

**Hort
Innovation**

Berries Practical 2026

**Keeping Growers Equipped: How
Hort Innovation is helping berries
navigate crop protection**

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September 2026



WE HAVE HEARD....

Berry crop protection is changing — and the toolbox is getting tighter

1. Berry growers are facing increasing pressure from pests, disease, regulation and market expectations.
2. Some long-used chemistry options are being reviewed, restricted or removed, including products used for fruit fly and other key pests.
3. New pest challenges, such as chilli thrips, are increasing reliance on a small number of newer products.
4. At the same time, residue limits, withholding periods and food safety perceptions are becoming more important for maintaining market access and consumer confidence.



WHY THIS IS INTENSIFYING

Regulation, economics and innovation are moving at different speeds

- **Regulatory complexity:** Reviews, label changes and cost recovery are raising the evidence burden and uncertainty.
- **Market economics:** Small crop markets make full registration uncommercial, driving reliance on minor use permits.
- **Technology gap:** Precision application, IPDM and biologicals are advancing faster than regulation and adoption.
- **International exposure:** Exporters must meet domestic labels plus importing-country residue and access rules.





WHAT WE ARE DOING TODAY

Supporting practical options for today - and building the next generation of tools

1. Hort Innovation is working with industry to help maintain access to crop protection options through Minor Use Permits, data generation and regulatory support.
2. We are supporting solutions that help growers manage risk, including:
 1. stronger evidence for permit renewals and label uses
 2. resistance management and multiple modes of action
 3. biologicals, biopesticides and alternative control tools
 4. better coordination between growers, industry, regulators and registrants
3. The goal is to keep berry growers equipped with safe, effective and market-ready solutions.

There are 63 Minor use permits (MUP) for our berry industries

17



Blueberry only

18



Rubus only

9



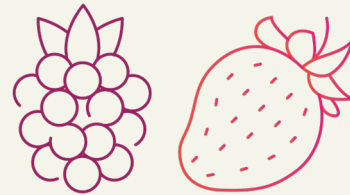
Strawberry only

13



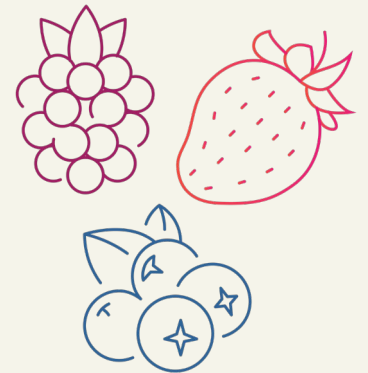
Blueberry plus Rubus

1



Rubus plus Strawberry

5



All Berries

Renewals and new permits

Renewed in the past 6 months

- PER91601 Acetamiprid + pyriproxyfen
Rubus / Various pests
- PER96693 Vertento
Berries / Chilli thrips
- PER91447 Zinc phosphide
Strawberry production / Mice.
- PER93024 Infinito SC Fungicide
Cane berries including Rubus / Downy mildew

Renewal submitted in the past 6 months

- PER95049 Chlorantraniliprole
Cane berries / Lepidopteran pests including cut worm and FAW.
- PER90178 Versys Insecticide
Cane berries / Aphids & Greenhouse Whitefly
- PER89214 Flonicamid Insecticide
/ Raspberries & Blackberries / several insects
- PER82601 Dragon Fungicide / Blueberry / Blueberry rust

New permit issued in August 2026

- PER97095 Sivanto Prime 200 SL Insecticide
Rubus & strawberries / Cottonseed bugs, green peach aphid & Rutherglen bug.

Permits due for submission to renew over the next 6 months (end Jan 2027)

1



Blueberry only

2



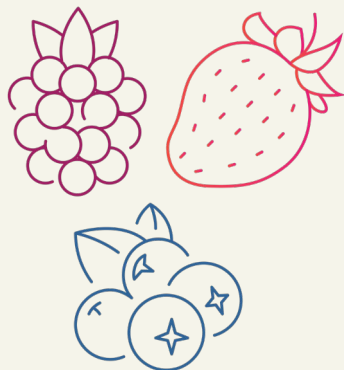
Rubus only

1



Strawberry only

0



All Berries

4

Total

Permits due for submission to renew over the next 12 months (end Jul 2027)

2



Blueberry only

10



Rubus only

2



Strawberry only

1



Blueberry plus Rubus

15

Total

How we prioritise

Two ways a request gets prioritised

1. **SARPs** – the Strategic Agrichemical Review Process (51 SARPs, on 5-year cycles)
2. **Urgent gaps** – raised by industries outside of SARP cycles



**Every review,
published**

Each SARP report sets
the priorities for its
industry

These assessments highlight regulatory threats to approved agrichemicals and current efforts to address pest management gaps.

Each SARP is renewed every 4 to 5 years and takes about 6-8 months to complete.

All 51 SARPs are available on the Hort Innovation website.



**Scan to browse all
51 SARPs**

On the Hort Innovation website

MT24009 Improving management of chilli thrips in blueberry & Rubus

Grower & levy payer snapshot

Objective: deliver practical tools for earlier detection, biological control and IPM-ready management of chilli thrips.

THE CHALLENGE

Tiny pest, large crop risk

Chilli thrips are hard to see, spread quickly and damage leaves, flowers and fruit — reducing berry quality and marketability.



Visual evidence: pest close-up + crop damage symptoms

PROJECT APPROACH

- Track when and where chilli thrips occur in WA berry crops
- Understand lifecycle and host use under local conditions
- Test natural enemies, attractants and field-ready options

YEAR 1 PROGRESS AND EMERGING FINDINGS

Monitoring established

Four commercial berry production sites monitored; trap + tapping protocol standardised.

Biology quantified

Lifecycle culture and developmental studies are generating WA-specific biological data.

Natural enemies screened

Preliminary predator assays show candidate predators can attack chilli thrips; efficacy differs.

Attractant work underway

Chemical ecology methods established; host-choice and VOC work moving toward validation.

EXPECTED BENEFITS

Earlier detection

Better monitoring to identify population changes before damage escalates.

More practical IPM options

Grower-tested tools that combine monitoring, natural enemies and targeted interventions.

NEXT 12 MONTHS

- Complete seasonal monitoring
- Functional response tests for predators
- VOC identification + behavioural testing

Industry value: practical monitoring + biological control + attractants + grower field trials → stronger IPM for berry crops

Improving Management of Leafrollers in Rubus and Blueberry

Started 12 Sep 2025 • 3-Year Project



Increased pressure from leafroller pests (Mango Flower Webworm, Orange Fruit Borer) in Rubus and blueberry crops is impairing vegetative growth and yield potential — driving the need for efficient monitoring tools and combined biological / behavioural IPM strategies.



Larval instars 1–5

Reference series used to track development stage in the field

AIM	PROGRESS TO DATE	INDUSTRY OUTCOME
 Biology & Host Range Understand host range, seasonality, and biology of key leafroller species.	Field sampling & lab assays underway. ✓ 1 industry article ✓ 2 oral presentations	<i>Improved knowledge of biology, seasonality & risk matrix.</i>
 Lures & Pheromones Research pheromone blends / lures and assess efficacy for monitoring.	Primary lab analysis & field testing conducted — traps deployed on-farm. ✓ Lab analysis complete ✓ Field testing underway	<i>Access to improved, pheromone-informed monitoring tools.</i>
 Biological Control Explore potential biological control agents (egg & larval parasitoids).	Field surveys underway for egg & larval parasitoids. ✓ 1 larval endoparasitoid identified	<i>Sustainable, integrated pest management strategies.</i>

Robotic UV-C System for sustainable Powdery Mildew Control (AS23010)

Challenge: Powdery mildew can cause up to 30% yield loss in strawberry crops each year.

Delivery Partner: Queensland DPI and international technology providers

Timeframe: 4 years

The key objectives of this project are to:

- **Validate UV-C effectiveness** for powdery mildew control across Australian climates and strawberry and table grape varieties.
- **Determine optimal UV dosage** by comparing Australian and Northern Hemisphere conditions and studying powdery mildew tolerance mechanisms.
- **Test two UV-C delivery systems:** a tractor-pulled unit and an autonomous robotic version, tailored to crop-specific operational needs.





Meeting the future needs of berry growers: *A proposed* National Fungicide Resistance Monitoring, IPM and Extension Program

01

Protect the chemistry growers still have

Resistance is eroding the available fungicides and new chemistry is slow and costly to develop. Early detection keeps current products working for longer.

02

National coverage, all three berry crops

Scales the WA Botrytis kickstart into strawberry, rubus and blueberry across more pathogens and resistance genes, nationwide.

03

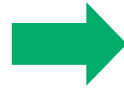
Tools and guidance growers can use in-field

Baseline data, field and lab diagnostics, and best practice stewardship and spray programs integrated with IPM, backed by a grower extension program.

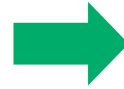
*Proposed

See a problem – try to piece together a solution (often a permit)

Regulatory approval



Product supply



Use phase



70%+

of the value of Australian horticultural produce depends on crop protection products

- Without these tools, it would be nearly impossible to grow most fruit and vegetables commercially
- The sector faces increasing complexity in chemical access and regulation – growers are seeing key products restricted and are concerned about future access to the tools their businesses rely on

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Thank you