

# When hackers gain access to your business email account



# The heavy cost of a business email compromise

When Jason\* was introduced to a new grain in a dish he was served in a friend's restaurant he was intrigued and began searching everywhere for the seeds. Eventually, he located the seed and began experimenting with growing it and selling it to restaurants in the region. The grain became the talk of the industry, featuring on television and winning numerous awards.

Then Western Australia became gripped by a drought and the grain struggled to grow. But the worst was yet to come.

Jason received an email he thought was from a contractual farmer indicating changed bank account details. He transferred \$10 000, but a few days later the farmer enquired where the funds were. Jason discovered his business email was compromised and the email he thought was from the farmer was actually from a slightly different email address.

The bank agreed to pay Jason the money back, but then this happened on another two separate occasions and he lost another \$10 000 and has only been able to get \$400 back. He contacted the AFP, the ACSC and the bank fraud squad and has spent "hours and days" trying to resolve the issue.

Jason is not sure how his driver licence was compromised, which was how the hackers gained access to his business email account.

Before the incident, cyber safety was the last item on Jason's mind. The only anti-virus he had on his computer was that which had been installed when he bought it – and it had since expired.

"When you are setting up a business, you are focussed on getting your product known, you are not thinking about cyber risks," he said.

It has had a "massive impact on my business".

\* Jason is not his real name.