



REGIONAL PROFILE

The Bundaberg region is one of the food bowls of Australia, producing a wide variety of fruits and vegetables for markets across the country including tomatoes, sweet potatoes, peas, beans, avocados and citrus.

Macadamias are one of the most significant horticultural crops in the Bundaberg region, and the industry is second only to citrus fruits in terms of gross value of production.

From small beginnings in the early 2000s, in 2016 Bundaberg overtook the Northern Rivers to become the largest producing macadamia region in Australia. More than 7,800 hectares are planted with macadamias, making it the largest horticultural crop by area in the region. Production in Bundaberg grew almost fivefold from 2000 (4339 t NIS) to 2016 (19,900 t NIS), and it is home to the world's largest producer of nuts and largest processing facility, Pacific Gold.

Some key reasons for the region's suitability to growing macadamias are its fertile soils, its relatively flat topography and the availability of secure irrigation water, which is sourced from three dams and the Burnett River. In addition, most plantations are on higher ground, which means that trees are usually unaffected by the flooding which occurs occasionally in the region.

Bundaberg, with a population of nearly 100,000 people, relies on the horticultural industry – it is the major contributor to its economy.

Employment on farm, with processors and indirectly through the range of support services provided is complemented by the economic benefits created by the purchase of farm machinery, fertilisers and other goods to maintain and expand production.

What the macadamia industry means to the Bundaberg region

Growers

Bundaberg growers are highly experienced farmers who have embraced new technology and innovation. Typically, they oversee large scale, highly mechanised operations. While the region has fewer growers compared to the other regions, the larger farms bring with them economies of scale and the ability to produce in a reasonably stable climate. A typical macadamia orchard here contains more than 50,000 trees (compared with 3,000 in the Northern Rivers region of NSW), and some of the larger farms cover more than 500 hectares.

Expansion of the industry continues in Bundaberg, both with new farmers entering the industry and existing farmers expanding their orchards.

Partly because of this success of plantings around Bundaberg, a new area is emerging around Emerald, which is 500 km to the north-west of Bundaberg, and has access to relatively secure water through the Nugoa Mackenzie water supply scheme.

Processors

A number of processing plants directly service the Bundaberg region and nuts are also sent to processors in other regions. Factories operate to industry best practice standards and have the capacity to cater for anticipated high future growth.

Local business

The macadamia industry injects millions of dollars directly into the economy of the Bundaberg region. Servicing the macadamia industry provides employment on-farm and in the local processing plants and revenue across a wide range of support businesses who supply the local industry.

Note. Economic figures have been sourced from data supplied by Australian Macadamia Handlers Association.

The region's macadamia industry at a glance

Trees planted:	2,440,000
Total area under canopy:	7,800 hectares
Total growers:	55 (approx)
Total production:	19,900 tonnes nut-in-shell (2016)
Farm gate value:	\$109 million (from 2016 tonnage @ est. \$5.45)
Factory gate value:	\$132 million
Retail value of Bundaberg production:	\$236 million