



2026 Growing Leaders - Graduates Biographies

Graduates

April Wyatt



Administrations Manager - Systems and Procedures
Wickham Farms Killarney
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I'm a fourth-generation horticultural farmer. My family proudly grows and supplies fresh potatoes across Queensland. We also operate a value-add processing facility servicing the food-service and food manufacturing industries, a beef cattle operation, and a refrigerated freight company. Agriculture has always been my passion. At Wickham Farms, I serve as Administration Manager, overseeing systems, processes, and day-to-day operational procedures. I'm participating in the 2026 Growing Leaders program to further develop my skills, expand my networks, challenge myself, and share industry knowledge. I am committed to strengthening the vegetable industry through practical solutions, improved efficiencies, innovative thinking, and helping secure a strong future for farming families.

Bisrat Kidane



Product Technologist/Quality Control Officer
Fresh Select
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I'm quality control officer with recent focus in product technology role with 3 years' experience in fresh produce industry and background in meat manufacturing. Skilled in conducting thorough inspections, identifying defects and ensuring product meets supplier specification. I have a degree in Food Science and Diploma of Health and Science. I'm excited and looking forward to gaining knowledge and creating connections within the industry. I would like to come up with solution to educate consumers, so they can have better understanding on how crops grow and seasonal change.

Brendan O'Kelly



Field Operations – Machine Operator
Bulmer Farms
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275 Orrs Road, Wy Yung, VIC, 3875

Hi my name is Brendan O'Kelly I have been working for Bulmers farms for eight years . I have been involved in the vegetable industry for 20 odd years running an organic vegetable farm aswell as owning my own farm.

I am participating in the 2026 growing leaders program to increase my knowledge on different techniques of leadership and how to use them effectively.

I would like to become more of a leader in the vegetable/onion industry

Carlos Ramirez  	Regional Account Lead Bayer Crop Science E: carlos.ramirez2@bayer.com 46 Merryn Grove, Wantirna South, VIC, 3152 I am an Agricultural Engineer with long experience in the world of farming. From banana growing from south America to the US and EU markets to vegetable production in ANZ across multiple different regional areas. I've been linked to the seed industry working together with growers to benefit their farming operations with better varieties across multiple crop segments. Working closely with Processing companies to understand their requirements and bring possible improvement opportunities. Finally over the last couple of years I've been interacting closely with supermarkets to understand innovation and identify possible alternatives in benefit of growers and final consumers.
Cuong Nguyen  	Head of Operations Comfresh Group E: cuong@comfresh.com.au 3 Heinrich Street, Mansfield Park, SA, 5012 My name is Cuong Nguyen, I am currently in the role of Head of Operations at Comfresh Group. From participating in this program, I hope to further develop myself personally and professionally. In regards for the industry, to bring the right type of attention that will grow the industry and provide clear pathways for the next generation.
Dimi Kyriakou  	Senior Communications Consultant RMCG E: dimik@rmcg.com.au Suite 4, Level 3, 108 Power Street, Hawthorn, VIC, 3124 Dimi joined RMCG in 2020 and delivers communications and marketing expertise and services to Australia's horticulture industry, as well as the wider agriculture and environmental sectors and regional communities. For Dimi, the 2026 Growing Leaders program is an opportunity to build her leadership skills, expand industry networks and play a role in supporting the future of Australia's vegetable industry through collaboration and innovation. Dimi has worked in Australia's vegetable industry since 2014 and is passionate about ensuring technical information is communicated clearly with impact. She particularly enjoys working with growers and sharing their stories and achievements with the wider industry.
Evan Braham  	Farm Hand / Manager Braham Produce E: azebraham@gmail.com 42 Alfred Road, Virginia, SA, 5120 My name is Evan Braham, I work for Braham Produce family owned business by my parents (Andrew and zurriyet Braham). We grow capsicums all under protected cropping around 60,000 plants 2.5 hectares. I have been in the industry full time for 4 years but grown up with growing my whole life. The reason why I am participating in Growing Leaders is because I am a young grower and experiencing chances like this boost my knowledge and skills with others and growing. its also great for networking and getting to know more growers and learning about their companies. What I would like to do for the vegetable industry is show that young growers can make a difference and show to others that change is needed to grow the best vegetables as some of the vegetable growers are stuck in old ways.

Gabrielle Kupsch  	QA & Operations Manager P J & J Cochrane Pty Ltd E: gkupsch@hotmail.com Unit 1/369 Yuille Street, Frankston South, VIC, 3199 I am fairly new to the horticulture industry with just 3 years experience on farm and a background in nursing before that. I think that nursing has equipped me with a fair idea of what makes a good or bad leader but I would say I missed the opportunity to explore or expand my own skills in that way. I now work for a growing business (in both senses of the word) and I am really excited about the opportunity to make a difference for myself, my workplace and hopefully the industry!
John Taylor  	Head Supervisor – Field Operations Taylor Family Produce E: john.taylor4380@gmail.com 74 Robertson Road, Amiens, QLD, 4380 As a fifth-generation leafy green vegetable grower in Queensland, I live in the Granite Belt—a region nestled high in the mountains, renowned for its delightful climate, stunning scenery, and national parks. This April, I am eagerly looking forward to marrying the love of my life after five wonderful years together. My two Kelpie dogs, Bundy and Skylier, always keep us on our toes. I'm fortunate to have a supportive family and community that stand by me and my partner in every aspect of life.
Josh Cranwell  	Farm Manager AE Cranwell and Sons E: josh@aecranwell.com.au PO Box 213, Milang, SA, 5256 Josh Cranwell is a sixth-generation vegetable grower from South Australia, part of a family-run multi-crop farm best known for producing Brussels sprouts. He values the farm's history and is focused on keeping it strong for the next generation. Josh is participating in the 2026 Growing Leaders program to challenge his thinking and strengthen his leadership skills. He wants to play a role in improving standards and adopting practical innovation to keep farming strong into the future.
Mendurim Selimovski  	Production Manager Schreurs and Sons E: productionshed@schreurs.com.au 7 Willum Way, Dandenong, VIC, 3175 Arriving in Australia in 2000 as an immigrant, I joined Schreurs & Sons as a celery packer. Over time, I have managed to work my way up to my current role of Production Manager. I am taking part in Growing Leaders as I want to improve my supervisory skills so that I can get the most out of my team, ensuring that they can continue to develop in their roles and drive change within the business. I want to help ensure that the vegetable industry can continue to grow healthy and safe vegetables in a sustainable and economically viable way.

Natasha Schultz  	Agronomist Elders E: natasha.schultz@elders.com.au 40 Ropeley Road, Blenheim, QLD, 4341 I am an agronomist with Elders Gatton in the Lockyer Valley, supporting vegetable and horticulture producers across the region. Coming from a farming family, I understand firsthand the challenges and rewards of agricultural life, which shapes the practical, grounded advice I provide. I work closely with growers on crop nutrition, soil health, and pest and disease management to improve productivity and sustainability. I am passionate about building strong relationships and delivering solutions that are both economically sound and environmentally responsible.
Nikola Manchev  	National Sales and Technical Specialist Boomaroo Nurseries E: nik.manchev@boomaroo.com 10 Parkhead Circuit, Warragul, VIC, 3820 I am a National Sales and Technical Specialist at Boomaroo Nurseries, working closely with vegetable growers to improve seedling performance, crop reliability and commercial outcomes. My role bridges technical agronomy and sales, focusing on practical solutions, innovation and long-term partnerships. I like identifying opportunities for improvement and turning ideas into measurable results. Originally from Europe and now based in regional Victoria, I value hard work, resilience and continuous growth. Outside of work, I'm a husband and father of 9 year old girl and 10 year old boy, which doesn't leave me much time for my motorbike.
Nina Morozenko  	Head Grower Flavorite E: nina.morozenko@flavorite.com.au 264 Copelands Road, Warragul, VIC, 3820 Hi. I am Nina Morozenko. I am a Head Grower at Flavorite farm. I am participating in 2026 Growing Leaders to challenge myself and enhance my knowledge in leadership.
Richelle Kelly  	Regional Development Officer North Queensland Farmers E: richellekelly@nqfarmers.com.au 45 Warwick Road, Bowen, QLD, 4805 I have been working with BGGA as the VegNET Regional Development Officer since late 2024, but I have a long background in agriculture. I grew up on a sugarcane farm in NQ before completing a communications degree and returning to work on the farm for 10 years. I then worked for a sugarcane agronomy firm before moving to this role in vegetables. I enjoy the challenge of horticulture, and working with the growers and my team to learn and develop in the industry i find to be rewarding.

Sophia Thach  	Research Scientist Applied Horticultural Research E: sophia.thach@ahr.com.au Level 3, Suite 340, Biomedical Building, Eveleigh, NSW, 2015 I am an early career researcher and project Manager for Soil Wealth and Integrated Crop Protection, the national extension and communications project supporting Australia's vegetable industry. I am participating in the 2026 Growing Leaders program to strengthen my leadership, communication and change-management skills so I can lead high-performing teams and deliver greater impact across horticulture projects. My vision is a resilient, profitable vegetable industry built on simple, evidence-based systems that improve soil and crop health, reduce costs, and support long-term sustainability and industry-led innovation.
Sugeesha Diunugala  	Harvest Manager Flavorite E: sugeesha.d@flavorite.com.au 77 Settlers Drive, Kialla, VIC, 3630 I am a results-driven Farm Manager with over 13 years of experience in agricultural operations and leadership. Currently overseeing harvest operations at one of Australia's largest hydroponic facilities, I lead diverse teams to deliver high-performance outcomes in quality, safety, and productivity. With a background in Agricultural Technology, an MBA in Marketing, and a Diploma in Human Resource Management, I combine technical expertise with strong people leadership. Passionate about continuous improvement and team development, I am committed to strengthening the vegetable industry through innovation, collaboration, and building capable future leaders within his workplace and community.