlapping and duplicated compliance requirements in the horticultural sector. Growers often face multiple audits and paperwork for similar standards, which creates unnecessary burden and confusion.

To explore this issue, the project team mapped key compliance programs and surveyed growers across Australia. The survey confirmed that:

- overlapping requirements are a significant concern for growers
- there is strong interest in using technology to make compliance easier.

Findings from the survey guided a deeper analysis of 5 major programs to assess the presence and extent of duplication in reporting requirements.

The project uncovered important challenges in defining and comparing compliance requirements. Differences in what programs cover and aim to do (their scope and purpose), inconsistent language and formats, and the difficulty of telling the difference between real and perceived duplication all add to the complexity. These issues make it harder for growers to understand what is required and harder for stakeholders to align or simplify the rules.

Two key groups were set up to guide this project:

- 1) Horticulture Community of Practice (Hort-CoP)
- 2) Volunteer Technology Working Group (VTWG).

The Volunteer Technology Working Group recommended developing a common language to address inconsistent terminology across programs. By standardising wording, this would reduce double-handling and create a clear base for future digital Regulatory Technology (RegTech) solutions. It also supported the design of a test model 'data cube', which shows how common language compliance data could be reused and connected more easily. This sets the stage for creating future technology that helps growers deal with complex compliance systems in a simpler, more consistent way.

Based on these insights, the project delivered a practical framework to help RegTech providers design tools that make compliance easier. It also produced clear recommendations for aligning and improving compliance systems across the industry.

Delivered outcomes

- A national grower survey report capturing compliance challenges.
- A map of overlapping compliance programs.
- A detailed analysis of duplication across 5 key programs.
- A framework to guide development of RegTech solutions.
- Recommendations to improve stakeholder coordination and reduce compliance complexity.

Benefits

- Grower perspectives were captured and helped shape the project's recommendations for improving compliance.
- Industry and regulators have clearer insight into where duplication exists, where it doesn't, and why it's difficult to define.
- Technology providers have a foundation to develop practical RegTech solutions.
- The project lays the groundwork for a more streamlined and efficient compliance system in horticulture.

Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the continuous connection of First Nations Traditional Owners and Custodians to the lands, seas and waters of Australia. We recognise their care for and cultivation of Country. We pay respect to Elders past and present, and recognise their knowledge and contribution to the productivity, innovation and sustainability of Australia's agriculture, fisheries and forestry industries.

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