

# Melbourne Hort Market Immersion

Wednesday 29 May – Wednesday 5 June

# Melbourne Hort Market Immersion

Net Promoter Score: 81.82

Participant Rating ★ ★ ★ ★ (4.73)

# Melbourne Hort Market Immersion Agenda

- Welcome Dinner [Agriculture Victoria](#) - Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD)
- Visit to [Melbourne Market Authority](#) - Victoria's wholesale fruit, vegetable and cut flower trading centre
- Visit to [Tahbilk Estate](#) - the oldest family owned winery and vineyard in Victoria
- Visit to [Australia Fruit Solutions](#) - fresh fruit processing facility specialising in the production of fruit juices and purées
- Visit to [Plunkett Orchards](#) - supplies premium quality fresh apples, pears and stonefruits to retailers around the world
- Visit to [Tatura SmartFarm](#) - Australia's leading horticulture SmartFarm research facility
- Visit to [Gaia Project Australia](#) - start-up agtech company that is dedicated to creating sustainable food production solutions
- Visit to [CSIRO Food Innovation Centre](#) - is the most extensive food innovation provider to industry in Australia
- Visit to [Fresh Select](#) and [NutriV](#) - Fresh Select is one of the largest lettuce and brassica farmers in Australia. Nutri V takes 100% Australian grown vegetables and turns them into nutrient dense, fibre-rich and protein fuelled vegetable powders.



# Melbourne Hort Market Immersion

|                                          |      |       |
|------------------------------------------|------|-------|
| Net Promoter Score                       |      | 81.82 |
| Overall Experience                       | ★★★★ | 4.73  |
| Activities                               |      |       |
| Overall value of this activity           | ★★★★ | 4.55  |
| Welcome Dinner with Agriculture Victoria | ★★★★ | 4.18  |
| Visit to Melbourne Market Authority      | ★★★★ | 4.27  |
| Visit to Tahbilk Estate                  | ★★★★ | 4.45  |





# Melbourne Hort Market Immersion

Activities continued

|                                       |      |      |
|---------------------------------------|------|------|
| Visit to Australian Fruit Solutions   | ★★★★ | 4.27 |
| Visit to Plunkett Orchards            | ★★★★ | 4.82 |
| Visit to Tatura SmartFarm             | ★★★★ | 4.64 |
| Visit to Gaia Project Australia       | ★★★  | 3.36 |
| Visit to CSIRO Food Innovation Centre | ★★★  | 3.45 |
| Visit to Fresh Select and NutriV      | ★★★★ | 4.73 |



# Melbourne Hort Market Immersion

| Experience                    |       |      |
|-------------------------------|-------|------|
| Communication before the trip | ★★★★  | 4.91 |
| Communication during the trip | ★★★★  | 4.91 |
| Accommodation                 | ★★★★  | 4.91 |
| Catering                      | ★★★★  | 4.82 |
| Transport                     | ★★★★  | 4.73 |
| Callaghan support             | ★★★★★ | 5.00 |
| Smooth running                | ★★★★  | 4.91 |

11 participants responded (100%).



# Reviews

## Review of Melbourne Hort Market Immersion

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- An amazing immersion into the Victorian Horticulture scene over 3 days including growers, fresh produce sellers, researchers, tech companies, government agencies and food manufacturers.
  - Really great to get out into the market and see a wide variety of companies with very interesting and inspiring stories. Well organised and jam packed and awesome to combine with a trade show. The team did a great job of organizing and communicating through the event.
  - An awesome way to learn about the market, to network and meet new business partners and friends in the industry.
  - The Melbourne Hort Immersion was a chance to get a snapshot of the AU Hort sector over a condensed time period where the visits were all worked out for us. It was also great to connect to other kiwi businesses in adjacent spaces. The experience has been an important reference point for developing our strategy for the AU market
  - Exceptional. An unbeatable mix of visits, events and other NZ companies that cannot be replicated.
  - The Melbourne Market Immersion facilitated valuable connections with growers, research institutions, and industry partners within the Victorian and wider Australian horticultural industry - far greater than what could have been achieved in isolation.
  - The Melbourne Hort Market Immersion was an awesome opportunity, I had good insights into the Australian market which will help me with my export plans.
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# Reviews

## Review of Melbourne Hort Market Immersion

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- The Melbourne Hort Market Immersion provided a comprehensive look at the hort industry from multiple perspectives. The diverse range of destinations (from advanced greenhouses to the bustling Melbourne Market) provided unique insights into different aspects of the industry. Individual delegates from a wide range of NZ companies gave valuable perspectives from unique experiences and backgrounds. The immersion provided a well-rounded understanding of the hort landscape, combining theoretical knowledge with practical insights.
  - It was very well organised. Thanks for the trip.
  - Great way to meet other NZ businesses in the Agritech space and learn about a certain industry collectively. The Callaghan team do a good job of covering a wide range of companies within the eco-system of an industry. The bus time is arguably the most valuable time where you get to know others on the trip and ultimately build long term connections. Highly recommend especially for those who are new to an industry or market.
  - The Melbourne Hort Market Immersion was an exceptional experience, providing valuable insights into the horticulture industry. Over two weeks, participants visited several key locations, gaining an in-depth overview of various horticulture businesses' workflows and operations. The tour offered a wealth of knowledge on understanding the sector, compliance, and traceability in horticulture, which directly benefits our software company, AgriSmart. These insights allow us to better tailor our solutions to meet the specific needs of the industry (specifically in Australia). The event was well-organised and provided ample opportunities for networking and learning. Highly recommended for anyone looking to stay at the forefront of the horticulture industry.
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# Suggested Improvements

## How could we improve the Melbourne Hort Market Immersion?

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- Always a challenge to get a mix of visits right as you can't please everyone. Perhaps we could have more on-farm time e.g. at Tahbilk and Fresh Select and less food production time e.g. CSIRO and Gaia.
  - Can't think of anything.
  - Not really. A couple of the visits were less useful for me but I can see that for the audience it is important to see a range of industry participants.
  - I cannot suggest any improvements.
  - A high level overview of the Australian horticultural ecosystem (e.g. Hort Innovation, government groups, Agritech etc.) and where everything and everyone fits in would have been a useful addition to put all of the connections and visits into context.
  - It would have been very helpful if the bus had Wi-Fi available as mobile connection was unreliable at times. It might also have been helpful to visit a few more commercial farm sights (rather than research facilities) who may have been valuable clients for the NZ delegates/companies to directly market to and work with. That said, overall, the trip was smooth and well-run!
  - Visit more orchards and get boots on the ground in the orchard itself.
  - This was my first Hort Market Immersion with Callaghan, and I must say it exceeded all my expectations. I couldn't find a single fault with the experience, and I am truly disappointed that it will be the last one.
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# Melbourne Hort Market Immersion

As a result of your experience, what new actions will you take?

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- Continue to develop my relationships in Australia.
  - Follow up all of the potential customers for further discussion, video calls, visits and comms. Need to support local distributor with prioritising and best way to follow up most promising leads.
  - Follow up on leads made, reinforces the strategy we have developed.
  - I am trying to connect with a couple of growers we visited to explore opportunities. We are in the middle of working out our game plan for AU and the trip helped with a part of that.
  - Our actions in Australia will definitely change. It's clear there are some fundamental differences between NZ and Australia, and these will affect how we may operate there. Closer relationships with some of the other NZ companies.
  - Follow up with new connections working in mutual areas of interest or crop types.
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# Melbourne Hort Market Immersion

## As a result of your experience, what new actions will you take?

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- Following on from the Market Immersion trip, our company is now able to utilise new contacts in the NZ and Australian hort sector to gain insights into different parts of the horticulture sector that we are not currently operating in. We will be able to approach new clients to establish distribution partnerships, expanding access to the hort commercial sector. We can connect with commercial clients to show how our products can optimize their plant growth and yield.
  - Chase after potential leads.
  - Arrange meetings with key contacts I met on the trip. Explore opportunities which are available via partnerships. Establish sales channels in the Goulburn Valley. Continue to increase our brand presence in AU Horticulture.
  - The Hort Market Immersion has underscored the vital importance of networking within the horticulture sector. It highlighted the value of face-to-face interactions with potential industry partners and clients, reinforcing their significance in building strong, collaborative relationships.
  - I have made new connections that will help me with the next stage of my business.
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# Melbourne Hort Market Immersion

## As a result of your experience, what new decisions have you made about your business?

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- Always good to see what works and how we can improve the value of these international immersions for customers.
  - A lot of interested people, we are heading in the right direction so keep doing what we are doing.
  - That Australia is definitely the target market.
  - That we need to find the right niches to compete in.
  - Talk more with the leads we have made and understand how best to approach Australia. Copy and paste won't work so best to understand how to do it properly.
  - From my Market Immersion experience, we have much more clarity about how research facilities (such as Tatura SmartFarm) gain funding for experimental research. This means we are clear about deciding when and how to approach such facilities in the future. We now understand more about the challenges faced by orchard growers, wineries/vineyards, fruit packers/processors, food processors and farmers, which assists when we are looking toward decisions in product design and our product roadmap.
  - Helped validate product design decisions. Establishing a new partner in the Goulburn Valley is needed medium to long term.
  - As a result of my experience at the Hort Market Immersion, I have decided to place a greater emphasis on networking and face-to-face interactions with potential industry partners and clients. This experience has highlighted the importance of building strong, personal relationships within the Australian horticulture sector. Consequently, I plan to allocate more resources towards attending industry events and facilitating direct meetings to foster these connections, which will ultimately enhance our business growth and collaboration opportunities.
  - Australia is ready for EatKinda and has heaps of cauliflower.
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Reception

**VICTORIA**  
Government  
Energy  
Environment  
Local Government  
Transport  
Water

**AGRICULTURE VICTORIA**

Tatura Smartfarm

**Victorian Fisheries Authority**

**Murray-Darling Basin Authority**

**Dairy Australia**

**VicForests**

**REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT VICTORIA**

# Melbourne Hort Market Immersion

**As a result of your experience, will you pursue business development opportunities in Australia, tell us why?**

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- Definitely opportunity for more Kiwi and Aussie partnerships which was good to see is already evolving.
  - Yes there is a need and interest in autonomous vineyard and orchard equipment.
  - Yes, learnt about channel partnering and distribution, what has worked for others and what hasn't.
  - Yes we are already in AU. The experience help me with my understanding of an important sector for us.
  - Yes, but potentially in a different manner to previously thought.
  - I am interested to explore the possibility of working more closely with the Australian Hort Industry. As two countries we face many similar challenges and opportunities so there are undoubtedly opportunities for collaboration.
  - Yes, we will be pursuing business development opportunities in Australia - growers in the Australian horticultural sector thrive when their crops thrive by receiving optimal growth and yields. This is regardless of what their crop type is. Our products do not discriminate between crops, and the parameters we focus on apply to all plants. We will be promoting further into the Australian hort sector to reach and help as many businesses and growers as we can.
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# Melbourne Hort Market Immersion

**As a result of your experience, will you pursue business development opportunities in Australia, tell us why?**

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- We are already pursuing.
  - Yes - it provided further validation there are opportunities in Hort market we can attack once we improve our production output.
  - Absolutely, I will be pursuing further business development opportunities in Australia. The primary reason I participated in the Hort Market Immersion was to deepen my understanding of the local horticulture sector, as we have been operating here since April 2024 and are based in Melbourne. This immersion provided an excellent opportunity to gain a comprehensive view of how things operate here, making it perfect timing for our recent expansion. The insights and connections I made during the tour were invaluable and have equipped me with the knowledge and relationships needed to further expand AgriSmart's presence in the Australian market. As the head of the AgriSmart office in New Zealand, this experience will significantly benefit our ongoing growth and integration in Australia.
  - Yes
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# Melbourne Hort Market Immersion

Did you make any useful connections during the market immersion (either with NZ companies or hosts)?

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- Absolutely, one of the key benefits.
- Yea a lot of interest and new connections.
- 100% - too many to list, without this kind of experience these connections could be made but it would take months if not years to make as many as was made in just a few days.
- Yes. A couple of the visits I have followed up with. A number of useful connections with NZ companies I am confident will lead to opportunities (Precision Ag and English family office etc).
- Yes - both. I made great connections with other NZ companies, we gathered a few leads, and now have connections with some of the tour spots as well. Some of the NZ connections are potentially the best as well!
- A few useful connections where there was a cross-over in the areas of focus or crop types. It was also useful to further understand Callaghan Innovation from the team and how it all fits into the agritech ecosystem.
- During my Melbourne Hort Market Immersion experience, there were many useful connections made, both with fellow NZ delegates, as well as with our hosts. These new NZ delegate and host connections allow us insights into sectors of the hort industry which we do not directly operate in, giving us alternate perspectives which may not have been clear to us before. We can now directly reach out to these connections in the future should we need to speak with subject matter experts from these sectors.
- Yes, we did.

**100% of respondents stated they made useful connections on the Melbourne Hort Market Immersion**



# LET'S CONNECT EVENT

Sunday 2 June 2024

# Let's Connect Networking Event

| NPS Score                         |      | 63.64 |
|-----------------------------------|------|-------|
| Overall Experience                | ★★★★ | 4.59  |
| Activities                        |      |       |
| Overall value of this activity    | ★★★★ | 4.41  |
| Opportunity to Network            | ★★★★ | 4.50  |
| Representation of sector at event | ★★★★ | 4.14  |
| Atmosphere                        | ★★★★ | 4.64  |
| Venue                             | ★★★★ | 4.55  |
| Catering                          | ★★★★ | 4.50  |

NPS Score for the Melbourne Hort Let's Connect Networking Event 63.64

91% of respondents stated they made useful connections at the Melbourne Hort Let's Connect Networking Event.



# Let's Connect - Reviews

## Review of Let's Connect Networking Event

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- Great event to meet some interesting innovations from NZ before the week starts.
  - Thank you for your hospitality Sophie and team. I enjoyed meeting some Kiwi founders. We should do this more often!
  - Sophie does a remarkable job for the Agritech sector by organising the networking event. This allows the different companies an opportunity to get to know each other and explore opportunities to collaborate.
  - Great event not to be missed.
  - Another great event put on by the Callaghan team. Managed to connect with lots industry stakeholders.
  - Really good opportunity to chat with a range of groups from industry bodies, government, investors and companies. Very relaxed environment and well worth attending.
  - A very good platform provided by Callaghan Innovation to introduce NZ start-ups and scale-ups to the Australian agri sector. The event was well represented by RDCs, accelerators, and industry bodies providing a good representation of the agriculture ecosystem in Australia. This event definitely forms the basis for further conversation at the conference.
  - A great opportunity for Kiwis at Hort Connections to catch up with each other and with local Australian partners and stakeholders.
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# Let's Connect - Reviews

## Review of Let's Connect Networking Event

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- Really great event. Great mix of people.
  - If you are attending a conference like Hort Connections then the Let's Connect Networking Event is a great way to meet fellow attendees from New Zealand before the event. This is especially useful if this is your first time at a conference and you don't know many of the attendees. Through this event you will have some contacts at the conference and they may be able to put you into contact with potential leads for your business during the conference. It is good to have some collegiality with fellow NZ businesses.
  - It was a great opportunity to connect to with a cross section of companies.
  - Let's Connect is a great opportunity to network. The event is always friendly and inviting with the team excellent hosts and connectors.
  - The Let's Connect Networking Event was excellent. The comfortable setting made it easy to engage with industry professionals. Casual conversations and straightforward face-to-face interactions facilitated the formation of promising, long-term business relationships. I found it to be a valuable networking opportunity.
  - I think it went relatively well. I just wish there were more people to connect with.
  - Great audience, carefully curated, very applicable. comfortable and a great experience.
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# Let's Connect - Reviews

## Review of Let's Connect Networking Event

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- Attending the Melbourne Hort Let's Connect Networking Event was an excellent experience - Thank you Sophie for organising this. The event provided an excellent platform for New Zealand delegates to meet and engage with fellow horticulture sector professionals from both New Zealand and Australia. It was a fantastic opportunity to discuss ideas with like-minded individuals. The connections made during this event will undoubtedly contribute to the growth and success of our horticulture sector.
  - The Let's Connect events are a great way to meet & connect with the wider industry, meet enthusiastic people, and often find a business/ idea you were not aware of.
  - Good opportunity to network with others in the industry. The event I attended in Perth had far better attendance, so I got a lot more value out of that event. It was a shame the numbers were low.
  - Let's Connect enabled us to meet several businesses in related fields that we have since followed up with to explore possibilities.
  - A great opportunity to connect with like-minded hort sector individuals from across the industry - the smaller group setting allowed for time and space to create meaningful connections, as opposed to large events like Hort Connections.
  - Great event, good chance to meet people from Australia.
  - Great event, I loved the board with all the names of those attending, made meaningful networking incredibly easy, and the hosts were great at encouraging connection and making introductions.
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# Let's Connect - Suggested Improvements

## Suggestions on how could we improve the Let's Connect Networking Event?

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- Venue had good sound so we could hear everyone talking but was too cold for this time of year and difficult to get to for locals. Would recommend something in the CBD or Richmond next time close to public transport. Food was good too!
  - No suggestions as the event was brilliant.
  - No improvements necessary.
  - More representation from horticulture growers, although I know it's hard to get a good representation and we have met many in the trip. Unfortunate that some couldn't come.
  - Venue was a little large for 30-40 people (better suited for 60-80) but still a great event.
  - Send out an attendee list with name, contact details, business name and a short statement of their sector and what they are looking for out of the conference.
  - This event could have been more beneficial if there were more Australian companies / groups represented.
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# Let's Connect - Suggested Improvements

## Suggestions on how could we improve the Let's Connect Networking Event?

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- Would have been good to have more local attendees.
  - Possibly by encouraging attendees to utilise the available space and break off into smaller group conversations. I found most attendees grouped in one small area making conversations a bit more difficult.
  - No, done really well.
  - No.
  - Another great event.
  - More people = better value. Simple as that.
  - My understanding of the event was not that great prior to the event. The AU contingent was very light at the meeting. The connections we made were kiwi companies. Not sure how to get more local companies there.
  - More attendees?
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NEW ZEALAND AGRITECH  
FOUNDED BY PLACE

CHRISTOPHER E.  
Chris Stevenson

CHRISTOPHER E.  
Chris Stevenson

Bluelab

CHRISTOPHER E.  
Chris Stevenson

kind

GPSit

CHRISTOPHER E.  
Chris Stevenson

# HORT CONNECTIONS

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Tuesday 4 - Wednesday 5 June 2024





# Hort Connections Conference

|                                   |      |      |
|-----------------------------------|------|------|
| Overall Experience                | ★★★★ | 4.18 |
| Activities                        |      |      |
| Relevance of the activity         | ★★★★ | 4.36 |
| Overall value of this activity    | ★★★★ | 4.18 |
| Support from Callaghan Innovation | ★★★★ | 4.73 |



