

MUSHROOM FARM HYGIENE MINI-SERIES

A new virtual mini-series in farm hygiene, to be delivered in May and June 2024, is an opportunity to review current knowledge, learn new techniques, and explore the topic of hygiene across the whole production process. By Judy Allan

The AMGA is delivering a Hort Innovation Mushroom Fund project – *Mushroom International Study Tours – Inbound and Outbound (MU22010)*.

This 3-year project has been designed to deliver educational programs to a wide range of industry personnel across a broad range of industry topics, with the aim to improve knowledge of growers, compost producers and their employees, and build an industry that is resilient, efficient, and sustainable.

In 2023, the project facilitated two, 2-day in-person workshops with international mushroom production expert Eric de Groot. The workshops *Mushroom production – review and update*, had great attendance at both the South Australia and New South Wales events, however, many farm owner-operators were unable to attend in-person. Responding to feedback received from participants and the wider industry, the project has now pivoted to present bite sized (1.5hr) training virtually, with the aim of reaching and educating more farms around Australia.

ABOUT THE MUSHROOM FARM HYGIENE MINI-SERIES

Good pest and disease control begins and ends with good hygiene; however, practices and procedures can sometimes fall by the wayside – particularly when farms are short staffed or have high turnover of labour.

The mini-series program consists of four 1.5 hr sessions delivered remotely on consecutive Thursday afternoons of the 16, 23, and 30 May and 6 June. The program has been designed and delivered by Warwick Gill and Judy Allan, who will highlight resources developed through the Hort Innovation-funded *MU21007 Pest and Disease Management for the Australian mushroom Industry* project.

A follow-up remote event with an international speaker who specialises in farm hygiene audits and training is currently being developed as part of this initiative.

AMGA will host the mini-series. The recorded sessions will then be uploaded to the *Agora Pest and Disease* website.

TARGET AUDIENCE

For both experienced and less experienced key farm staff, the mini-series is an opportunity to refresh what they know and explore what they don't know about the impacts of good (or bad) farm hygiene.

Please note that this series is not targeted to new entrants with no experience on a mushroom farm. Less experienced participants can attend but will be expected to watch the new *Farm Hygiene and Integrated Pest Management Voice-Over PowerPoint (VOP)* videos currently being prepared as a prerequisite. These VOP videos will be released progressively prior to the May dates.

Recognising that the scope of farm hygiene includes more than can be covered in the four short, remote sessions of the mini-series, links to relevant pre-existing videos and relevant resources will also be distributed during the delivery period.



Course trainers Dr Warwick Gill and Judy Allan

TRAINER PROFILES

Warwick Gill graduated from the University of Canterbury (New Zealand) specialising in the mushroom disease 'Drippy Gill'. He undertook postgraduate study of mushroom diseases at the Tottori Mycological Institute (Japan) as a recipient of a JIST Fellowship, followed by a BRAIN research fellowship at the University of Tokyo (Japan), where he studied mushroom cultivation techniques.

In 2000, Warwick was awarded a DIST research fellowship, sponsored by Huon Valley Mushrooms in Tasmania, to study mushroom cultivation techniques at the Tasmanian Institute of Agriculture, University of Tasmania. He then joined Huon Valley Mushrooms as head exotic grower, spawn maker and farm manager.

In 2013 he joined Judy Allan to deliver the Hort Innovation-funded MU12007 (*Development of a pilot mushroom farm disease monitoring scheme*) in which they developed novel and rapid sampling techniques for large porous surfaces such as grow room floors. He then took the lead in the Hort Innovation-funded MU16003 (*Pest and disease management and research services*).

Judy Allan has been involved in the mushroom industry since 1982, initially as a government advisor with the NSW Department of Agriculture and then as a private consultant. As a specialist in pest and disease management and industry risk mitigation, she has performed roles as project manager and/or team member on Hort Innovation-funded projects including: MU13014 (*Implementing industry risk management*), MU11003 (*editorial consultant to the AMGA Journal*), MU12001 (*Mushroom industry knowledge training*), MU12007 (*Development of a pilot mushroom farm disease monitoring scheme*), and MU16003 and MU21007 (*Pest and disease management and research services*).

Judy has served on numerous industry committees and has extensive experience in delivering industry training at farm and whole industry level. She was awarded Life Honorary Membership of the Australian Mushroom Growers' Association in 2003 in recognition of her services to the industry.

In MU21007 Judy utilises her mushroom-specific technical background and in-depth knowledge of the industry to be predominantly responsible for grower liaison and awareness raising, as well as working with Warwick on resource development.

PROGRAM CONTENT

Session 1: Thursday 16th May, 2024

- Farm hygiene and its importance for Integrated Pest Management
- Costs associated with pest and disease outbreaks
- Examples of disease risk factors influenced by farm characteristics
- Events and situations that increase the likelihood of cross contamination on mushroom farms
- Vectors
- First response

Session 2 : Thursday 23rd May,2024

- The 7 stages of effective cleaning
- Choosing the best fit detergent and disinfectant
- Influence of residual organic material on disinfectant efficacy
- Application technology
- Economic thresholds
- Case study

Session 3: Thursday 30th May,2024

- Physical exclusion
- Foot dips and foot dip management
- Monitoring flies
- Dust
- Case study

Session 4: Thursday 6th June,2024

- Hygiene associated with harvesting
- Spot treatment
- End of crop procedures
- Case study

For more information or to register, visit the AMGA Website: <https://australianmushroomgrowers.com.au/events/>

or contact the event organiser, **Judy Allan**, directly on 0427 671 057 or email judyallan@bigpond.com

Hort Innovation MUSHROOM FUND

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