

AuSPICA

Newsletter August/ September Edition 2019

Topics

- [Letter from the Editor](#)
- [25th Birthday Celebrations and AGM](#)
- [New science, a potential application to the Potato and Tomato Industries](#)
- [University of Melbourne students](#)
- [Staff Profile - Michelle Wilson](#)
- [Selfcare - sun smart](#)
- [New AuSPICA knowledge hub](#)



- [UNECE Pest app](#)
- [Growers Q & A](#)
- [Recipe](#)
- [Meet the team](#)

Letter from the Editor



The first official AuSPICA newsletter is now under our belt, we are ready to set sail on the second edition. I would personally like to thank everyone who contributed to the first Newsletter and the countless hours put in by staff to get the newsletter up and running, it is very much appreciated.

We would love everyone to have an opportunity to contribute, if you are wondering how, we encourage you to email me with growers questions.

This is a great way to get some answers for those important questions. In addition if you want to see an article published or more information on a topic please ask. We have such an amazing team of staff at AuSPICA, over the current and future Newsletters you will see articles written and questions answered by all those amazing people. In this edition we have articles, profiles and questions all written by staff members for everyone to enjoy.

If we have just stimulated your interest and you are keen to get involved but unsure how please contact me via email:

Crystal.wilkinson@auspica.org.au

We are very excited to be working in partnership with you.

Until next edition, may the weather be kind and ground green.

Crystal Wilkinson

AGM 25th Birthday Celebrations

AuSPICA 25th Birthday Celebrations 2019 (and AGM)



Annual General Meeting and Celebration

25 years ago AuSPICA became an industry run organisation and we would like you to join us and others in the Potato Industry for dinner and drinks to celebrate achievements. All are welcome.

The AGM is open to AuSPICA Seed Growers and Affiliated Members with the presentation of the annual report and AuSPICA's performance over the year.

AGM 4:30pm, Dinner from 6pm Friday 6th September

Buffet meal \$60 RSVP auspica@auspica.org.au

The Mercure Ballarat, 613 Main Road, Golden Point, Ballarat, Victoria

AuSPICA

Feel free to click attending on our [facebook event](#).

New science, a potential application to the Potato and Tomato Industries

The Australian Processing Tomato Research Council (APTRC) and AuSPICA are in collaboration on the development of a novel method for insect trapping

and surveillance. The two industry-based groups have received a funding grant from Agriculture Victoria under the Horticulture Innovation Fund. The funds are being used to investigate the use of new technology to monitor insects including aphids and tomato potato psyllid (TPP). The investigation includes the construction and evaluation of passive suction insect traps known as Macquarie Island insect traps. The Meeniyah Men's shed have been engaged to construct 40 Macquarie Island insect traps.



The Macquarie Island insect traps will be placed in crops in the coming season and used to physically trap insects in the field. The sample collected from the insect traps will be used to evaluate cutting edge technology that involves using genetic barcoding to identify the species of insects captured. The surveillance of insect pests will be valuable for potential biosecurity incursions, as it will establish sound data to support known area freedom regions for insect pests. The insect identification also allows growers in both industries to fully embrace integrated pest management principles to ensure effective and sustainable use of pesticides.

Potato seed growers have communicated about the need for pest insect monitoring. Insect pests spreading diseases, such as Potato Virus Y (PVY) is a concern across the potato industry. The monitoring of insect movements will be a useful tool to predict insects flights and prescribe appropriate management options.

Final completion of the insect traps,
from left to right, Nigel Crump
(General Manager at AuSPICA),



Mitchell Gorman (Gippsland Certification officer and agronomist), John (Meeniyana Men's shed engineer) and Roy Beaumont (Meeniyana's Local Potato seed grower).

[AuSPICA hosts University of Melbourne Masters of Biotechnology students](#)



As part of their post-graduate studies in Biotechnology, three students are doing their Industry Project with AuSPICA. The project team is Kirill Orlov, Yunqing Zhou and Elizabeth Valerie.

The seven month industry project focuses on two aspects: (1) the use of different modern biotechnological techniques to detect diseases that affect potato crops that are applicable *in vitro* and (2) different DNA barcoding techniques to identify insects, especially those that detrimentally affect potato plants by carrying virus or other pathogens. This technology will be able to determine the presence or absence of PVY in an aphid population. Additionally identify if insects carry the zebra chip disease that is caused by the bacteria *Candidatus Liberibacter solanacearum* (CLso), carried by TPP. The students will present to the AuSPICA board and write a literature review. The first

outcome will be an exploration of the strengths and weaknesses of current diagnostic tests for quarantine and non-quarantine potato pathogens in tissue culture. The second outcome is to determine the most appropriate techniques and methods for determining CLso and PVY in insect populations through DNA barcoding. This will help with on farm surveillance for zebra chip disease and PVY. This project is important for supporting area freedom to maintain trade and for the efficient control of insects using integrated pest management. This project is facilitated by Matthew Digby (University of Melbourne, Master of Biotechnology Course Coordinator) and Fiona Simpson (University of Melbourne, Careers and Industry Consultant).

[Michelle Wilson - Staff Profile](#)



My name is Michelle Wilson, I was born and raised in Mt Gambier. My 4 boys are now grown up and have given me 4 beautiful grandbabies. When I'm not spending time with my grandchildren, I am spending time nurturing my fur babies. Growing up I always had a love for animals, which continued to grow as I become an adult. Currently I have 5 dogs, 19 geese , 12 ducks, 20 chickens, 1 turkey, 1 guinea fowl, Betty my cockatiel and Wobbly the rooster.

I am currently a Certification Officer for AuSPICA in Mt Gambier, SA and Portland, VIC regions. I have filled this role for the last 3 years, I strive to work with the growers to produce high Quality crops and uphold the integrity of AuSPICA. I love my role within AuSPICA and feel privileged to work with a great team of staff and growers.

I bring with me over 30 years of experience in the potato industry. Prior to AuSPICA I was employed at Safries for 8 years. I have also had experience in planting, rouging, harvesting, weigh bridge operation and sheds maintenance. I bring a vast knowledge and history of the potato industry but I still like to seek every opportunity to learn more and increase my skills. In the last year I have completed the Predicta Pt course for soil DNA testing, and the Mental Health

Selfcare - Sun smart

As we all get caught up in the busy seasons of growing potatoes, we often forget about our own selfcare. During the season we spend countless hours in the sun and the effects of not properly preparing our bodies for the exposure can be detrimental. Here are some key points to remember;

- Apply 2 hours before sun exposure and every 2 hours thereafter
- Put on protective clothing such as hats and long sleeve shirts
- Apply sunscreen, even when it isn't sunny as UV is still present
- Use good quality sunscreen and lip balms 50+
- Do regular skin checks, these can be done by your regular GP

If you have any concerns, it is important to consult with a medical professional. For more information, see the [Cancer Council](#) and [Sun Smart](#) websites.

New AuSPICA Knowledge Hub

We are proud to announce that the AuSPICA Knowledge Hub is officially launched. The aim of this site is to provide a single site with the latest potato related information and technology.

Access to the website will be for Affiliated Members and Certified Seed Grower members who pay an additional annual fee (details on our website).

The Knowledge Hub includes access to the specific AuSPICA created educational tools and materials, including videos and fact sheets on a range of topics. These topics include

- Seed cutting and handling
- Disease and pest facts
- Physiological age
- Seed selection
- Blight management
- Best Practices

Furthermore, if there is a topic that you are especially interested in or would like to learn more about, feel free to send us an email and we'll ask our extensive group of potato experts.

In addition to the Knowledge Hub, there will be other activities including access to visiting potato experts from around the world, where you'll be able to ask questions in person.

<https://www.auspica.org.au/membership-options/>

[UNECE Potato Pest, Disease and Disorder Online App](#)



To access the app, click here: <https://spg.softwareobjectives.com.au/#!/search>

AuSPICA has worked with a software developer (Software Objectives) to produce the UNECE Pest, Disease and Disorder Guide as an online publication. This can be accessed on your phone, tablet or laptop and is available for free. AuSPICA will be working with the UNECE to ensure this online app is available as an international resource. Please send any feedback on additions, improvement etc.

[Growers Q&A](#)

Q: What should I use to disinfect tools and equipment to ensure disease such as blackleg isn't spread on my farm?

A: Quarternary ammonium disinfectant is most suitable. As with any chemical it's important to follow manufacturer instructions, as there can be requirements for effective treatment such as the removal of organic matter and minimum time to keep surfaces wet.

For further information on blackleg: <https://www.auspica.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Blackleg-on-Potatoes-in-Australia.pdf>

Dirt Diggers to Divine Diners

We are searching high and low to find some amazing potato recipes to share every newsletter, if you have a great recipe to share please email me on crystal.wilkinson@auspica.org.au



Nellie's crispy spiced spuds

Boil potatoes in pot with two teaspoons of bicarbonate of soda. Once nearly cooked, drain, and pop back in saucepan.

Add salt, pepper, rosemary, garlic, cumin, paprika and a few teaspoons of oil.

Put lid back on saucepan and SHAKE shake SHAKE till edges are battered.

Bake in a moderate oven for around 20mins till crispy

Meet the Team

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Certification Officer

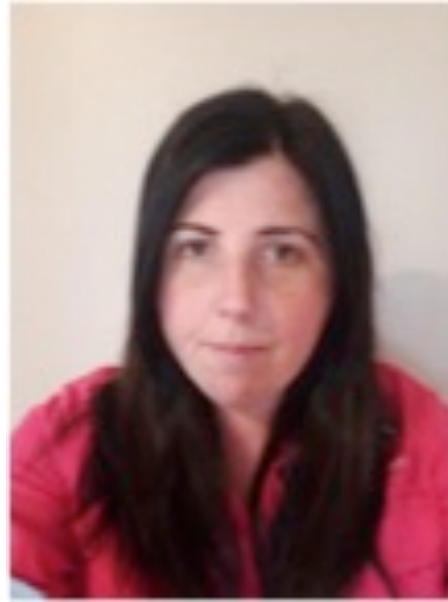
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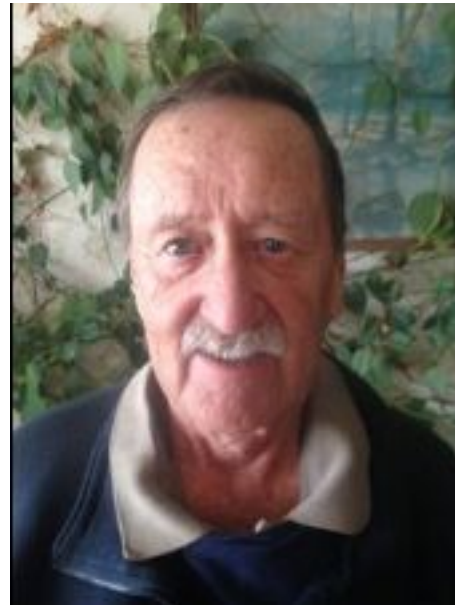
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