



AMGA[®]

Australian Mushroom Growers' Assoc.

ANNUAL REPORT

FY 2025 - 26

About the AMGA

The Australian Mushroom Growers Association (AMGA) is a national peak industry body dedicated to driving value for our members, Australia's mushroom growers.

We provide a range of services to our members and the broader industry to foster growth and development, and our members comprise of Mushroom farmers, associated businesses and industry people.



The AMGA works with all parts of the supply chain, from production through to the consumer. By working together, we seek to continually improve our growers' ability to provide a healthy, profitable and safe product for all consumers. As part of this continual improvement, we work with Hort Innovation to ensure the industry levy funded Research and Development and Marketing programs for the Australian Mushroom industry are well directed and responsive to industry needs.



Our Board

The Australian Mushroom Growers Association is governed by a Board of Directors responsible for setting the strategic direction of the organisation. The Board comprises elected grower and industry members and AMGA members, who can stand for election to the Board at the AMGA annual general meeting. The following directors form the elected Board of Directors of the Australian Mushroom Growers Association for FY 2025/26.



Kevin Tolson
Chairman
Regal Mushrooms



Jaylon Rogers
Deputy Chair
Pure Mushrooms



David Tolson
Treasurer
Elf Mushrooms



Kylie O'Reilly
Director
Richmond Mushrooms



Kyle Davies
Director
Marland Mushrooms



Nick Femia
Director
SA Mushrooms



Blair Gibbs
Director
Costa Group



Danny Ung
Director
Greenhill Mushrooms

AMGA Chair Report



KEVIN TOLSON

AMGA Chairman 2025-26

The 2025-26 year has marked a defining period for the Australian mushroom industry and for the Australian Mushroom Growers' Association, bringing significant change, important decisions and a renewed focus on the future needs of growers. The industry continues to face a challenging environment. There are fewer growers, businesses are becoming more concentrated and operating costs continue to climb. Consumer demand also remains under pressure. These challenges are being felt across the industry, particularly by small and medium-sized growers.

Against this background, the AMGA Board has spent considerable time considering not only the immediate challenges facing growers, but what AMGA needs to remain relevant, practical and valuable to the industry into the future.

FOOD SAFETY, AMSAFE AND PROTECTING OUR INDUSTRY

The Erin Patterson case reinforced the importance of protecting confidence in commercially grown Australian mushrooms. AMGA's focus remains on AMSAFE, food safety and industry risk management, supported by the new five-year Watch and Act program. AMGA continues to support practical RD&E focused on real issues affecting growers. The proposed \$0.50/kg R&D levy would retain access to eligible Australian Government matching funding through Hort Innovation, helping extend the value of industry investment.

MARKETING, DEMAND AND INDUSTRY ENGAGEMENT

AMGA continued to support key market intelligence, education and consumer initiatives, while the Fresh Logic Data Insights program along with Quantum has strengthened access to market information.





As levy arrangements change, reliable data and market intelligence will remain important in helping growers understand demand and make informed decisions.

THE AGARICUS LEVY - TURNING YEARS OF DISCUSSION INTO ACTION

The future of the Agaricus Levy has been a significant focus for the AMGA Board, reflecting broader industry concerns about whether the current structure continues to deliver the best value for growers. Over time, the Board has explored different marketing and funding models and listened closely to industry feedback.

Following the research done by Elf farm Supplies (Rob Tolson), further consultation was then undertaken, including an independent survey of levy payers and a broader review conducted by ACIL Allen. This work provided the Board with a clearer picture of industry sentiment, including majority support for reducing the statutory Marketing and Promotion levy to zero.

After many years of discussion and calls for change, it has been encouraging to see a clearer direction emerge.

In response to the survey, review and industry feedback, the Board has now passed a proposal to:

- reduce the statutory Marketing and Promotion levy to \$0.00;
- reduce the statutory R&D levy to \$0.50 per kilogram of mushroom spawn; and
- retain the existing exemption cap.

It is important to be clear that these are proposed changes and the required formal process is still underway. The change has not yet taken effect. As Chairman, I have written directly to Hort Innovation, growers and levy collection agents outlining the proposal and the next steps.





AMGA has also engaged ACIL Allen to assist with the communications and transition process, helping ensure that growers and industry stakeholders are kept informed and that the proposed changes are progressed in an orderly and transparent way and as quickly as possible.

For many years, AMGA and growers have been pushing for change. It is pleasing to now see this work moving from discussion into action. We are moving quickly and have already made significant progress.

Reducing the statutory marketing levy to zero does not mean that demand or marketing is no longer important. It means the existing statutory model is proposed to change. The industry will need to determine what collective marketing or demand activity is worthwhile in the future, how it should be funded and how value to growers can be demonstrated.

The continuation of the R&D levy is equally important. It maintains an industry-wide mechanism for investing in practical research while retaining access to eligible government matching funds through Hort Innovation.

THE FUTURE OF THE AMGA

The proposed levy changes have also created an important opportunity to reconsider the future purpose and structure of AMGA. At the 11 August 2026 workshop with ACIL Allen, the Board considered how AMGA should operate in a changing industry. The focus is all about ensuring AMGA concentrates on the areas where it can provide the greatest value to growers. These include AMSAFE, food safety and quality assurance, biosecurity and industry risk, practical RD&E, pest and disease management, market intelligence, advocacy and grower communication. The Board is also reviewing the organisational structure needed to support these priorities, including staffing, outsourced services, funding arrangements and governance. The aim is to ensure AMGA remains relevant, sustainable and well positioned to support the industry into the future.





FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP AND INVESTMENT

AMGA holds significant reserves and a managed investment portfolio, providing an important financial base as the Association considers its future structure. The Board remains focused on responsible investment and careful use of reserves, ensuring funds are directed toward strategic priorities and the long-term needs of the industry.

BOARD AND LEADERSHIP CHANGES

The year has also brought significant changes in the leadership of the Association. During 2026, Georgia Beattie, Steve Willemse and Brian Backhouse stepped down from the Board. I thank each of them for their contribution, commitment and service to AMGA and the Australian mushroom industry.

We subsequently welcomed Nick Femia and Blair Gibbs to the Board, and I thank them for stepping forward during an important period of transition.

There has also been a change in executive leadership, with CEO Leah Dennis resigning from AMGA. Her departure has provided the Board with an opportunity to review the leadership and staffing structure required for AMGA's next phase.

Effective 24 August 2026, Kura Antonello has been appointed Interim Relationship & General Manager. In this role, she will support the AMGA and assist with the coordination and management of key relationship and operational matters.

LOOKING FORWARD

There is still considerable work ahead, but this year has seen real change. We have moved the levy discussion forward after years of debate. We have commenced the formal process toward a proposed zero statutory marketing levy and a reduced R&D levy. We have retained our focus on food safety, AMSAFE and industry risk. We have continued to deliver practical R&D and market intelligence, and we have begun the important work of defining the future purpose and structure of AMGA.





The objective is to create a more focused, sustainable and grower-driven AMGA. Our role should be clear: to support growers in the areas where working together as an industry delivers greater value than acting alone.

As we now move into the next chapter, a new Board will take responsibility for guiding AMGA forward, and this also marks the end of my term as Chairman. It has been a pleasure and a privilege to serve as your Chairman over the past two years. During that time, we have worked through some significant and, at times, difficult issues. I am pleased of what has been achieved and of the direction that has now been established.

I wish the incoming Board every success. I hope they continue to build on the work that has been undertaken and carry forward the progress we have made on levy reform, food safety, practical R&D and the future direction of AMGA for the benefit of the industry.

While my term as Chairman is coming to an end, my commitment to the mushroom industry is not. I will continue to serve, support and contribute to the industry wherever I can.

I would like to thank my fellow Directors, AMGA staff and contractors, our research and industry partners, Hort Innovation and, most importantly, our members and growers for their support and contribution throughout my term.

I leave the Chairmanship confident that the work undertaken over the past two years has laid a strong foundation for the next chapter of AMGA, and I look forward to seeing the new Board carry that work forward for the benefit of Australian mushroom growers and the wider industry.

Regards,



Kevin Tolson

AMGA Outgoing Chair 2025-26



Interim Relationship & General Manager Report



KURA ANTONELLO

AMGA Interim Relationship & General Manager

The 2025-26 financial year has been another significant year for the Australian mushroom industry, shaped by changing consumer behaviour, increasing cost pressures and the ongoing need to build demand for Australian mushrooms.

Having served as AMGA's Marketing & Communications Manager throughout the reporting period, before stepping into the role of Interim Relationship & General Manager in August 2026, I have had the opportunity to see firsthand the breadth of work undertaken by our small team and the commitment of those across our industry.

Throughout the year, AMGA continued to deliver across marketing, research and development, industry advocacy, education and member engagement. A particular focus has been strengthening consumer demand and finding new ways to keep Australian mushrooms relevant, accessible and front of mind for Australian households.

Our marketing program continued to evolve, with significant investment in future proofing the mushroom industry. With growth across Club Mushroom, strong-performing consumer content and new partnerships designed to extend the reach of Australian mushrooms. We also continued our investment in education and industry capability, while working closely with Hort Innovation and our research partners to ensure levy-funded activities respond to the priorities of growers.

Central to all of this work are our members.





As I step into the Interim Relationship & General Manager role, strengthening that connection will remain a priority.

I want the AMGA to listen closely to our growers, understand the pressures and opportunities facing their businesses, and ensure their perspectives are reflected in our advocacy, investments and activities.

I would like to acknowledge our Board, AMGA team, members, partners and researchers for their contribution throughout 2025–26.

There is much to be proud of from the past year, but there is also much, much more to do. Our focus for the year ahead must be clear and disciplined: strengthening the future of the Association, deepening our relationships with members, growing demand for Australian mushrooms, and directing our time and resources towards the areas where we can deliver genuine, measurable value for growers.

We cannot be everything to everyone. We must be ambitious about what we want to achieve, rigorous about where we invest, and prepared to prioritise the work that genuinely moves the needle for our industry.

I look forward to working closely with our members, Board and broader industry to build a stronger, more connected and sustainable AMGA – together.

Regards,



Kura Antonello

AMGA Interim Relationship & General Manager



AMGA R&D Manager Report



ROSALIE DANIEL

AMGA Research Development and Extension Manager

As AMGA Research Development and Extension Manager and Coordinator (RDEM / RDEC), my role is to ensure that mushroom RD&E levy investments align with industry needs and that research outcomes translate into practical benefits for growers. I joined the AMGA in May 2026 and in my capacity as RDEM, I manage projects the AMGA leads. This report covers the full period since the last AGM.

The AMGA currently leads six projects funded through the Hort Innovation Mushroom Fund using the mushroom R&D levy and contributions from the Australian Government. These projects focus on food safety, risk management, market demand, consumer education, and innovative technologies to strengthen the mushroom industry's competitiveness and sustainability.

Key achievements are highlighted below and a summary of the AMGA-led levy funded projects is included at the end of this report.

- Mushroom Research, Development and Extension Coordinator: The Mushroom Pest and Disease Management Roadmap is being developed following industry consultation to guide future SIAP investment. Dr Michael Wolfin's Australian workshops and webinars provided practical pest-management training to growers, including the use of predatory mites, which several farms are now trialling. Work is also progressing towards a Minor Use Permit for potassium salts of fatty acids as a fly-control option. The RDEC continues to support SIAP, levy-funded projects and industry knowledge sharing through MushroomLink.



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- Alternate Mushroom Casing Substrates: Laboratory assessment of alternative casing materials is complete, with selected blends progressing to a commercial block trial at Premier Mushrooms while the MLMRU remains unavailable.
 - Mushrooms in Schools: More than 900 growing kits have been distributed nationally. Curriculum-aligned resources are available to teachers, while August 2026 Virtual Classrooms reached 149+ classrooms and more than 3,000 students, building positive associations with mushrooms from a young age.
 - Training, Capability & Knowledge Exchange: Six growers and compost producers completed an international Mushroom Masterclass and European industry tour, achieving 9.6/10 satisfaction. Consultation for the 2026-2029 program will commence shortly.
 - Food Safety & Risk Management: The previous program resolved 41 confidential food-safety matters with zero adverse outcomes. Support continues through the new Watch and Act program.
 - Industry Conference: Planning continues under the theme “Growing Innovation, Cultivating Connection.”

Please reach out to me at any time if you have any questions or suggestions for RD&E project priorities or activities, as the purpose of my role is to ensure that mushroom industry needs are being addressed.

Regards,



Rosalie Daniel

AMGA RE&D Manager



AMGA Marketing Report



KURA ANTONELLO

AMGA Interim Relationship & General Manager (Previously Marketing & Communications Manager)

The AMGA funded 2025/26 marketing strategy focused on building consumer demand and confidence in Australian mushrooms through creator-led content, seasonal campaigns, education and community engagement. The \$200,000 program was designed to reinforce mushrooms as a tasty, versatile and relevant everyday food, while extending consumption occasions and supporting Australian growers. An additional \$100,000 was allocated to marketing to creep the edges and help drive consumption into Winter. Total Marketing budget for the year was \$300,000.

Some campaign highlights:

MUSHROOM GRAVY REDEMPTION

Fresh mushrooms reclaimed a familiar Australian food occasion through a high-profile creator partnership.

- 5M+ combined followers across Nat's channels.
- Launched across YouTube, Instagram and TikTok.
- Swiss Brown hero recipe reinforced taste, versatility and fresh-over-packet positioning.

MUSHROOMS IN SCHOOLS

Hands-on education converted mushroom growing into tasting, learning and family conversation.

- 555 mushroom kits delivered.
- 16,600+ students reached.
- 3,000 educational emails supporting teachers.
- 2026 relaunch: Mini Mushroom Growers, funded by Hort Innovation (MU23006).





MUSHROOMS ON THE BBQ - CHEAT MEATS

Summer activity targeted the category's seasonal sales decline by making mushrooms a BBQ essential.

- \$15,000 investment.
- 4 new BBQ mushroom recipes + 4 social reels.
- Live Mushroom BBQ Masterclass from Perth.
- 3M+ reach.

MUSHROOM MONTH - #NOTALLMUSHROOMS

Humour and a direct Australian-grown call-to-action reset the Mushroom Month conversation.

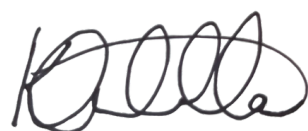
- Instagram: 268,000 views | 61.9% non-followers | 3.57% engagement.
- Facebook: 241,621 views | 98% non-followers.
- TikTok: 4,398 views | 9.3 sec average watch time.
- YouTube: 2,316 views.

WINTER CAMPAIGN - CREEPING THE EDGES

Multi-channel winter campaign drove reach, retail visibility and purchase inspiration among light and medium mushroom buyers.

- 12M+ Australians reached across Instagram and TikTok
- 25 creators
- 170,000+ Club Mushroom subscribers
- National A Better Choice retail activation
- Adelaide Central Market + South Melbourne Market activations
- Shop-in-Shop displays and point-of-sale activity
- Paid digital and seasonal recipe support

Kind regards,



Kura Antonello

AMGA Interim Relationship & General Manager



AMGA Treasurers Report



DAVID TOLSON

AMGA Treasurer & Director

The AMGA has completed another active year supporting the Australian mushroom industry through its research, development, marketing, governance and broader association activities. For FY2025–26, the Association recorded a net deficit after income tax of \$353,819, compared with a surplus of \$46,718 in FY2024–25.

Income for the year was \$1,083,490, compared with \$1,825,906 in the previous year. The main contributors remained spawn contributions, Hort Innovation project management income and investment income.

The principal movements were:

- **Project management income** decreased from approximately \$850,000 to \$543,000.
- **Sponsorship and registration income** decreased because AMGA did not hold a conference in FY2025–26, having held one in FY2024–25. Sponsorship income fell from approximately \$96,000 to nil, while registration income fell from approximately \$79,000 to \$10,000.
- **Spawn contributions** remained relatively consistent at approximately \$333,000.
- **Investment portfolio:** At 30 June 2026, AMGA's portfolio with Evans and Partners was valued at approximately \$3.58 million, down from \$3.81 million a year earlier. The change reflects approximately \$178,000 in investment sales and a \$57,000 fall in the value of investments still held. The portfolio also generated approximately \$169,000 in investment income during the year.

Expenses for the year were approximately \$1.44 million, \$342,000 lower than FY2024–25.





The main movements within that total were:

- **Project expenditure** decreased from approximately \$867,000 to \$411,000.
- **Marketing expenditure** increased from approximately \$167,000 to \$276,000 as AMGA continued its industry marketing activities.

Although overall expenditure decreased, the reduction in income was greater, resulting in the reported deficit. The Board continues to monitor the Association's income, expenditure and cash flow as it plans future activities.

AMGA's investment portfolio with Evans and Partners was valued at approximately \$3.58 million at 30 June 2026, compared with \$3.81 million a year earlier. It generated approximately \$169,000 in investment income. Overall returns were lower than in FY2024–25, when the portfolio benefited from substantial investment gains. Investment sales and market movements also affected its year-end value.

AMGA continued to manage Hort Innovation research and development projects, delivering industry outcomes and earning project management income. Clearer separation of project and Association finances has improved the Board's oversight of both. We will pursue new projects where they meet industry needs and AMGA's capacity.

At 30 June 2026, AMGA held total assets of approximately \$3.77 million and liabilities of approximately \$108,000, leaving net assets of approximately \$3.67 million.

The AMGA retains a substantial financial base to support its work for members and the wider mushroom industry.





The Board remains focused on managing those resources carefully and maintaining a sustainable financial position – much work has been done in the last couple of months to ensure this occurs.

If members have any questions regarding the financial report, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Regards,



David Tolson

AMGA Treasurer & Director





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Australian Mushroom Growers' Assoc.