

**Title** Successful research collaboration: how is it done? Understanding the flesh browning disorder in Pink Lady™ apples as a case study

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### **Abstract**

The Horticulture Australia funded research project investigating the flesh browning disorder in Pink Lady™ apples has in 5 years solved an import industry problem through a successful collaborative research effort. The Oxford dictionary definition of collaboration is to "work in combination with" although the second definition is to "co-operate treacherously with the enemy". Often research collaborations can fall into the second definition when there is an atmosphere of unhealthy competition. The flesh browning project was a success for several reasons. These include:

1. unique nature of the research problem
2. keen industry support of the research outcomes particularly because it was based on direct accountable financial losses
3. inclusion of researchers from different regions and countries, particularly the Northern and Southern Hemispheres
4. research model where individual expertise was encouraged but centred on common research parameters
5. opportunity for the Project Leader to directly compare all results and identify research strategies
6. active communication within the team and to the industry

Many research teams also achieve successful outcomes for similar reasons. At the same time, it is important to acknowledge that good research collaborations are not always possible or needed to solve industry problems. Collaboration is one model and this presentation aims to present a "good news story" that highlights some of the unique requirements of a good collaborative research project.