



VOICES

True listening, better choices

BIOSECURITY:

MOTIVATING DESPONDENT FARMERS TO ADOPT IT

THE ISSUE

If farmers feel that disease is inevitable because it's impossible to prevent, they give up on biosecurity

- * Globally, fruit farmers have been devastated by a certain disease. It's literally wiped out whole countries.
- * In Australia, biosecurity measures have kept the disease at bay in some parts of the country but not others. Therefore success has already been partially achieved.
- * Despite this, farmers felt that that the onset of this disease on their property was inevitable.
- * This made them despondent and limited their willingness to engage and invest in biosecurity measures that would help keep the disease at bay.
- * **Core question: How to motivate farmers to adopt biosecurity measures, when they didn't feel any true motivation to do so? They understandably felt, 'What's the point?'**

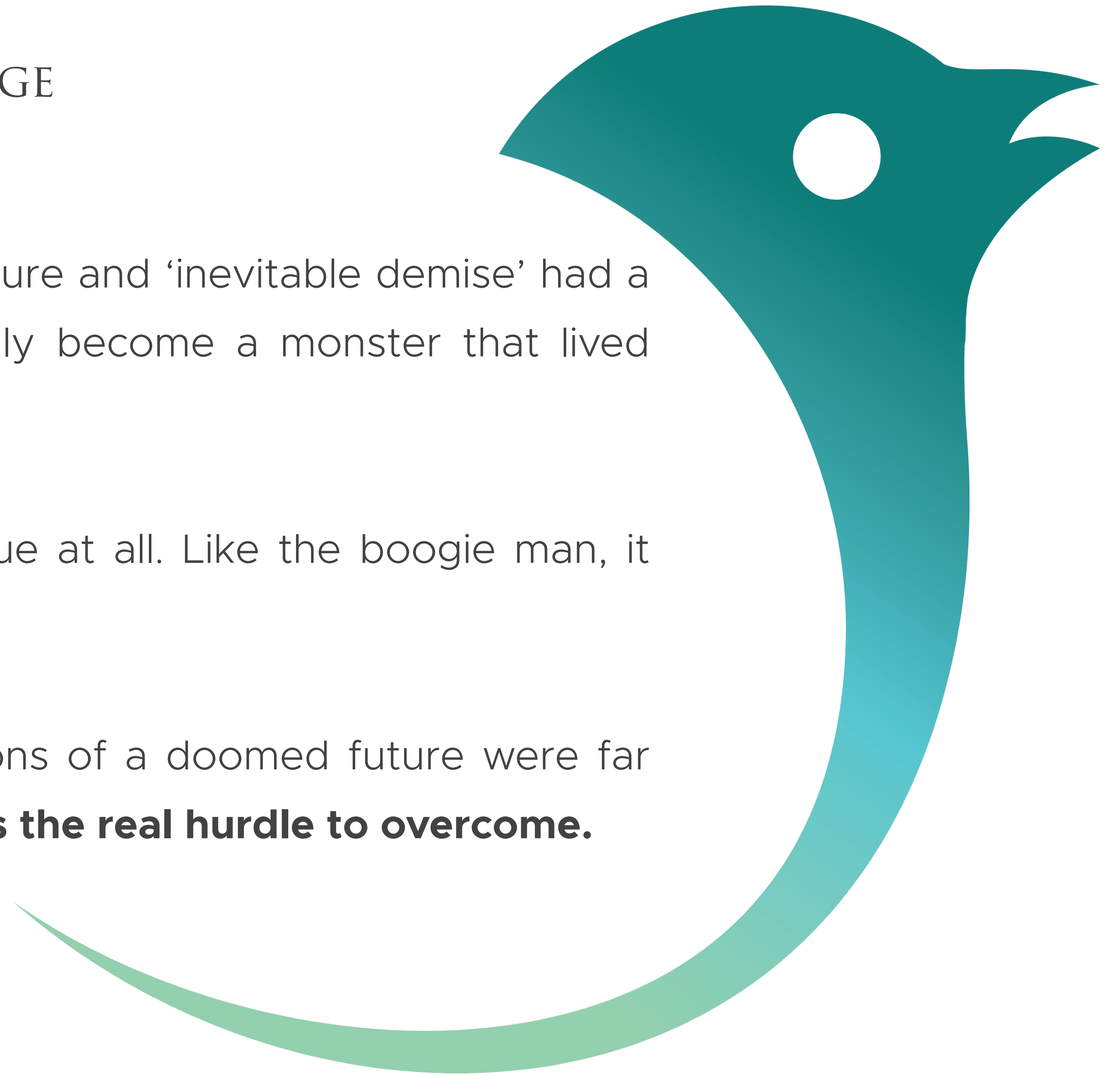


THE CORE CHALLENGE

Negative talk within the industry about its future and ‘inevitable demise’ had a way of spreading and growing, to eventually become a monster that lived inside growers’ collective psyche.

However the negative talk was often not true at all. Like the boogie man, it didn’t exist in real life.

As is often the case, psychological projections of a doomed future were far more harmful than the disease itself. **This was the real hurdle to overcome.**



THE INSIGHT

Farmers who had experienced the disease and who still had it on their land were, very interestingly, **the least fearful and most mentally healthy of all the farmers we spoke to in this project.**

They had faced the ‘boogie man’ so to speak and found that it was not as bad as their psychological projections. **Reality was far less scary than their fears.**

They still had functioning, profitable farms and were now innovating and diversifying more - with new disease-resistant varieties as well as other crops. They were also changing their practices to be more biosecure, which had improved their productivity, hence profitability, after a certain period. ‘Necessity’ was certainly the mother of their invention and very ironically, their better mental health.



THE SOLUTION - SHARE STORIES AND COMMUNICATIONS MATERIAL THAT SHATTERS THE BOOGIE MAN

Stories and communications about 'infected' farmers' improved productivity, profitability and mental health were widely shared with other farmers.

Additionally, farmers were discouraged from spreading negative talk because it damaged mental health and the industry as a whole.

