To develop the next crop of horticulture growers and meet rising food demand, Hort Innovation Australia and Western Sydney University combined forces to launch Australia’s first state-of-the-art vegetable glasshouse-production Research Centre.

Syngenta was represented by Dion Potter and Sarah Bingham at the official opening on Wednesday, November 1st, 2017, by Assistant Minister for Agriculture and Water Anne Ruston, with Minister for Western Sydney Stuart Ayres.

The National Vegetable Protected Cropping Centre represents a $7M investment in protected cropping research. The striking 1,728 m$^2$ glasshouse will house various industry-driven research and development projects and pre and post graduate teaching material. The facility features eight temperature-controlled chambers with diffuse glass and smart glass coatings that adjust the spectrum, direction and intensity of light. Research targets are to achieve the highest possible commercial-yields with minimal energy, labour, nutrients and water outputs.

Industry figures, including Hort Innovation Chief Executive, John Lloyd, Protected Cropping Australia deputy chair Mark Massey, and Western Sydney University Vice-Chancellor, Professor Barney Glover, commented that the new facility on the Hawkesbury campus, located on the peri-urban fringe of Sydney, is perfectly placed for conducting research and education to help drive Australia’s future
horticulture productivity.

The combination of an ageing horticultural industry with a fast-moving technological landscape and a rising global demand for food means the Vegetable Protected Cropping Centre has never been more critical and the expected findings that will come out of this Centre are exciting.

Researchers will work to manipulate inputs to create the optimum environment to drive maximum harvest windows and overall yield for a variety of vegetables, then share this information with Australia's growers and help develop the next generation of horticultural students.

Syngenta is proud to be partnered with the Western Sydney University through a strong network within the University. Syngenta has provided practical support through the supply of seed for the vegetable varieties to be grown in the facility, a contribution of funds towards the pollination project “Stingless bees as effective managed pollinators in Australian Horticulture” and a guest lecture titled “Emerging Horticulture Markets” to the 2017 agricultural graduates, delivered by Dion Potter.

**Watch a timelapse of the greenhouse construction**

Video of Time lapse: Construction of the $7 million Glasshouse facility at Hawkesbury