

Autumn 2024 | RRP \$13.50

# N&G NEWS

NURSERY & GARDEN INDUSTRY NSW & ACT



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PLASTICS  
SUPPLIER TO HORTICULTURE  
FOR OVER 30 YEARS



Nursery & Garden Industry  
NSW & ACT



# 2024 Events & Training

## CALENDAR



### January

**Wednesday 17** | Sydney Trade Day

**Friday 26** | Pulling Back The Shade Cloth

### February

**Thursday 1** | Board Meeting

**Friday 9** | Northern Rivers Event

**Wednesday 21** | Sydney Trade Day

**Wednesday 28** | Online Member Forum

**Thursday 29** | Social Media & Marketing

### March

**Friday 8** | Intl Women's Day High Tea

**Tuesday 12** | Northern Rivers Trade Day

**Thursday 29** | Central Coast Event

**Wednesday 20** | Sydney Trade Day

### April

**Thursday 4** | NextGen Event

**Thursday 9** | ChemCert AQFIII, Sydney

**Wednesday 10** | Sydney Trade Day

**Thursday 11** | First Aid & CPR, Sydney

**Wednesday 24** | ACT Event

**Wednesday 24** | Online Member Forum

**Friday 26** | Pulling Back The Shade Cloth

### May

**Thursday 2** | Pioneers Lunch

**Wednesday 8** | Sydney Trade Day

**Thursday 16** | NGINA Conference

**Thurs-Fri 16-17** | AQF4, Sydney

**Wednesday 15** | Golf Day

**Wednesday 22** | Online Member Forum

**Thursday 23** | Board Meeting

**Thurs-Fri 30-31** | AQF4, Regional (TBC)

**Friday 31** | Pulling Back The Shade Cloth

### June

**Thursday 13** | First Aid & CPR, Sydney

**Wednesday 19** | Sydney Trade Day

**Wednesday 26** | Online Member Forum

**Thursday 27** | First Aid & CPR, Regional (TBC)

**Friday 28** | Pulling Back The Shade Cloth

### July

**Wednesday 17** | Sydney Trade Day

**Thursday 18** | Board Meeting

**Wednesday 24** | Online Member Forum

**Friday 26** | Pulling Back The Shade Cloth

### August

**Thursday 8** | ChemCert AQFIII, Sydney

**Thursday 15** | ChemCert AQFIII, Regional (TBC)

**Wednesday 21** | Sydney Trade Day

**Thurs-Fri 22-23** | AQF4, Sydney

**Monday 26** | Board Meeting

**Tuesday 27** | Port Macquarie Trade Day

**Wednesday 28** | Online Member Forum

**Thurs-Fri 29-30** | AQF4, Regional (TBC)

**Friday 30** | Pulling Back The Shade Cloth

### September

**Thursday 5** | First Aid & CPR, Sydney

**Tuesday 10** | Northern Rivers Trade Day

**Thursday 12** | First Aid & CPR, Regional (TBC)

**Wednesday 18** | Sydney Trade Day

**Wednesday 25** | Online Member Forum

**Friday 27** | Pulling Back The Shade Cloth

### October

**Thursday 10** | Board Meeting

**Wednesday 16** | Sydney Trade Day

**Wednesday 23** | Online Member Forum

**Tuesday 24** | NextGen Event

**Friday 25** | Pulling Back The Shade Cloth

### November

**Wednesday 20** | Sydney Trade Day & AGM

**Wednesday 27** | Online Member Forum

**Thursday 21** | Social Media & Marketing

**Friday 29** | Pulling Back The Shade Cloth

**Friday 29** | Awards & Gala Night

### December

**Friday 6** | Central Coast Christmas Party

**Wednesday 11** | Sydney Trade Day

**Thursday 12** | Board Meeting

**Friday 13** | Sydney Group Christmas Party

**PLEASE NOTE:** The dates provided for the year are approximate and may be subject to adjustments. Training dates are flexible based on expressions of interest and participant numbers. Feel free to reach out to us for more information!



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FROM PLANT TO  
PLATE & INDUSTRY  
PUZZLES

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Nursery & Garden Industry

# Jobs board

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Greener Growth Nurseries  
Londonderry, NSW 2753



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General Nursery Hands

Botanica Nurseries  
Silverdale, NSW 2752



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**Industry Jobs:**  
**Propagation Manager**

Humphris Nursery  
Mooroolbark, NSW 2480



# Executive Summary

As we lean into this new calendar year, the horticultural industry finds itself blossoming with potential challenges and exciting opportunities.

It's no surprise that "Cozzie livs" — a light-hearted play on the term "cost of living" — which was named the Macquarie Dictionary's 2023 Word of the Year struck a chord with so many Australians.

Households have endured a sustained cost-of-living squeeze with stubbornly high inflation and rising interest rates putting many family budgets under severe pressure, especially those carrying big mortgages.

Australian Bureau of Statistics figures indicate that real household disposable income has had its biggest decline since the 1980s. In response, shoppers have cut spending on big ticket discretionary items such as electronics, furniture and other household goods.

It's not all bad news, though. Australians have not given up on their morning coffee or weekend brunch. The onus is on all of us to remind everyone that if they can't afford to travel then it is extra important that they beautify their homes.

While the economic climate certainly plays a part in our success it's also evident that several noteworthy trends have the potential to reshape the landscape of our industry and offer us all huge opportunities. Proactively embracing advanced technologies, fostering mental wellness initiatives, and strengthening operational resilience against climate challenges are crucial measures to ensure sustainable growth.

Technological advancements, such as automation and data analytics, are transforming traditional practices, enhancing efficiency, and reducing environmental impact. Precision farming techniques, robotic harvesting, and smart irrigation systems improve productivity and minimise resource wastage. Concurrently, mental wellness initiatives are gaining recognition as essential components of a healthy workplace.

Employee assistance programs, stress management workshops, and mental health awareness campaigns can support the well-being of workers in the high-pressure horticulture sector, ultimately boosting productivity and morale.

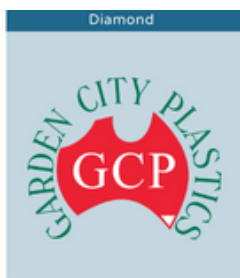
Moreover, the industry is increasingly facing challenges posed by climate change, including extreme weather events, water scarcity, and pest outbreaks. To address these challenges, we must focus on building operational resilience. Strategies such as crop diversification, investment in water-efficient technologies, and adoption of sustainable practices are becoming commonplace.

Through these measures, the industry can mitigate risks and ensure long-term sustainability.

As the leaders of our organisation, we understand the risks and challenges you face and the many opportunities available. Building on our period of recovery and growth our new Strategic Plan 2024-2027 contains the following priority areas:

1. Ensure Climate Change Resilience
2. Advance Innovation
3. Strengthen Education and Awareness
4. Improve Industry Collaboration
5. Encourage Market Development
6. Engage in Policy and Advocacy
7. Ensure Association Viability

We are committed to providing you with the necessary tools and resources to thrive. That's why we offer a range of relevant training programs and events focused on embracing advanced technologies and keeping you up-to-date with the latest advancements and strengthening education awareness. We are dedicated to supporting your well-being. Furthermore, we provide resources and guidance on how to strengthen your operational resilience against climate challenges. Together, through more industry collaboration and market development we can lead the way in shaping a more sustainable and efficient future for the Australian horticulture industry.







Specifically, during the first quarter of this year we will run 3 Sydney Trade Days and one Trade Day in the Northern Rivers. Our Sydney Group hosted a presentation from John Stanley in January who has often been described as the leading horticultural consultant in the world today. At the time of writing, we have events coming up which include a networking event for our Central Coast members at Sprint Horticulture, an event for our NextGen Group at Scotts Tubes, a breakfast to celebrate International Women's Day and we are planning an industry conference in May. We have our monthly on-line member forum, which in January focused on fire ants, February on Artificial Intelligence and in March we will look at innovation in the industry.

We have been the go-to source for all information on the recent discoveries of fire ants in NSW and will continue to liaise with Government representatives to make sure our members are informed of all changes and requirements in NSW and the ACT.

We are organising training for our members in truck licensing, forklift operations, chemical usage, waterworks, first aid and social media. Our apprentice program is going from strength to strength and we have presented to this year's new recruits. We are running a scholarship program that will send 5 lucky apprentice winners on a Study Tour to Melbourne over MIFGIS. Additionally, to ensure we always have new apprentices in the pipeline we are running a tour for careers advisors to teach them about the scope and beauty of our industry.

We have fostered an ongoing positive collaboration with the other state NGIs and the national body GIA through regular

executive catch-ups. Together we have been working on the fire ants issue, establishing a common identity and looking at how we can get relevant and correct data on the scope of the NSW industry.

Closer to home we are working with our regional groups to better support them by reducing their administration, increasing NGINA support by utilising technology, increasing the professionalism of all communications and assisting with their accounts. We have drafted a Regional Group Charter to make it easier for our groups who should only be focused on what they do best – connecting our members with each other.

The NGINA board has been focused on our various policy positions and engagement with the State Governments. We have focussed recently on our water policy and have engaged with Sydney Water.

We have also launched a new partnership with Choice Energy who provide complimentary energy bill health checks, commercial energy broking, procurement, and quality solar solutions.

We are incredibly grateful for all our members who continue on this journey with us and we are looking forward to another successful year. Together We Grow!



**David Jakobs**  
**PRESIDENT**



**Anita Campbell**  
**CEO**

## MEMBER INCENTIVE

**As we rally together to grow our industry, NGINA is excited to offer a Membership Signup Incentive.**

Earn \$150 NGINA credit, for simply referring a potential member.  
Once they have successfully signed up you will receive \$150!  
The more members you bring on board, the more you earn!





# UNVEILING HISTORY

The Timeless Journey of N&G  
News Magazine





As we, the Nursery and Garden Industry NSW & ACT, delved into the depths of its storage unit recently, an unexpected treasure emerged – a trove of old magazines that tell the story of our association's journey through time. Among these treasures, one gem shone brightly: the N&G News magazine, a publication that has been a steadfast companion since 1970 and continues to thrive today.

The discovery of these magazines not only uncovers a piece of our organisational history but also provides a unique glimpse into the evolution of the horticultural industry over the years. From its humble beginnings to its current state, the N&G News magazine has faithfully chronicled the triumphs, challenges, and innovations that have shaped our community.

As we sifted through the pages of these vintage publications, we were transported back in time, witnessing the milestones and memories that have defined our association. Each issue serves as a time capsule, preserving the knowledge, expertise, and camaraderie that have been the cornerstone of our organisation for decades.

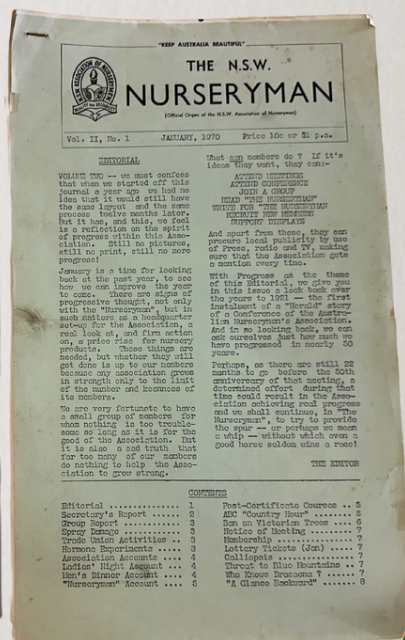
But these magazines are more than just artefacts; they are a testament to the dedication and passion of our members and pioneers who have contributed to the growth and success of the horticultural industry. Their stories, insights, and experiences are woven into the fabric of each page, inspiring us to continue our journey of growth and discovery.

We invite our members and pioneers to join us in this journey through time. Our library, now enriched with these historical treasures, is open to all who wish to immerse themselves in the legacy of the N&G News magazine. Come, enjoy a cuppa, and flick through the pages of history. Whether you are a seasoned veteran or a newcomer to the industry, there's something magical about tracing our roots and celebrating how far we've come.

So let us gather around the table of remembrance, where the past meets the present, and the seeds of inspiration are sown. Together, let's honour our heritage, embrace our legacy, and continue to cultivate a vibrant future for the horticultural community in NSW & ACT.



How it's going



Where it started

*"As the current Editor and Designer of the N&G News Magazine, I am incredibly proud to have taken the reins and continue the legacy of publishing such a historic magazine for our esteemed association."*

**Leisha Jordan** | Communications & Marketing



BY  
GARDEN  
CITY  
PLASTICS

Garden City Plastics (GCP) stands as the leading supplier of quality plastic pots, chemicals, fertilisers, and essential nursery products in Australia and New Zealand.

# OUR PEOPLE ARE OUR GREATEST ASSET



With a wide range of products, GCP is renowned for its commitment to quality and customer service and has been for nearly 50 years! Geoff Allison, the General Manager, encapsulates this ethos, stating "We value our people and the contribution they make to building strong relationships with our customers. Our strength as a company is our approach to partnering and our commitment to consistently deliver quality products and knowledge across every area of the business for our customers."

Garden City Plastics' reputation within the nursery industry can be attributed to its people, they are the backbone of the business. From the tool room, to the shop floor and across all distribution centres GCP's people are focused on delivering value for customers, with a focus on continuous improvement, consistency and dependability. Garden City Plastics offers the expertise of its Field Managers and Agronomy team providing boots on the ground support free of charge to help diagnose problems and design solutions in collaboration with customers. Luciana Mazzucchi, Craig Rich and Steve Hart are on the road covering the entire state of NSW and are happy to call in and trouble shoot any product or pest and disease issues. They are backed up by an experienced Agronomist Elliott Akintola and a range of allied partners who can be called upon for more technical matters.

Garden City Plastics has a state-of-the-art warehouse in Somersby using the latest technology to track stock, check inventory and pick orders. Craig Calverley, Glenn Blissett, David Jones and Ethan Williams are a tight team who can turn an order around and have it ready for a customer in no time at all. The new fleet of fully electric forklifts utilise the latest technology for driver safety and efficiency as well as being energy efficient and a more sustainable option compared to traditional gas forklifts. GCP delivery drivers Rob and Shane are very familiar faces unloading at their customers premises and are always ready to help and assist where they can.

Many of Garden City Plastics customers are now ordering online via the GCP website. A fresh new look GCP website and customer ordering portal will soon be available for customers. A swag of new features will be available including an improved search capability, ability to create smart buying lists, history lookup, see favourite purchases, check pricing and see related products to help make the best purchasing decisions.



L to R: Tom Schepel, Luciana Mazzucchi, Craig Rich and Arietta Schepel at T & M E Schepel Nursery.





## GCP'S SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY INITIATIVES AND PARTNERSHIPS

Polypropylene (PP) plays a crucial role in GCP's sustainable practices. As a fully recyclable material, PP is integral to the industry's efforts to reduce landfill waste. GCP's use of recycled PP exceeds 7 million kilograms annually, demonstrating their commitment to environmental stewardship.

Dan Ewings, General Manager of Alpine Nurseries comments "Garden City Plastics are channelling significant resources into supporting customers in reducing waste to solve their sustainability challenges. The Plastic Smart Program makes it easy for us, with a drop off and collection service, all our customers need to do is fill the cage and GCP take care of the rest."

As a signatory to the Australian Packaging Covenant Organisation (APCO) and participant in the PP5 Recycling Initiative, GCP is at the

forefront of sustainable packaging solutions. This pot recycling program has been a great success with over 1 million kilograms of plastic pots recycled just in the last 12 months.

Here's how to contribute to closing the loop with plastic pot use in the horticultural industry and help reducing the amount of PP5 plastic waste that ends up in landfill across the country:

Visit [pp5.com.au](http://pp5.com.au) to locate your nearest collection point or discuss alternatives with GCP when you place your next order.

Drop your used plant pots and labels to any of the PP5 collection points - there are new locations regularly being added Australia wide at participating suppliers and retailers.

If you are a commercial or retail business that is interested in joining the PP5 recycling revolution, please fill out and submit the bin request form at [pp5.com.au](http://pp5.com.au).

The challenge is to even further increase the program to a wider group of businesses and inform the broader community that recycling pots is an easy and convenient option.

Garden City Plastics sustainable practices extend well beyond pot recycling. Sustainable innovation is at the forefront of Garden City Plastics future development and with their paperless warehouse procedures, investment in state of the art property plant and equipment and the national PP5 & PS6 pot and tray recycling programs they are making significant progress. Reinforcing their dedication to environmental responsibility by supporting their customers success today and into the future.



GCP's PP5 recycling red cages in action at Engall's Nursery

Find your local PP5 recycling location



Complete your bin request here





# ASK AN

## HOW DOES GOOD SOIL GROWING MEDIA MICROBIOLOGY ENHANCE THE HEALTH AND RESILIENCE OF PLANTS IN PRODUCTION NURSERIES?

The natural soil is a complex mixture of organic matter, minerals, water, air, and microorganisms, crucial for supporting plant life and ecosystems. It serves as a vital medium for plant growth, providing essential nutrients and serving as a habitat for diverse organisms. Within the soil matrix, the Rhizosphere is the dynamic zone where plant roots interact with soil-borne microbiomes, offering a more favourable environment for plant and microbial growth compared to the bulk soil.

Advancements in science and technology have made it possible to grow plants in other materials or growing media with similar physical composition to natural soils. The physical and chemical compositions of these alternatives have also been closely matched to that of natural soil. The major differences however are the biological components. It is important to note that in a standard soil, there is much more diversity in the microbiology and complexity in the plant-microbe interaction which is yet to be fully understood.

Examples of alternate media commonly used in nursery plant production systems include bark, woodfibre, coir, and peat. A single growing media could contain different components of the materials in varying proportions to suit the plant, growing environment, and need of the grower.

It is well known that there are endophytic microbes which colonise and reside in plant roots. The discovery of Nitrogen-fixing organisms by Hellriegel and Wilfarth in 1967 showed that galls on roots of leguminous plants contain bacterial (Rhizobiaceae) and plant cells that fix N<sub>2</sub> from the air, providing plants with essential ammonia (NH<sub>3</sub>). This was closely followed by the discovery of root colonising fungi known as arbuscular mycorrhizal fungi (AMF), which symbiotically enhance plant productivity. Trichoderma, a common soil-inhabiting fungus, was then discovered in the 1920s and 30s to possess the ability to control pathogenic fungi. This characteristic made

Trichoderma is a valuable asset in protecting plants from harmful pathogens and suggested that Trichoderma has the potential to contribute significantly to plant protection and enhance productivity.

In container production in the nursery these naturally existing microorganisms can also be incorporated into growing practices. This has been made possible by the developments of commercially available microbial inoculants (like Trichoderma or Bacillus species) and the inclusion of compost blends / additives that promote the establishment of a healthy media microbiology. This is made possible through the understanding that all microorganisms have a pH range in which they survive and grow best. The range is different for each. Outside that range they survive but they do poorly.

Microorganisms	pH range preferred
<i>Rhizobium bacteria</i>	Above 5
<i>Ectomycorrhizal fungi</i>	4 to 6
<i>Endomycorrhizal fungi</i>	4 to 6, some to 7
<i>Decomposers of organic matter</i>	5 to 9
<i>Bacteria that convert ammonium to nitrate</i>	Above 6
<i>Bacteria that attack fungi</i>	6.5 – 7.5

Table 1: Summary of ideal pH for beneficial plant microorganisms. (Source growing media for ornamental plants and turf K.A Handreck and N.D Black)

From the table above we can see that in the presence of the right physical and chemical parameters, microorganisms can have a chance of being a useful tool for improving plant health and resilience to pathogens and abiotic conditions. Below are practical examples of how the media microbiome contributes to beneficial plant growth processes.

### NUTRIENT AVAILABILITY AND UPTAKE:

- **Nutrient Cycling:** Microbes break down organic matter, converting nutrients into forms that plants can easily absorb. For instance, bacteria and fungi play a key role in the nitrogen cycle, transforming atmospheric nitrogen into nitrates that plants can use.
- **Enhanced Nutrient Uptake:** Mycorrhizal fungi form symbiotic relationships with plant roots, extending their network and increasing the surface area for nutrient and water absorption. This is particularly beneficial in the confined space of a container, where root expansion is limited.



# EXPERT

## DISEASE SUPPRESSION:

- **Competition with Pathogens:** Beneficial microbes can outcompete harmful pathogens for space and resources, reducing the incidence of soil-borne diseases.
- **Production of Antimicrobial Compounds:** Some microbes produce substances that are toxic to plant pathogens, thereby acting as natural biocontrol agents.

## IMPROVED MEDIA STRUCTURE AND AERATION:

- **Aggregate Formation:** Microbial activity helps in improving and aggregate stability, which improves infiltration, water-holding and aeration, which in turn improves root growth and health. Good structure is essential in container media for proper aeration and water movement.
- **Root Growth and Health:** A well-structured media allows for better root growth and gas exchange, critical in a potted environment.

## STRESS TOLERANCE:

- **Enhanced Resilience to Environmental Stresses:** Plants in healthy microbial soils media are better equipped to withstand environmental stresses such as drought, salinity, and extreme temperatures.
- **Induced Systemic Resistance (ISR):** Some microbes can trigger a plant's immune response, priming it to better resist diseases and pests.

## IMPROVED WATER MANAGEMENT:

- **Water Retention and Availability:** Microbial activity can affect the water-holding capacity of the media, making water more available to plants. This is particularly important where water availability can fluctuate rapidly.

## ENHANCED GROWTH AND YIELD:

- **Growth-Promoting Hormones:** Certain microbes produce plant growth-promoting hormones like auxins and gibberellins, which can enhance plant growth and development.
- **Increased Vigour and Productivity:** Plants in microbially rich media often exhibit increased vigour and productivity, which is a key goal in production nurseries.

## SUSTAINABLE GROWING MEDIA HEALTH:

- **Organic Matter Decomposition:** Continuous decomposition of organic matter by microbes ensures a steady supply of nutrients and maintains long-term media fertility.

In conclusion, the pivotal role of good growing media microbiology in bolstering the health and resilience of plants in production nurseries cannot be overemphasised. The intricate interplay between various microorganisms and plant roots creates a dynamic ecosystem that significantly enhances nutrient availability, disease suppression, and overall media structure.

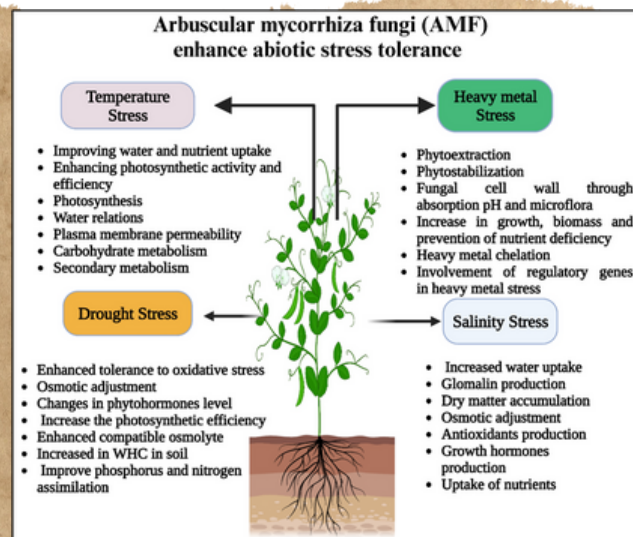


Figure 1. Schematic representation of the different mechanisms imparting abiotic stress tolerance in plants by arbuscular mycorrhiza fungi (AMF). (Source: Wahab, A. et al Role of Arbuscular Mycorrhizal Fungi in Regulating Growth, Enhancing Productivity, and Potentially Influencing Ecosystems under Abiotic and Biotic Stresses)

This, in turn, leads to improved stress tolerance, water management, and enhanced growth and yield of plants, which are critical factors in the success of potted container production nurseries. By employing advanced strategies such as customised compost blends, microbial inoculants, root zone optimisation, precision nutrient management, and integrated pest and disease management, growers can effectively harness the power of microbiology.

Furthermore, the adoption of irrigation and moisture control technologies, in-depth growing media health monitoring, and smart container technologies ensures a sustainable and environmentally conscious approach to nursery management. Ultimately, these practices not only contribute to the immediate success and productivity of the nursery but also play a crucial role in maintaining long-term media health and sustainability, aligning with the broader goals of environmental stewardship and resource conservation in the horticulture industry.

By Tara Preston  
NGINA Member Services Manager

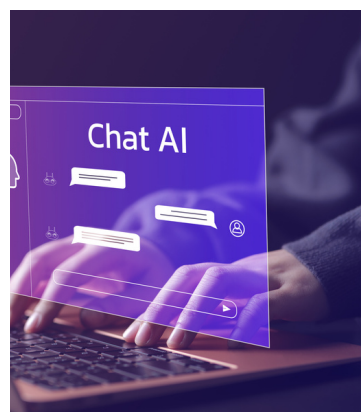




## Artificial Intelligence (AI)

is proving to be a transformative force in Australia. Far from being confined to playing chess, AI is now in the very soil of our gardens and nurseries, promising to redefine traditional practices with cutting-edge innovation, sustainability, and a deeper integration of data-driven decision-making.

# AI IN GREEN LIFE



As members of the Nursery and Garden Industry NSW & ACT gear up for Autumn, it's an opportune moment to explore the burgeoning role of AI in horticulture. This exploration isn't merely

academic; it's a guide to harnessing AI for enhancing the productivity, sustainability, and profitability of our businesses.

## Adopting new technology

Integration of AI in horticulture isn't just about adopting new technology; it's about fundamentally enhancing our understanding and management of plant ecosystems. Through the convergence of AI with big data analytics, IoT, and advanced robotics, we're seeing an era where data-driven insights are leading to more informed decisions, optimised resource use, and reduced environmental impact.

**Data-Driven Cultivation:** AI systems can analyse data from a myriad of sources, including satellite imagery, soil sensors, and climate data, to provide precise recommendations for watering, fertilisation, and pest management. This granular level of control helps in significantly reducing resource wastage and improving crop yield and quality.

**Supply Chain and Inventory Management:** AI can forecast demand trends, helping nurseries and suppliers better plan their production and stock levels. By aligning supply with market demand, businesses can reduce surplus inventory, minimise waste, and improve their bottom line.

**Customer Personalisation:** AI algorithms can analyse customer behaviour, preferences, and feedback, enabling businesses to tailor their product offerings and marketing strategies. This level of personalisation enhances customer satisfaction and loyalty, driving sales and growth.





### *A Strategic Partner in Horticultural Businesses*

For businesses within the horticultural sector, AI is quickly becoming an indispensable tool, driving innovation and efficiency at every level:

- **Optimising Production in Nurseries:** AI-driven systems enable precise control over environmental conditions in nurseries, adjusting parameters to suit the needs of different plant species. This precision leads to healthier plants and more efficient use of resources, reducing costs and environmental impact.
- **Enhancing Disease and Pest Management:** By employing AI-powered diagnostic tools, businesses can detect plant diseases and pest infestations early and accurately. This capability allows for targeted treatment, preserving the health of crops and reducing the reliance on chemical pesticides.
- **Streamlining Operations:** AI can automate routine tasks such as watering, pruning, and harvesting, freeing up staff to focus on more complex tasks. This not only improves operational efficiency but also reduces labour costs and enhances worker safety.



## *Operational Efficiency and Supply Chain Optimisation*

The benefits of AI extend well beyond the nursery, impacting every aspect of the horticultural supply chain:

- **Logistics and Distribution:** AI algorithms can optimise delivery routes and schedules, reducing transportation costs and ensuring that plants reach retailers and customers in optimal condition.
- **Market Analysis and Trend Forecasting:** By analysing market data, AI can identify emerging trends, helping businesses adapt their product offerings and marketing strategies to stay ahead of the competition.

### *Try Tapping into ChatGPT*

ChatGPT is an artificial intelligence program designed to engage in natural language conversation, providing information, assistance, and conversation on a wide range of topics. ChatGPT's adaptability turns it into a significant resource. Explore the various ways it can enhance your operations:

- **Customer Service:** Utilise ChatGPT to manage customer queries through email or instant messaging, allowing your staff to concentrate on more critical duties.
- **Email Campaigns:** Leverage ChatGPT to design enticing marketing emails that clearly present your latest deals and promotions, aiding in boosting sales and engaging your clients.
- **Product Details:** Crafting thorough descriptions for your online store's products can be daunting. ChatGPT can produce comprehensive descriptions, helping your customers make well-informed purchases while saving you time.
- **SEO-Optimised:** Enhancing your website visibility requires Search Engine Optimised (SEO) content. ChatGPT can assist in creating content that improves your search engine rankings, leading to increased organic web traffic.
- **Social Media Management:** Maintaining an active and appealing social media presence can be demanding. ChatGPT can generate compelling social media content that engages your followers and fosters interactions.



### *An Experiment For You To Try*

As we draw near to the end of this exploration into the world where AI meets the world of horticulture, I extend a personal invitation to you to embark on an experiment of your own? Open your ChatGPT app, take a photo of your favourite plant, and ask,

*Read more over the page*





"How can AI help me care for this?" or "Does this look healthy?" You'll be surprised at the wealth of information and assistance AI can offer, from identifying the plant species to providing tailored care tips, potential pest warnings, and even water and nutrient needs.

This hands-on experiment serves as a tangible gateway to understanding the profound impact AI can have on our daily gardening practices, making the leap from theoretical possibilities to practical, everyday applications. So, grab your phone, capture the beauty of your cherished plant, and let AI unveil a new dimension of gardening insights and innovations right at your fingertips.

### Conclusion: Seizing the AI Opportunity

Adopting AI in the horticultural sector is about opportunities to enhance efficiency, sustainability, and market responsiveness. As we continue to explore and integrate AI technologies, we're not just optimising our businesses; we're contributing to a more sustainable and prosperous future for the entire industry.



*Written by Julian Moore,  
Strategic Membership Solutions*

Julian Moore is a skilled and entertaining speaker who provides practical and useful ideas through real-world examples and case studies. Julian is an unabashed technology geek who is thoroughly enjoying the process of adapting to an AI world. With extensive experience in Australia, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom, Julian is committed to helping organisations achieve their goals. Contact: +61 401 648 533 or [julian@smsonline.net.au](mailto:julian@smsonline.net.au) to learn more.



## Do you get our emails?

We regularly communicate with our members via email. If you feel you could be missing out on any of our emails please contact the office on (02) 9679 1472 or email [info@ngina.com.au](mailto:info@ngina.com.au) so we can look into it for you.



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## A Must for Suppliers, Wholesale and Nursery Retailers

In the ever-changing world of wholesale and nursery trading, it's crucial to keep in touch with your customers and **show that you know your stuff**. One of the best ways to do this is through blogging. *A blog as a digital journal that is published on a website. It's a space where people write about their interests, experiences, opinions, or expertise on various topics, and others can read, engage with, and sometimes comment on those posts.* Let's take a look at why blogging is so important along with some simple tips to get started.

Blogging lets you share your knowledge and expertise within the green life industry. Whether it's offering advice on plant care, talking about the latest plant/soil trends, or giving tips for retailers, sharing useful info helps build trust with your customers and shows that you're the real deal.

## Talk to Your Customers: Your blog is a place where you can

**Deals:** Use your blog to highlight your latest products, sales, and special offers. Share photos, descriptions, and stories to catch people's attention and get them interested in what you're selling. You can also use your blog to talk about upcoming events or news in the industry to keep your customers in the loop.

Write in a way that's easy for people to understand, and focus on giving them useful info. Break up your text with headings, images, and bullet points to make it easier to read.

In a nutshell, blogging is a great way for wholesale growers and suppliers and nursery traders to connect with their customers, show off their knowledge, and grow their business. So, don't be shy—start writing those blog posts and watch your business bloom!





## MANAGERS AND BOSSES SEEM RELUCTANT TO HAVE CONVERSATIONS ABOUT RETIREMENT. HERE'S WHY YOU SHOULD BE TALKING ABOUT IT WITH EMPLOYEES.

# WHY THE R-WORD SHOULDN'T BE TABOO

HR practitioners and line managers are avoiding the conversations they used to have with employees about their retirement intentions. While legislation and social pressures may have caused this to happen, there are drawbacks for both employees and employers from avoiding the issue, and ways around it need to be found.

### WHY RETIREMENT CONVERSATIONS ARE DISAPPEARING

It was previously quite common for employees to be approached as much as five years before their "official" retirement age and asked about their intentions for working and retiring. A plan which often included a transition or phasing into retirement often resulted.

However, a number of external developments appear to have discouraged employers from continuing this approach: Anti-discrimination legislation has made it unlawful to set compulsory retirement ages for employees or to engage in conduct designed to cause an employee to retire because of their age.

Age discrimination legislation has also made employers more cautious. Raising the issue of possible retirement could be perceived as placing pressure on employees to retire when they don't want to.

The "official" retirement age (for pension entitlement purposes) is increasing, in response to community and government pressures to keep employees in the workforce for longer. This pressure comes from both budgetary reasons and the need to cope with workforce demographic trends.

Overall, employees' life spans and health are improving, both of which encourage many of them to keep working for longer.

### THE CONSEQUENCES OF NOT HAVING CONVERSATIONS

The result of the above factors is that conversations about retirement intentions often

do not occur unless an employee initiates them. Many employees are either reluctant to do this or do not know how to go about it.

The following can be the consequences:

- Employees are unaware of options that may be available to them, such as flexible work arrangements and transition-to-retirement plans.
- Employers may lose valuable employees sooner than they need to.
- Workforce and succession planning are harder for employers because they do not know employees' intentions and preferences and have less information to plan with. In organisations with a high proportion of mature age employees, this is particularly difficult because they are at risk of losing many employees in a short period without receiving much prior notice. They may have to rely on guesswork and percentage estimates.

An overall trend is that the concept of "retirement" is gradually disappearing and leaving the workforce is being lumped into the category of resignations.

### WHAT INFLUENCES EMPLOYEES' DECISIONS?

Employees' decisions about when to retire are influenced by a combination of factors:

- financial position
- pension and other superannuation entitlements
- health status
- carer's responsibilities
- other interests, e.g. travel, further education, volunteer work
- availability of various flexible work arrangements.

### KEEP HAVING THE CONVERSATIONS

It is not unlawful to ask employees what their plans for the future are and discuss how or whether they can be accommodated at the



workplace. It is recommended practice to have similar discussions with all employees about their plans and aspirations, regardless of age.

It may be unlawful discrimination on the ground of age only if the information obtained is used to disadvantage the employee in some way, e.g. to force the employee to retire, or overlook them for promotion, or if the employee is pressured to make a particular decision, e.g. to retire earlier than preferred.

The discussions can be included as part of other conversations with the employee, e.g. performance reviews or general "catch-up" meetings.

Because perceptions of discrimination still sometimes exist, the recommended practice is to train managers and HR practitioners in how to raise and discuss the issues with employees.

### STRATEGIES FOR MANAGING OLDER EMPLOYEES

Organisations are under pressure to retain mature age employees in the workforce for longer, e.g. to avoid losing corporate knowledge/expertise and to counter demographic trends, but they must also accept that some employees will choose to retire at particular times and many prefer some sort of transition or phasing-in process.

Therefore, strategies for managing mature age employees should have two elements: they should both seek to retain employees in work but also assist them to retire if that's what they

want. Too many strategies focus mainly on the latter and overlook the former, for example, financial planning assistance that emphasises planning for retirement ahead of work/life balance.

Advice to employees should cover the potential benefits and drawbacks of both options. For example, continuing to work can have benefits for the psychological well-being of many employees (e.g. a sense of "belonging" and continuing to make a valuable contribution), although it may not be obvious at the time and even if an employee doesn't actually need (e.g. financially) to work.

A wide range of flexible working arrangements should be available to employees, e.g. part-time work, casual work, consulting roles, compressed working week, purchased leave, career breaks, flexible start/finish times and working from home. Again they should have a dual aim, both to retain employees in at least some capacity, and to assist them to phase into eventual retirement.

Another important step is to review all employment policies and practices to ensure that none directly or indirectly discriminate against mature age employees and that none provide a disincentive to continue working beyond a certain age (e.g. superannuation entitlements).

*This article has been republished with permission from Business NSW.*

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## GARDENING FOR WELLBEING:

# A COMPREHENSIVE MARKETING AND WELLNESS GUIDE FOR RETAIL GARDEN CENTRES

### THE POWER OF PLANTS

Gardening for wellbeing is an increasingly recognised concept that highlights the therapeutic benefits of engaging with nature through gardening activities. This practice encompasses a range of activities, from planting and nurturing plants to landscaping and creating garden spaces, each contributing to physical, mental, and emotional health. The act of gardening not only fosters a connection with the natural world, enhancing environmental awareness, but also promotes physical activity, which is beneficial for overall health. Furthermore, gardening has been shown to reduce stress, anxiety, and depression, offering a peaceful and meditative experience. The sense of accomplishment and the nurturing aspect of caring for plants can boost self-esteem and provide a sense of purpose. Additionally, gardening activities can encourage social interaction and community building, further contributing to a sense of wellbeing.

With the growing consumer interest in health and wellness, retail garden centres have a unique opportunity to capitalise on this trend by offering products and experiences that promote physical, mental, and emotional health through gardening.

### THE THERAPEUTIC BENEFITS OF GARDENING: INSIGHTS AND STATISTICS

See below for insights into the specific therapeutic benefits of gardening:

- **Stress Reduction:** A study by Van Den Berg and Custers (2011) found that gardening for 30 minutes resulted in a significant decrease in cortisol levels (the body's stress hormone), and an improvement in mood suggesting a strong stress-reducing effect. Gardening was shown to be more effective than reading indoors for the same amount of time.
- **Mental Health Improvement:** Research by Soga, Gaston, and Yamaura (2017) showed that regular gardeners reported significantly better mental health (reduction in depression and anxiety) and higher emotional wellbeing compared to non-gardeners.
- **Physical Fitness:** According to a study in the "British Journal of Sports Medicine", gardening (e.g. digging, planting and weeding) can burn over 300 calories per hour, making it a moderate-intensity physical activity. Other studies have shown it is a great way for everyone to meet their physical activities requirements to help prevent heart disease, high blood pressure, obesity, adult-onset diabetes and osteoporosis.
- **Cognitive Health:** A study published in the "Journal of Alzheimer's Disease" found that various physical activities, including gardening, can reduce the risk of Alzheimer's by up to 50%. This is because gardening can improve focus, memory and cognitive abilities especially in older people. Another study found that people that garden regularly had a 36% lower risk of dementia than non-gardeners.
- **Air Purification:** Physically, plants contribute significantly to human health through air purification. Studies have shown that plants can absorb up to 87% of volatile organic compounds (VOCs) every 24 hours. VOCs like benzene, formaldehyde, and trichloroethylene are common in urban environments and can be detrimental to health. Plants absorb these pollutants and carbon dioxide, with an average indoor plant capable of converting approximately 0.87 grams of carbon dioxide into oxygen per day. This process significantly improves air quality, which is particularly beneficial in urban areas with limited green spaces. The air-purifying effect of plants can lead to better respiratory health and overall wellbeing.
- **Enhancing Mental Alertness:** A study by the University of Exeter found that productivity increased by 15% when workplaces were filled with houseplants. Additionally, Texas A&M University research revealed a 45% increase in the generation of innovative ideas and solutions in environments with plants and flowers. These findings highlight the importance of greenery in enhancing mental alertness and fostering a more positive and stimulating environment.





## MARKETING STRATEGIES FOR GARDEN CENTRES

Retail garden centres, which provide the tools and knowledge for healthier living through gardening, have a special chance to spearhead the gardening and wellness movement. Below are marketing strategies and initiatives that not only educate the public but also offer a unique selling point for garden centres in a competitive market.

- **Educate Your Customers**
  - **Workshops and Events:** Host events focused on the health benefits of plants and gardening, collaborating with horticulture and mental health experts.
  - **Informational Content:** Share tips and statistics on gardening for wellbeing through various media. A survey by Gardeners' World Magazine (2017) revealed that 80% of gardeners reported being happy and satisfied with their lives, compared to 67% of non-gardeners. Sharing such statistics can highlight the benefits of gardening.
- **Create a Therapeutic Shopping Experience**
  - **Garden Layout:** Design your centre to mimic a tranquil garden oasis with calming colours like:
    - **Soft Greens:** Evokes a sense of nature and tranquillity.
    - **Sky Blues:** Reflects calmness and serenity.
    - **Earthy Tones:** Grounds the environment and reduces stress.
  - **Sensory Plants:** Display plants that stimulate the senses, such as fragrant herbs and textured foliage.
- **Tailor Your Product Range**
  - **Wellness Kits:** The Global Wellness Institute reported that the wellness industry in 2022 was worth \$5.6 trillion globally, indicating a significant opportunity for wellness-oriented products. To capitalise on this your retail nursery could offer specific wellness kits including:
    - **Stress Relief Collection:** Lavender, chamomile, and jasmine – known for their calming scents.
    - **Air-Purifying Collection:** Spider plants, peace lilies, and Boston ferns – excellent for improving indoor air quality.
  - **Ergonomic Tools:** Stock easy-to-use tools for a diverse range of customers.
- **Foster Community Engagement**
  - **Gardening Clubs:** Encourage participation in gardening clubs or community garden projects. It has been demonstrated that community gardening fosters relationships between individuals who have similar values and helps to dissolve barriers between cultures, all of which contribute to the creation of more socially sustainable communities. Additionally, community gardening facilitates social interactions and functions, improves mental wellbeing, and offers a way to learn from others, share experiences, and feel a sense of community and belonging.
  - **Social Media Interaction:** Create an online community around gardening for wellbeing.
- **Partner with Health and Wellness Businesses**
  - **Collaborations:** Partner with local wellness centres to cross-promote products and services.
  - **Sponsorship:** Sponsor local wellness events to enhance visibility.

## GARDENING FOR WELLBEING TIPS TO GIVE YOUR CUSTOMERS

Gardening for wellbeing goes beyond the mere act of planting and nurturing; it's about creating a space that fosters mental, physical, and emotional health. Here are tips for you to give your customers of all gardening levels to help them find peace and satisfaction in their gardening endeavours:

- **Start with a Plan:** Before they dig in, help them plan their garden space. Consider factors like sunlight, soil type, and the amount of time they can dedicate. A well-thought-out plan can prevent gardening tasks from becoming overwhelming and ensure a more rewarding experience.
- **Choose the Right Plants:** Begin with easy-to-care-for plants that match their skill level to avoid customers feeling guilty if their plants become sick or die due to incorrect care. For beginners, easy-to-care-for plants like succulents, snake plants, or herbs can be a great start.
- **Mindful Gardening Practices:** Suggest they engage in gardening mindfully by focusing on the present moment. Have them notice the feel of the soil, the sound of the birds, and the smell of the plants. This practice can help reduce stress and improve mental clarity.
- **Garden Design:** Create a space that feels peaceful, using elements like water features or wind chimes.
- **Create a Sensory Experience:** Incorporate plants with various textures, fragrances, and colours to stimulate the senses. For example, lavender and rosemary offer soothing scents, while the soft leaves of lamb's ear can provide a tactile experience.
- **Garden Journaling:** Keep a garden journal to track your progress, jot down thoughts, or sketch plants. This can be a therapeutic way to reflect on your gardening journey and observe the growth and changes, not just in your garden, but in yourself as well.
- **Gardening for Wildlife:** Create a wildlife-friendly garden by planting native species and pollinator attracting flowering perennials and annuals (with a range of flowering seasons), setting up bird feeders, or installing a small pond. Attracting birds, butterflies, and other wildlife can add an extra layer of enjoyment to gardening.
- **Regular Maintenance:** Regularly tending to your garden can provide a sense of routine and accomplishment. Even simple tasks like watering your vegetable garden or pruning can be therapeutic and give a sense of purpose.

By integrating the concept of gardening for wellbeing into their marketing and product offerings, retail garden centres can tap into the growing wellness market. This approach not only meets the current consumer demand but also contributes positively to the health and wellbeing of the community. Through educational initiatives, tailored product ranges, and a focus on therapeutic experiences, garden centres can enhance their appeal and foster long-term customer relationships.

WRITTEN BY TARA PRESTON



# CULTIVATING THE FUTURE: Your Role in Promoting Horticulture Careers

By Anita Campbell

As individuals deeply rooted in this green sector, the responsibility to promote horticulture as a vibrant career option and nurture the next generation rests with us. As industry ambassadors, we are uniquely placed to educate about the many benefits of our industry.

**A role for everyone:** Let's champion the inclusivity of horticulture. From hands-on cultivation to managerial roles, research, design, and leadership positions, the industry embraces individuals with varying skills and interests. The diverse range of qualifications and courses ensures accessibility to anyone with a passion for plants and sustainability.

**Sustainable Practices and Environmental Stewardship:** Plants improve the environment by releasing oxygen into the atmosphere, absorbing carbon dioxide, providing nutrients to animals, and regulating the water cycle. Our commitment to sustaining life on earth is our badge of honour! Each of us plays a role in actively contributing to environmental conservation, biodiversity, and the overall well-being of the planet. Let's remind everyone of their contribution to the planet by working in horticulture and showcase our eco-friendly practices, reduced environmental impact, and resource-efficient production methods that define our industry.

**Contribution to the economy:** Horticulture is one of the fastest-growing industries in Australia, playing a vital role in delivering economic, social, and environmental value. While hard to quantify the exact value of the NSW horticulture industry we can all agree that it contributes billions to the NSW economy every year. Let's remind everyone of the economic importance of our industry.

**Global Opportunities and Technological Advancements:** As pioneers, we understand the global scope of horticulture. We encourage international collaboration and welcome the infusion of diverse ideas. Our industry embraces technological advancements, from precision farming to automation, all of which positions us as leaders in innovation. It's time to amplify our technological achievements to attract the best minds.

**Appealing to the Youth:** We, the architects of green spaces, have a unique perspective on the dynamic and innovative nature of our work. Let's highlight the attractiveness of horticulture to the younger generation. Showcasing the creativity, innovation, and hands-on engagement that defines our careers will resonate with their values and aspirations.

**Promoting Personal Well-being:** Beyond economic prosperity, our industry nurtures personal well-being. We've experienced the positive impact of spending time in green environments on mental health, stress reduction, and overall happiness. Let's share our personal stories, making horticulture not just a job but a holistic approach to life.

The responsibility to engage and inspire the youth falls on our shoulders. We need your help. Let's actively participate in educational outreach programs, offer internships, and build partnerships with educational institutions.

As we strive to future-proof our industry, we call on you to enrol an apprentice. Australia is facing staggering skills shortages and our industry is no exception. We have experienced a 22% increase in sales since 2015-16 but not a corresponding increase in employment within the industry. Engaging an apprentice not only brings Government assistance but also fosters skill development, talent growth, and adds new perspectives to your business.

Each apprentice enrolled is a step towards future-proofing our industry. We aim to recruit 50 apprentices for the class of 2024 to ensure a robust and skilled workforce to take us into the future.





# WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW:

**Certificate III Nursery Ops Vs Certificate III Horticulture:** Choosing the right course is crucial. Certificate III Nursery Ops (retail or production) is the registered qualification for apprentices and the only qualification that provides specialist skills to be a grower or a retailer whereas Cert III Horticulture is designed to develop general skills and knowledge and does not specialise in any horticulture related field.

*Did you know that students enrolled in C III Nursery Ops can gain a dual qualification to receive their C III in Horticulture by completing only one extra unit? This valuable insight adds flexibility and enhances the apprentice's skill set.*

**Appealing to the Youth:** Customised Learning for Success: Join us in promoting customised learning through TAFE NSW Richmond Campus. The delivery is

designed to meet the demands of the nursery industry, offering flexibility and responsiveness while maintaining quality training. Engage apprentices in virtual tutorials, catch-ups, block releases, and work-based assessments, all tailored to industry needs.

## Getting Started:

Help us future-proof our industry by enrolling an apprentice. Contact the Australian Network Provider (ANP) to sign up, and connect with TAFE Richmond College for enrolment details. With customised programs developed centrally from Richmond, apprentices can join from anywhere in NSW.

In conclusion, our collective efforts can shape the future of the horticulture industry. With your support, we can sow the seeds of inspiration, cultivate a thriving tomorrow, and ensure that horticulture remains a vibrant and fulfilling career choice.



Nursery & Garden Industry  
NSW & ACT

## A CAREER IN HORTICULTURE

### NURSERY OPERATIONS:

#### Production Nursery:

- Horticultural Trainee
- Production Nursery Trainee
- Horticultural Assistant
- Nursery Worker
- Flower Grower
- Assistant Horticultural Crop Farmhand
- Production Nursery Assistant

#### Retail Nursery:

- Retail Nursery Sales Trainee
- Retail Nursery Sales Assistant
- Retail Nursery Worker
- Retail Nursery Sales Representative

#### Retail Nursery:

- Retail Nursery Sales Trainee
- Retail Nursery Sales Assistant
- Retail Nursery Worker
- Retail Nursery Sales Representative

### LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT:

#### Leadership in Production and Retail:

- Horticultural Team Leader
- Protected Horticulture Supervisor
- Production Nursery Supervisor
- Retail Nursery Supervisor

#### Management Excellence:

- Horticultural Manager
- Production Manager (Production Nursery)
- Nursery Manager (Retail Nursery)
- General Manager
- Operations Manager

### ADVANCED PROFESSIONS AND SPECIALISED PATHS:

#### Advanced Professions in Horticulture:

- Biosecurity Officer
- Soil Specialist
- Field Biologist
- Plant Ecologist
- Laboratory Technician
- Conservation Biologist
- Forestry Manager

#### Sales and Marketing in Retail:

- National Sales & Marketing Manager
- Managing Director
- Business Owner
- Retail Business Owner
- National Retail Sales Manager

#### Advanced Professions in Horticulture:

- Biosecurity Officer
- Soil Specialist
- Field Biologist
- Plant Ecologist
- Laboratory Technician
- Conservation Biologist
- Forestry Manager

"CULTIVATE A FLOURISHING FUTURE IN HORTICULTURE, AUSTRALIA'S \$11 BILLION INDUSTRY, OFFERING DIVERSE, SUSTAINABLE, AND INNOVATIVE CAREER PATHS WITH GLOBAL OPPORTUNITIES, PROMOTING ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP, WELL-BEING, AND JOB SATISFACTION."

#GROWWITHGREENLIFE



# HOW YOUR NURSERY LEVY SUPPORTS NSW AND ACT'S GREENLIFE INDUSTRY

The nursery levy works for you to fund a variety of projects and programs which strengthen the greenlife industry. Broadly, it works to fund research and development initiatives, as well as marketing activities to spread the word and raise the profile of the sector.

Levy funded projects in 2023 provided valuable tools and research for the industry, like an economic overview, case studies on best practice management, and research and development updates on water disinfection.

## ➔ ECONOMIC OUTLOOK

The Australian horticulture industry was estimated to be worth \$17.2 billion in FY2022, as reported in the 2021-22 Nursery Industry Data Capture Report funded by Hort Innovation. The industry had a farmgate gross value of production (GVP) of \$2.78 billion, and post farmgate is estimated to have added a whopping \$2.49 billion to the economy.

In NSW/ACT, the gross value of production (GVP) in FY2022 was \$832.6M – the highest in the country. The NSW/ACT greenlife industry employs 3,610 full-time equivalent (FTE) staff, with NSW representing 24% of total industry sales.

## ➔ WHAT'S NEXT?




By 2030, the Australian nursery industry is projected to be worth \$3.165 billion, with NSW/ACT representing \$949.6 million of this figure, according to the Center for International Economics. It's an exciting time to be in the greenlife industry, and GIA looks forward to continuing to work with state organisations and stakeholders to deliver the best possible outcomes for industry.

## LEVY-FUNDED R&D ENSURING CLEAN WATER AND GREEN FUTURES

The levy-funded NSW Department of Primary Industries (DPI) project Validating Water Disinfection Systems in Nursery Production (NY21002) is evaluating and comparing the efficacy of irrigation water disinfection methods. The project team is engaging and collaborating with growers to assess the performance of water disinfection systems in real world conditions, with the aim of determining if the systems are delivering the expected results. The data will be used to update the Nursery Industry Accreditation Scheme (NIASA). The project is pivotal in safeguarding the industry's future through addressing current challenges and equipping growers to face future threats.

Read the R&D update by scanning the QR code:



	NEW SOUTH WALES/ACT	QUEENSLAND	VICTORIA	WESTERN AUSTRALIA	SOUTH AUSTRALIA	NORTHERN TERRITORY	TASMANIA
 GVP	\$832.6M	\$832.6M	\$777.1M	\$221.1M	\$55.5M	\$36.1M	\$19.4M
 Employment	3,610 FTE	3,738 FTE	3,758 FTE	829 FTE	323 FTE	140 FTE	108 FTE
 GVA	\$753.6M	\$705.4M	\$758.6M	\$154.1M	\$66.0M	\$29.5M	\$19.8M

Stats from the 2021-22 Nursery Industry Data Capture Report





**Auscitrus Nursery**



**Greenlife  
Industry Australia**

## PROMOTING THE VALUE OF ACCREDITATION

Located in Dareton, NSW, Auscitrus is committed to providing customers across Australia with top quality citrus budwood and seed. Manager Tim Hermann participated in a GIA case study, explaining that NIASA helps Auscitrus to stay at the top of its game. Gaining accreditation was a priority for Auscitrus, and it ensures the business upholds best management practices and adheres to industry standards.

Your nursery levy ensures GIA can spread the word on accreditation and its benefits, encouraging other businesses to do the same. This promotes a sustainable future for the Australian nursery industry. Read the Auscitrus case study via the QR Code:



**Harry working hard in a dam collecting sediment samples.**

## MACQUARIE UNIVERSITY AND NGINA FLOOD PROJECT

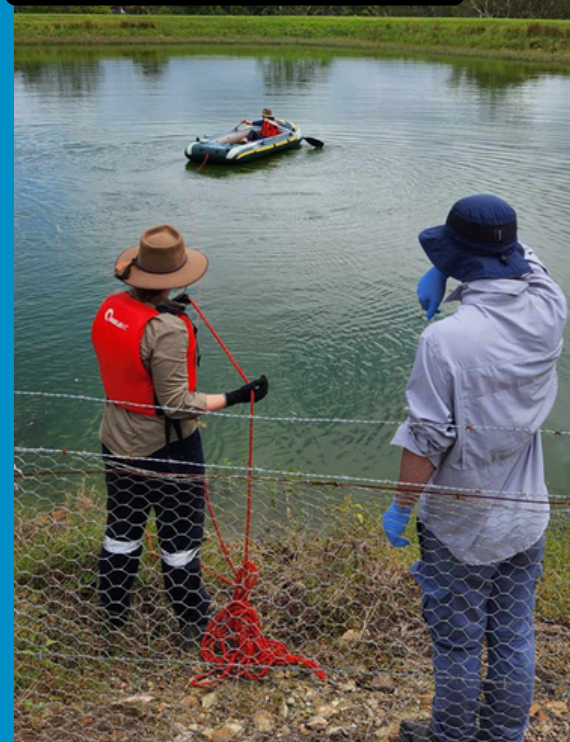
The NGINA, in collaboration with Macquarie University, has secured funding from the Department of Regional NSW for a Flood and Storm Research Project focused on investigating water storage contamination in NSW nurseries following floods or heavy rain. The project involves nurseries from Northern Sydney, Central Coast, and Northern Rivers, exploring landscape settings, runoff and hydrology, water and soil contaminants, plant pathogens, and aquatic biota.

### 16th February 2024

Bradley Graves and Harry Bowman from Macquarie University undertook onsite visits to gather the initial set of water quality and photopoint data at production nurseries across Sydney, the Central Coast, and the Northern Rivers regions during January and early February 2024. Accompanied by Macquarie University Summer Internship students Jessica Honor and Ella Molloy, the team dedicated their time and efforts to collect water and sediment samples, gaining invaluable field experience. They are now actively engaged in processing and analysing the gathered data back at Macquarie University. Additionally, Megan Gomes has been working diligently on the water quality fact sheets. We are in the process of finalising our nursery fact sheets, and once they receive approval, we will disseminate them to the NGINA community – stay tuned!

Here is a selection of photos from our most recent fieldwork!

**Retrieving images from nursery cameras and maintaining camera systems.**



**Jess and Ella actively gaining hands-on experience and collaboratively working as a team under the supervision of Harry.**



# Syngenta Ornamentals introduces a new website with innovative digital tools, to aid in your plant protection programs' decision-making.

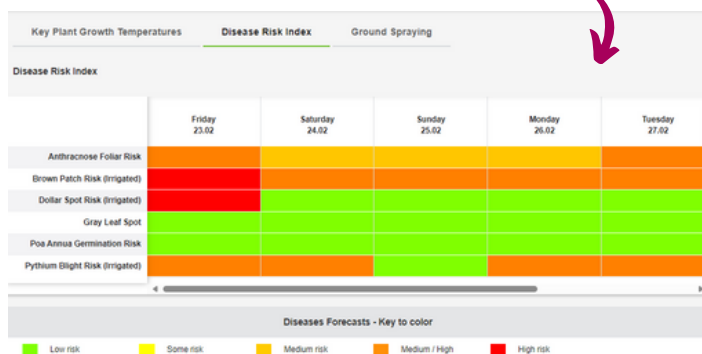
Syngenta is committed to driving innovation in the ornamentals industry as it announces the launch of their dedicated Ornamentals website. This comprehensive resource is tailored specifically for ornamental growers and is filled up with valuable features, including:

- The Expert Centre, providing service and digital tools and key information on the common pests and diseases that growers can find.
- Practical advice on managing pests and diseases, addressing the daily challenges faced by growers.
- A series of webinars hosted by our global network of Syngenta experts, offering insights and knowledge from around the world.
- Best practice tips for application techniques to optimise plant health and productivity.

## WHY UTILISE TEMPERATURE AND HUMIDITY DATA?

High temperatures can cause heat stress in plants, leading to wilting, sunburn, and reduced growth. Nurseries may need to provide shade and/or increase irrigation to mitigate these effects.

High humidity can create an environment conducive to fungal diseases and pests, which can rapidly spread and damage plants. By integrating these critical parameters, you can better assess and predict the disease risk window for your site for the upcoming seven days, allowing you to get ahead of high disease pressure periods and have stock protected by a preventive application.



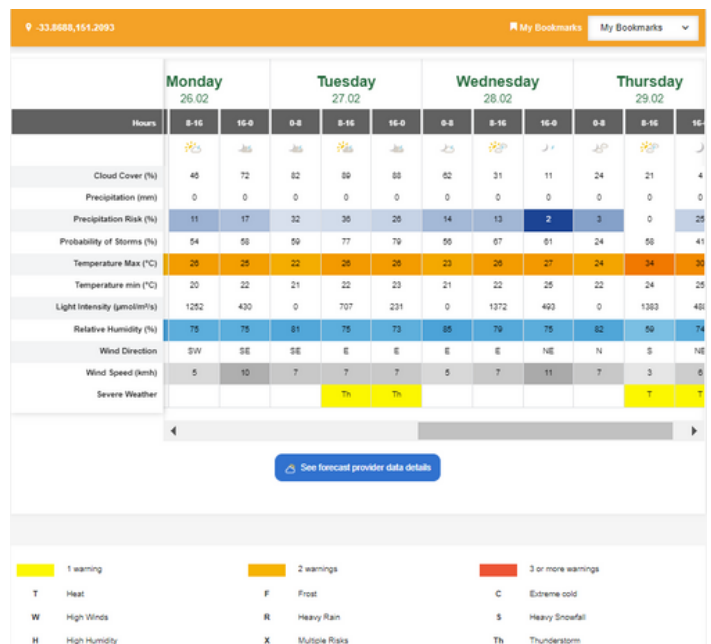
Syngenta Ornamentals Weather Forecast Digital Tool - Disease Risk Index

## THE DIGITAL WEATHER TOOLS

The access to comprehensive data is crucial for informed decision-making. The new Syngenta Ornamentals website provides, at no cost, digital weather tools designed to empower growers with the information needed to make well-informed decisions regarding plant protection application programs and optimal timing. This, in turn, promotes sustainable and responsible practices, assisting in the reduction of chemical usage over the course of a year.

All digital tools are designed to pinpoint your exact location, delivering the most accurate weather data directly to you including precipitation risk, wind speeds and humidity levels. These tools offer a comprehensive range of data presentation options – for the upcoming seven days – including:

- Daily averages
- Eight-hourly averages
- Hourly averages.



Syngenta Ornamentals Weather Forecast Digital Tool - Weather Weekly View



Syngenta's advanced tools significantly enhance nursery and garden management by accurately predicting the most effective spraying times within the upcoming week. This precision in timing ensures optimal efficacy of products like pesticides and fungicides, tailored to specific environmental conditions such as temperature and humidity. Such targeted application not only maximises the effectiveness of these products, leading to healthier plants and improved yields, but also promotes cost efficiency by reducing waste. Moreover, it aids in adhering to best practice standards and regulatory compliance, minimising environmental impact through reduced off-target movement. Additionally, this predictive capability allows for better labour management, ensuring that spraying activities are scheduled efficiently.



**Syngenta Ornamentals Weather Forecast Digital Tool - Ground Spraying Risk Matrix**

## FURTHER DATA AVAILABLE

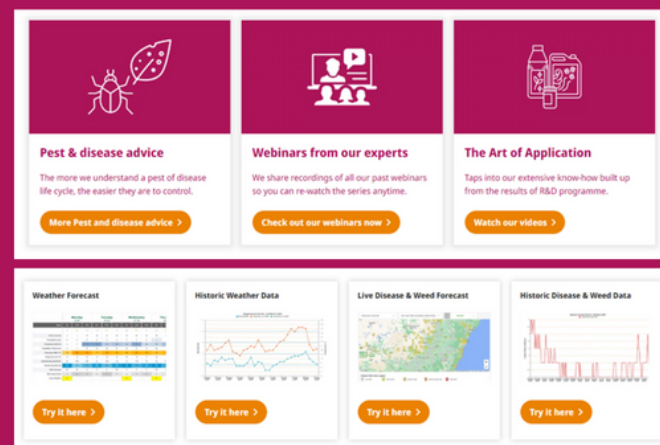
Additionally, going beyond the standard metrics, our digital weather tools provide detailed insights on:

- light intensity
- cloud cover
- storms potential
- likelihood of severe weather including frost, heavy rain and heavy snowfall
- soil temperature

Knowledge of extreme weather events such as frost, snow, high humidity, heavy rain, and extreme heat is vital for production nurseries, as these conditions can have profound impacts on plant health, growth, and the overall success of the nursery. Each type of extreme weather presents unique challenges:

- **Frost and Snow:** These can cause physical damage to plants, particularly to new growth, and can be fatal to sensitive species. Understanding the likelihood of frost and snow enables nurseries to implement protective measures, such as frost cloths or heating, to safeguard their plants.
- **Heavy Rain:** Excessive rainfall can lead to waterlogging, root rot, and nutrient leaching from the soil, adversely affecting plant health. Nurseries need to be prepared to adjust watering schedules accordingly.

## Expert Centre, digital tools, webinars and much more.



syngenta

But it does not stop there. In addition to the weather forecast tool, the website provides historical weather data tools, offering an invaluable data source to visualise past weather patterns impacting your specific site. Data includes temperature, rainfall, soil temperature, long-term extremes or averages and seasonal comparisons. Assessing the effectiveness of your programs over the past 12 months is crucial and determining whether adjustments are necessary for the upcoming year is equally important.

Scale data for daily, weekly, or monthly averages and get the benefits of assisting with preventative programs and maximise efficacy and longevity of product applications. With just a few clicks, you can access up to seven years of historical data tailored specifically to your location.

Within the Expert Centre, the website also provides a Live Disease Risk Tool and Historic Disease data, a useful guide to define risk of the potential disease due to local conditions, where the risk models have been developed based on known parameters required for potential development.

Join us at the new Syngenta Ornamentals website and get access to specialised knowledge here:

**[www.syngentaornamentals.com.au](http://www.syngentaornamentals.com.au)**



Syngenta Australia Pty Ltd, Level 1, 2-4 Lyonpark Road, Macquarie Park NSW 2113. ABN 33 002 933 717. ®Registered trademark of a Syngenta Group Company. ™Trademark of a Syngenta Group Company. All products written in uppercase are registered trademarks of a Syngenta Group Company. © 2024 Syngenta. ED 24-024.



# Become a member



Nursery & Garden Industry  
NSW & ACT

The Nursery & Garden Industry NSW & ACT (NGINA) is an industry-led, membership-based, not-for-profit organisation that is the peak industry body for operators in the nursery and garden sector in NSW and ACT. This can include:

- growers and producers of plants
- wholesalers and hirers of plants
- retailers of plants and related products
- industry gardens, florists and landscapers
- allied traders—suppliers of growing media, chemicals, containers, tools and equipment, etc.
- service providers including consultants, training providers, government departments, etc.

Members of NGINA range from small to medium-sized family-based operations through to multinational corporations and all share a passion for greenlife and for the industry.

Such a diverse membership brings with it many different needs and requirements and that's why we have created a range of membership categories.

## NEW

MEMBER INCENTIVES

**\$150 COULD  
BE YOURS!**

Earn \$150, simply refer a potential member. Once they have successfully signed up you will receive \$150!  
The more members you bring on board, the more you earn!



Students

**\$50**

Subscription to N&G News, eNews, access to Sydney and regional trade days.  
Invitations to attend our four NextGen events held throughout the year



Single Business Owner

**\$625**

A business entity (owner/operator) that conducts its operations with no additional employees and/or contractors engaged in the delivery or production of its products or services



Trading

**\$1,470**

Available for businesses with 5 or less full-time equivalent (FTE\*) employees including owner/principal



Enterprise

**\$2,450**

Available for businesses with 6–20 full-time equivalent (FTE\*) employees including owner/principal



Corporate

**\$4,400**

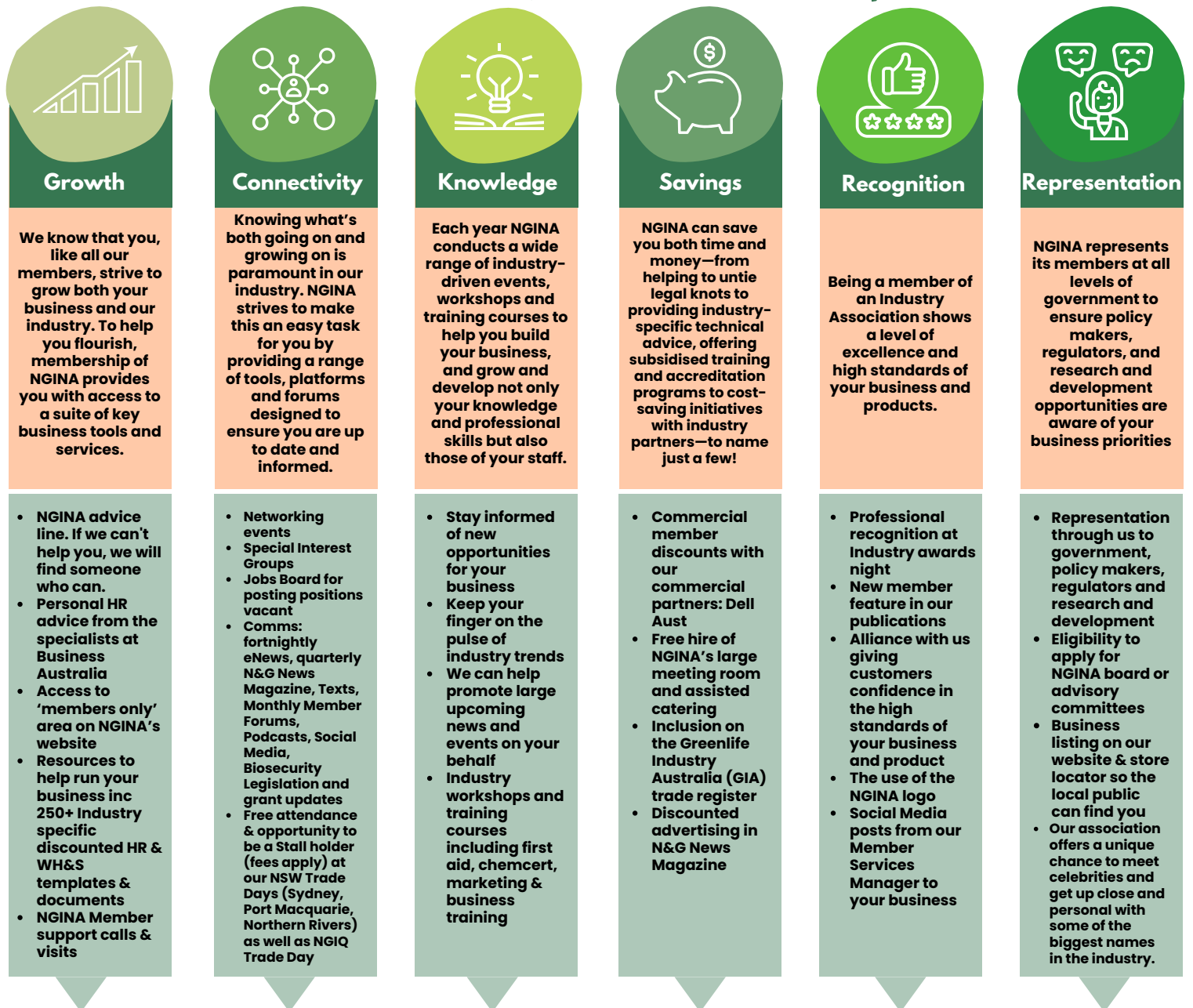
Available for businesses with more than 20 full-time equivalent (FTE\*) employees including owner/principal

Complete our NGINA membership application form online by scanning this QR code. Approved applicants will be notified by email or contacted by phone. If you have any questions about membership, please contact the NGINA office on 02 9679 1472.





# NGINA MEMBER BENEFITS



## WHAT YOUR COMPANY CAN SAVE BY BEING A MEMBER:

**HR & IR Advice line | \$3500**  
Average cost of an external support line

**HR & IR Documents | \$5000**  
Average cost to create legal company specific HR & IR documents through a lawyer

**WH&S Manual | \$5000**  
Average cost to create a legal company specific WH&S Manual through a lawyer

**Jobs Listings | \$225**  
Per job: Posted on website, Instagram, Facebook, Linked in & eNews

**N&G News Ads x 4 | \$6600**

**Yearly NSW Trade Day Entry | \$250**

**N&G News x 4 | \$50**

**Social Media Advertising | \$80**

**Forklift Training | \$300**  
Per person

**Training Savings | \$150**  
Members get 10-20% off. Average calculated per person for 3 courses per year

**Dell Australia Commercial Member Discounts | \$500+**  
Price may vary year to year

**Meeting Room | \$500**  
Full day, fully equipped

**GIA Register | \$2500**  
Non-member listing price

**New Member Features | \$1100**  
Full page article/ad in N&G News, CEO welcome in eNews, Full ad with company links in eNews

**Social Media Post | \$80**  
Recap of our visit and a blurb about your business on our Facebook and Instagram.

**Store Locator | \$1000**  
Be found by the public and other industry professionals on our website store locator.

**Website Links | \$500**  
Member feature on our website with all your contact details including backlinks to your website which assist in boosting SEO.

### OTHER INVALUABLE SERVICES:

- NGINA staff technical support
- Freight savings at Trade Day
- Networking
- Exposure
- Information
- Professional Development

**A TOTAL SAVING OF: \$28,515.00\***

\*Savings may vary year to year and are calculated by the average member potential savings



## NEW MEMBER

### Indigo Specialty Products Pty Ltd

Indigo Specialty Products is a privately-owned business, formed and operated by a small team of industry professionals with extensive experience in manufacture, distribution, development and product registration. We are a business focussed on production and supply of plant protection, weed control, pest control, plant nutrition, soil, water management and biological products.

# indigo

## SPECIALTY PRODUCTS



Specialising in Australasian non-crop and niche horticultural markets, including Nursery Production, Turf & Amenity, Industrial Vegetation Management, Aquatics, Pest Control and Consumer Home Garden & Pest Management.

We strive to be relevant in our core markets, by adding value via overcoming issues and obstacles that are present in the markets we operate within. We do this by focusing on control of key pests or diseases or by solving key management issues that our valued end user customers have. We also strive to be active in the core markets in which we operate by working closely with our allied distribution network, offering support, service and advice where required.

#### Team photo

Pictured from left to right (back row): Andrew Chan, Peter Kirby, Tim Kennedy and Andrew Bull.  
Pictured from left to right (front row): Helen Yeo, Penny Bale and Lesley Pepperell.

#### Contact Details:

- 0491 201 694
- orders@indigospecialty.com
- www.indigospecialty.com.au
- 3/49 Donaldson Road, Rocklea QLD
- @indigospecialtyproducts
- Indigo Specialty Products
- Indigo Specialty Products Pty Ltd
- @indigospecialty





# NEW MEMBER



## EnviroTec: We've got you covered!

Our vision is simple: Create the highest quality greenhouses for growers across Australia. We provide customers as diverse as the Australian landscape with protection for their crops, plants and seedlings. As a 100% Australian family-owned and operated business and daughter company of Fernland, we build on 35 years of experience in horticulture.

Our business has been built upon core beliefs which we feel are extremely important:

- A market-leading range of proven quality products at competitive prices.
- Outstanding customer service and care. We are always prepared to go the extra mile.
- Exceptional workmanship that our customers have come to rely on.
- Experienced, friendly and helpful staff with extensive industry knowledge.
- An honest and committed approach to our customers and their growing needs.

## Nurturing Australia's Horticultural Landscape

We supply and install a comprehensive range of structures for nurseries, farms and related industries. From shadehouses for the backyard to extensive commercial structures.

Most parts of our greenhouses are made in our warehouse in Yandina (QLD) or with other local partners. This is how we deliver structures that have survived floods, hail and other weather events in the past. Our Shadecloth and Plastic Covers keep animals and the hot Australian sun out and create healthy growing environments. With clear instructions and good old customer service, doing business with EnviroTec is easy and straightforward.

Visit us here:



### Contact:



07 5454 8899



[sales@envirotecstructures.com.au](mailto:sales@envirotecstructures.com.au)



[envirotecstructures.com.au](http://envirotecstructures.com.au)



33 Paulger Flat Rd, Yandina QLD 4561



@envirotecstructures



@envirotecstructures



# FAST TRACK YOUR NURSERY OPS: QUALIFICATION GREEN THUMB PRO

NGINA, through the Trade Pathways Innovation Fund (TPIF), is revolutionising the path to trade qualification in the industry. Our innovative app, developed with the Trade Pathways grant, simplifies evidence collection and assessment, enabling an easier route to achieving a Certificate III in Nursery Operations via Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL).



Our RPL App for Nursery Ops is coming along beautifully, and we have our Pre-Qualifier questionnaire ready to test. Big thanks to Pace and Steve Rixon for their contributions and expertise.

If you (or anyone you know) has existing experience in the industry and may qualify for RPL, you can take our Pre-Qualifier Questionnaire to find out. It should take you 10-20 minutes and will give you a great idea of the benchmarks required for each unit and evidence you would be asked to supply to prove your competency.

Having participants from industry test the app as we create and refine it will help us to create a more effective tool, with a simple and stress-free user experience so your help is greatly appreciated.

If you're curious to see how you stack up against the latest qualification requirements and industry best practice, please give it a go – you never know – you might discover you're closer to a qualification, and recognition for your skills and experience than you realise!



← CHECK OUT THE LANDING PAGE ON  
OUR WEBSITE WITH A LINK TO THE  
TRIAL VERSION OF THE APP HERE



## GREEN EXPO 2024

30 - 31 July  
Gold Coast Turf Club & Events Centre

[www.ngiq.asn.au](http://www.ngiq.asn.au) | [events@ngiq.asn.au](mailto:events@ngiq.asn.au) | +61 7 3277 7900



# BIOSECURITY UPDATE AND INFORMATION:

## Red Imported Fire Ants

By Tara Preston

### What does a Fire Ant Look Like?

Their distinguishable features make them easy to identify against other ant species. Fire ants are:

- Dark, reddish-brown with a darker black-brown abdomen
- Small, measuring 2–6 mm long
- Found in a variety of sizes within the one nest
- Waist section has two segments
- Aggressive behaviour - hundreds of ants will come out of a nest if disturbed, trying to sting over and over

Fire ant nests can look like mounds of loose, crumbly or fluffy looking soil with a honeycomb appearance with no obvious entry or exit holes. They are not always visible and can take months to pop up. They are usually found in warm, open areas.

### What should I do if I think I have found a fire ant?

#### Reporting to NSW Department of Primary Industry (DPI)

Report any suspicious ant sightings in NSW to DPI immediately, as these pests can spread rapidly. Important: Don't try to control or treat suspected fire ants yourself. Eradication requires direct supervision by NSW DPI to apply the expert treatment and checks. Call 1800 680 244 OR use the online form via this QR Code;



#### Reporting to ACT Access Canberra

If you think you have seen fire ants or their nests in the ACT, do not disturb or touch them. Contact Access Canberra on 13 22 81 during business hours.

### What if I transit through a biosecurity zone (from a fire ant free area) to a clear zone in NSW?

You can move a fire ant carrier material through the known infested area of Queensland into NSW only if:

- The fire ant carrier was present in the known infested area for less than 12 hours, and
- You did not stop in the known infested area during transit, except to obtain supplies, i.e. fuel, or rest, or have a meal, or deal with an emergency, and
- The fire ant carrier was kept in a condition to prevent infestation by fire ants (i.e. kept off the ground to prevent fire ants crawling into or onto the materials) and kept covered to prevent fire ants landing on the materials.

### What are my reporting obligations if I want to order plants from a declared fire ant biosecurity zone?

#### Biosecurity Regulations for Fire Ant Carrier Material entering NSW:

NSW Biosecurity (Fire Ant) Emergency Order (No 1) 2024 outlines a Biosecurity Zone as a five-kilometre radius from the nest sites and restricts businesses and residents within the radius from moving fire ant carrier materials out of the biosecurity zone. These materials include, but are not limited to potted plants and growing media and soil.





### Record of Movement Requirements for NSW

Any person who **initiates the movement of a fire ant carrier** into NSW from the fire ant infested area must:

- provide details of the movement and a copy of the approved biosecurity certificate to the Department of Primary Industries by completing and submitting the record of movement declaration form before the fire ant carrier is moved, and
- retain details of the movement for 4 years.

This means retail garden centres and production nurseries buying stock (including potted plants and growing media) from within the fire ant movement control areas in Queensland and NSW must declare the Record of Movement – **because you initiate the movement by placing an order!** Failing to do this is an offence that carries severe penalties.

**You might not know all of the required information to complete the Form at the time of ordering your stock** (such as the registration of the transport vehicle and the date of movement). You must start a Record of Movement and save your progress to return to later when you have all the required information from the seller and the freight company. You must **finalise and submit the form before the product physically comes into NSW** from Queensland/Biosecurity Zones. Because you initiated the movement (by asking for the product) the onus is on you to start a form and submit it once you have all the information.

### Biosecurity Regulations for Fire Ant Carrier Material entering the ACT

In February 2024, ACT Government announced new mandatory restrictions on the importation of products and materials into the ACT that could potentially carry fire ants from affected areas of fire ant infestations in NSW and Queensland under the Plant Diseases (Red Imported Fire Ant Importation Restrictions) Declaration 2024.

#### Potted plants

Potted plants that have been present in the known infested area must not be moved into the ACT unless the following requirements have been met:

- The **potting media** that is part of the potted plant was **treated with an APVMA approved chemical for the control of fire ants** in accordance with all label directions and permit conditions;
- The treatment of the potting media of the potted plant **remains effective until the potted plant arrives in the ACT;**
- **The plant is accompanied by one of the following certificates certifying that the measures in paragraphs (a) and (b) have been met:** (i) a plant health certificate; (ii) a BioSecure HACCP Biosecurity Certificate issued in accordance with the entry conditions specified in BioSecure HACCP Entry Conditions Compliance Procedure Number: ECCPRIFA28, published by GIA; and (iii) a plant health assurance certificate

#### Organic mulch and soil

Organic mulch or soil that has been present in the known infested area must not be moved into the ACT unless the following requirements have been met:

- (a) the organic **mulch or soil was treated so that all parts of the mass were brought to a minimum temperature of 65.5° Celsius;**
- (b) immediately following treatment, the organic mulch or soil was **handled and stored in a manner that prevents infestation** by fire ants;
- (c) the organic mulch or soil remains in conditions that prevent infestation by fire ants until it arrives in the ACT; and
- (d) the organic mulch or soil is **accompanied by one of these certificates** certifying that the measures in paragraphs (a) and (b) have been met: (i) a plant health certificate, or (ii) a BioSecure HACCP Biosecurity Certificate

---

### How do I know where the Biosecurity Zone is?

To check if the supplier you are ordering from is located within a declared Fire Ant Biosecurity Zone (and therefore if you need to complete a Record of Movement) you will need to check the suppliers address in the Fire Ant Biosecurity Zone Map from the National Fire Ant Eradication Authority which is updated daily at [www.fireants.org.au/stop-the-spread/fireantmap](http://www.fireants.org.au/stop-the-spread/fireantmap)

---



## How do I treat potting media?

### Advice from Dr Sam Stacey, ICL Technical Manager

The Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) has issued off-label permits for specific insecticides, such as bifenthrin, that are effective in controlling fire ants. The permits provide options to either treat growing media prior to or after potting.

#### Applications before potting

For growers in NSW, Maxguard 2G can be incorporated into media prior to potting under the APVMA permit PER13916 to control fire ants. For most nurseries, this will best be done by the potting soil supplier prior to the growing media being delivered.

The NSW permit suggests a range of application rates depending on the period of protection required, from up to 6 months to more than 24 months. The dose rate is given as a target ppm (mg/kg) of active ingredient and users need to calculate the product rate to incorporate based on the dry bulk density of the potting media. The potting media supplier will have information on the bulk density of your mix and probably only needs confirmation from the grower about the period of protection required.

If you need to calculate the incorporation rate yourself the permit gives the following formula:

(bulk density of potting media (g/ml) x dose rate ppm)/concentration of bifenthrin

For example: For a media with a dry bulk density of 0.25 g/ml requiring up to 12 months control, the rate of Maxguard 2G that should be incorporated is given by:

$(0.25 \text{ g/ml} \times 12 \text{ ppm}) / 2 = 1.5 \text{ kg of Maxguard 2G per m}^3 \text{ of media.}$

#### Applications to existing potted stock

Procide 80SC can be applied as a drench to the surface of existing stock in NSW and QLD under a separate APVMA Permit PER14317. PER14317 allows for the treatment of containerised ornamental plants and non-bearing fruit trees. Fruit trees that are already bearing fruit must have the fruit removed prior to treatment.

Procide 80SC should be diluted at a rate of 2.5ml per litre of water. The mixture can be applied as a pot drench and watered thoroughly or, alternatively, it can be used as a dip by completely immersing the pot or root ball into the solution. In both cases, the product should be reapplied at least every 28 days.

Importantly, plants need to be treated 2 days prior to movement of the stock from the property.

If you are unsure about treatment options or how to calculate the correct application rates, please reach out to Robert Megier on 0418 239 503, or [robert.megier@icl-group.com](mailto:robert.megier@icl-group.com).

**FOR THE MOST UP TO DATE INFORMATION ON FIRE ANTS PLEASE SEE OUR BIOSECURITY PAGE IN OUR MEMBER CENTRE**

Members can visit this page by scanning this QR code: →



Contact your local ICL Regional Sales Manager for tailored and plant specific recommendations.

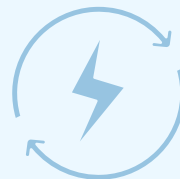
**Robert Megier 0418 239 503**





# NGINA WELCOMES NEW CORPORATE PARTNER

## CHOICEENERGY™

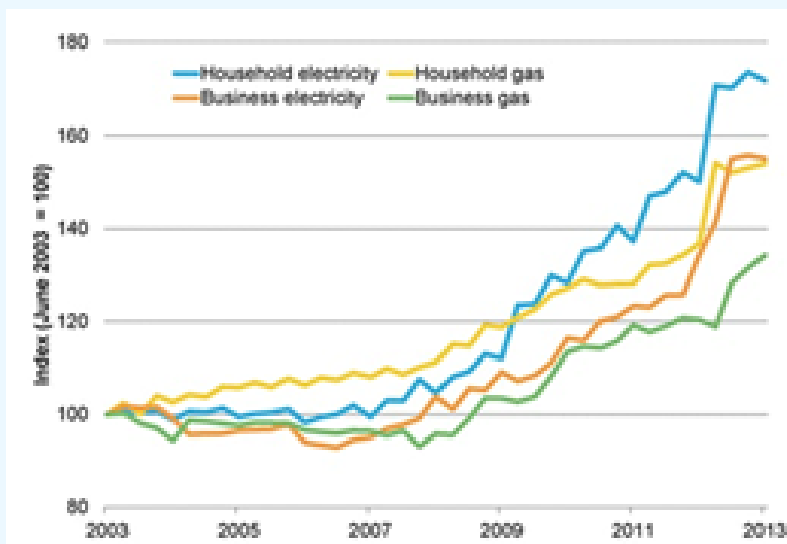


NGINA welcomes our new energy partner, Choice Energy, offering strategies and solutions to reduce energy costs and improve efficiency for our members. Choice Energy provides complimentary energy bill health checks, commercial energy broking, procurement, and quality solar solutions with performance guarantees, all aimed at fostering a predictable and low-cost energy future for businesses. With over 10,000 customers and a track record of helping 620 businesses save over \$4,000,000 since July 1st, 2023, Choice Energy stands as an award-winning commercial energy consultancy committed to cost-saving initiatives.

Contact Alex Townsend at [alex.townsend@choiceenergy.com.au](mailto:alex.townsend@choiceenergy.com.au) or 0435 080 646 for more information or register interest with the QR code below:



**"Choice Energy have already saved one of our NGINA members over \$8000 a year!"**



## #SHOWUSYOURSTICKER

**WEAR IT LOUD AND PROUD**

Financial members of NGINA have the right to display the NGINA member logo.

Where can I use this member logo?

We want you to wear your membership with pride! The success of your business and our industry is our goal.

Let clients and customers know that you are part of the reputable Nursery & Garden Industry body by displaying and promoting your membership badge.

You can publish your badge not only so it's visible at your workplace but also on your email signatures, website, business cards, letterheads, social media accounts, signage, marketing collateral, vehicles and promotional material.

Give your reputation a lift. Promote your alliance with us to give customers confidence in the high standards of your business and product.

NGINA member "New Housemates" was spotted adding their new 2024 sticker to their truck. Tag us when you share yours! [@ngina\\_nswandact](https://www.instagram.com/ngina_nswandact)





# SINCE 1972 SYDNEY TRADE DAY

Every month!

FREE FOR NGINA MEMBERS AND FIRST TIME VISITORS!\*

## Connecting growers and allied suppliers with buyers

Sydney Trade Day is a monthly trade only plant market held at the Hawkesbury Showground that connects growers and allied suppliers with buyers from across NSW and ACT.

- Pre-purchase your plants and allied products from multiple suppliers and pick up on Trade Day
- Hand pick the best stock
- Enjoy the convenience of a central collection point
- See stock from multiple suppliers under the one roof
- See what's new each month
- Talk directly with growers
- Save on freight costs
- Network and cross paths with industry peers
- Stay in touch with what is happening.

Landscapers, Garden Centres, Trade Customers, Florists, Homewares businesses and local Council representatives, please get in touch with NGINA to arrange your free entry or buy an annual buyers membership at: [info@ngina.com.au](mailto:info@ngina.com.au) or 02 9679 1472.

**Come and have a look around. Doors open at 7am. MEMBERS ARE ALWAYS FREE**

*\*This is a trade only event. Proof of trade may be required upon entry. Free visit is for first time visitors and those who haven't been in a while (6 months or more).\**



## Follow Us on Social Media



Let's Get Connected for our Latest News & Updates



on LinkedIn  
[@nursery-garden-industry-nsw-act](https://www.linkedin.com/company/nursery-garden-industry-nsw-act)



on YouTube  
[@Nursery & Garden Industry  
NSW & ACT \(NGINA\)](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCNurseryGardenIndustryNSW&ACT)



on Facebook  
[@NurseryGardenIndustryNSWACT](https://www.facebook.com/NurseryGardenIndustryNSWACT)



on Instagram  
[@ngina\\_nswandact](https://www.instagram.com/ngina_nswandact)



on tiktok  
[@ngina\\_nswandact](https://www.tiktok.com/@ngina_nswandact)



# Northern Rivers Autumn TRADE DAY

## ALSTONVILLE SHOWGROUND

### Tuesday 12TH March, 2024

The Northern Rivers Trade Day is back in 2024, and it's going to be even better than last year. Get ready for the ultimate get-together celebrating all things green in the Nursery and Garden Industry of NSW & ACT.

#### Exclusive Lucky Door Prizes

Pre-register as a buyer for a chance to win one of three incredible \$100 lucky door prizes! It's our way of saying thank you for your support.

#### Rise and Shine with Free Breakfast

Delicious complimentary breakfast served from 7:00 am.

#### Networking Evening at the Wollongbar Tavern

You're invited to join us the night before Trade Day for an evening of drinks and nibbles at the Wollongbar Tavern, located at 53 Simpson Ave. 5:30 pm on Monday, March 11th, 2024.

For further information call Julie-Anne Pearce  
t: 02 6628 1289. e: [julespearce@bigpond.com](mailto:julespearce@bigpond.com)




**STANDHOLDERS  
REGISTRATION  
CLICK HERE**



**FREE BUYERS  
REGISTRATION  
CLICK HERE**

### Our Sponsors



Find us on   
NGINA NORTHERN RIVERS  
REGIONAL GROUP



Regular flights to Ballina and Gold Coast Airports.

Located just a short 15-minute drive from Ballina Airport and a scenic 70-minute drive from Gold Coast Airport. | Ask us for Accommodation options



# BRANCHING OUT

## AT RECENT NGINA EVENTS



### Sydney Group Christmas Party

Late last year our Sydney Group came together for their annual meeting and Christmas Party. We are incredibly grateful to our members who run our regional groups and we thank Cameron Blakemore who has stepped down as the chair of the Sydney Group after many years of service and thank Brent Tallis from Overland Nursery for taking on the position. We also welcome Evan Mueller from IGC to the committee. It was great to catch up with everyone to celebrate a wonderful year in Sydney.



### Sydney Group Event

On Tuesday 30 January the Sydney Group hosted Presenter John Stanley. John Stanley is a coach, consultant, author, speaker and trainer and has often been described as the leading horticultural consultant in the world today.

John's presentation covered getting the basics right, the driving forces from a consumer perspective, how we should adapt as retailers and growers to changing consumer trends and how to communicate what 'wellbeing' actually means.

Thank you to our Sydney Group for ensuring that we can provide such relevant content to our networking events. Everyone walked away informed, inspired and motivated.



### Northern Rivers Summer Catch Up

Our Northern Rivers Group had their Summer Catch Up at The Federal Hotel on Tuesday 6 February. The local NGINA members had a lovely evening of networking and had the chance to get the latest updates on fire ants from DPI and LLS, all things NGINA and upcoming training opportunities in the Northern Rivers.

There were many questions around fire ants and clearly our members are very passionate about doing everything possible to assist the authorities with their eradication program.





# UPCOMING

## EVENTS 2024

### CENTRAL COAST AND HUNTER GROUP EVENT **SPRINT HORTICULTURE** 29 FEBRUARY | 5.30PM

Experience a behind-the-scenes look at Sprint Horticulture's state-of-the-art propagation nursery. Discover innovative techniques and cutting-edge technology in plant propagation. This event presents a unique opportunity for our members to connect, share insights and explore the latest advancements in horticulture.

### **INTERNATIONAL WOMENS DAY** 8 MARCH | 8.00AM

Our International Women's Day Breakfast honours the remarkable women in horticulture, offering a morning filled with empowerment, networking, and insightful discussions, all complemented by a delightful breakfast. Join us at Sirculo Cafe, Dural – 8am to 10am

### **NORTHERN RIVERS TRADE DAY** 12 MARCH | 7.00AM

Join us at Alstonville Showground to connect with suppliers, discover new trends, and engage with industry professionals at the Northern Rivers Trade Day. This event is an excellent opportunity for members to explore a wide range of plants, products, and services in a vibrant market atmosphere.

### **SYDNEY TRADE DAYS** 20TH MARCH | 10TH APRIL | 8TH MAY | 19 JUNE 7.00AM - 10.00AM

Each month Sydney Trade Days are held at Hawkesbury Showground - 7am to 10am. Our Sydney Trade Days are key dates for networking, buying, and selling plants and allied products. These events are essential for staying connected and informed about the latest developments in our industry.

**We encourage all our members to participate in these events to connect, learn, and grow together. For more details and to register, please visit the member centre on our website or contact our team. We look forward to welcoming you to these events and working together to make them a resounding success!**

### NORTHERN RIVERS GROUP **PULLING BACK THE SHADE CLOTH** 26 APRIL | 31 MAY | 8.00AM

Pulling Back The Shade Cloth is a networking event in the Northern Rivers usually held at one of our members' sites.

### **NEXTGEN EVENT AT SCOTTS TUBES** 4 APRIL 2024 | 5.00PM

Our NextGen Group is for 18-35 year olds working in the industry and those who want to support them. Come and see the latest innovation and technology at Scotts Tubes who entered NGINA's Hall of Fame for winning Large Production Nursery of the Year Award in 2020, 2021 and 2022.

### **PIONEERS LUNCH** 2 MAY 2024

The Pioneers Lunch is a special occasion to honour the longstanding members and veterans of our industry. It's a day of celebration, storytelling, and acknowledgment of the contributions that have shaped the future of horticulture in NSW and ACT.

### **SYDNEY GOLF DAY** 15 MAY 2024

Tee off with fellow industry professionals at our Golf Day. This event combines leisure and networking in a relaxed, outdoor setting. It's a perfect opportunity to build relationships and enjoy a day of friendly competition on the green.

### **NSW AND ACT STATE CONFERENCE** 16 MAY 2024

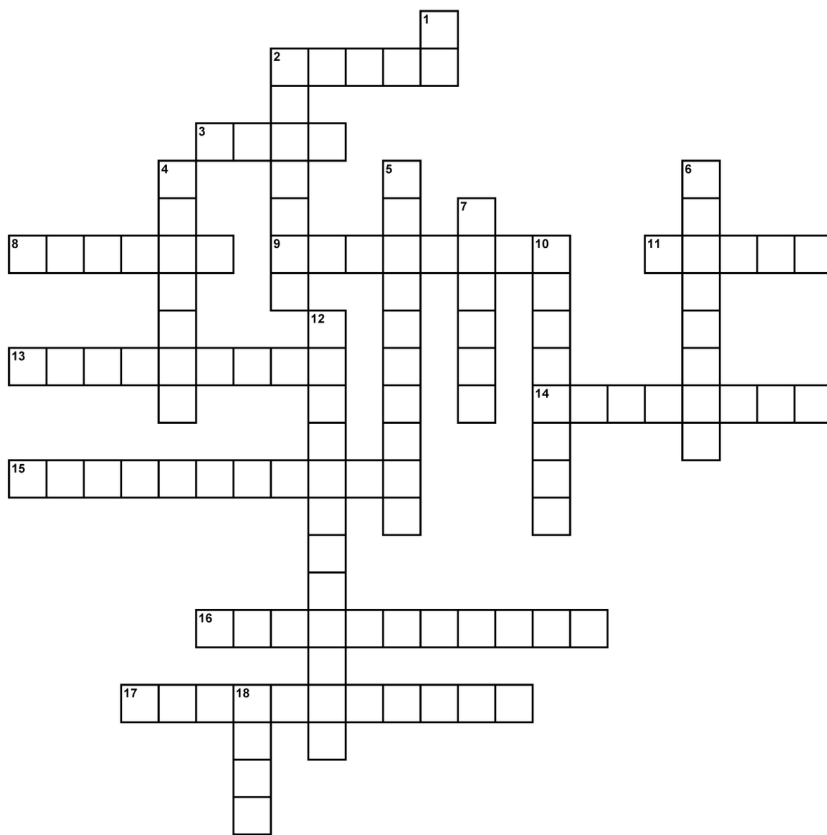
The NSW and ACT State Conference is a cornerstone event, offering a platform for learning, sharing, and discussing the latest industry trends and practices. It's an invaluable opportunity for professional development and networking.



Nursery & Garden Industry  
NSW & ACT



How well do you  
know your greenlife?



## ACROSS

**[2]** A layer of material applied to the surface of soil to conserve moisture, improve fertility, and reduce weed growth.

**[3]** Small, non-vascular plants that typically form dense green clumps or mats often found in damp or shady locations.

**[8]** A family of plants that produce a pod with seeds inside, including beans and peas.

**[9]** Microscopic, worm-like organisms that can be beneficial or harmful to plants.

**[11]** The group of structures, or sepals, at the base of a flower, enclosing the petals when in bud.

**[13]** A chemical compound or biological organism used to kill or inhibit fungi or fungal spores.

**[14]** A fragrant flowering plant known for its purple flowers, often used in aromatherapy and perfumes.

**[15]** The appearance of differently coloured zones in the leaves, and sometimes the stems, of plants.

**[16]** The process of trimming the roots of a plant to encourage new growth or to prepare it for transplanting.

**[17]** The process in plants where oxygen is used to release stored energy by breaking down sugar molecules.

# CROSSWORD

## DOWN

**[1]** A measure of the acidity or alkalinity of soil, which can affect plant growth.

**[2]** A technique of providing moisture to plants by spraying them with fine droplets of water.

**[4]** The movement of water molecules through a selectively permeable membrane from a region of lower solute concentration to higher.

**[5]** The practice of isolating plants to prevent the spread of pests or diseases.

**[6]** A horticultural technique where tissues from one plant are joined to those of another to continue their growth together.

**[7]** The art of cultivating small tree that mimic the shape and scale of full sized trees.

**[10]** A horticultural technique to train trees or shrubs against a flat surface.

**[12]** The process of using worms to decompose organic food waste into a nutrient-rich material.

**[18]** A small-sized seedling or cutting grown in an individual cell, ready for transplanting.



# SUDOKU

LEVEL: MEDIUM

		3			5		2	9
9	2		1		4	8		5
5		7	2	8			4	3
8			4	1			5	
	4	1			2	3		8
3				7	8	4		1
		5	3	2			8	4
1		8		4		5		
		4		5			1	



# From plant to plate

With Leisha Jordan

Transport your taste buds to the sun-drenched shores of Greece with these irresistible zucchini fritters. Crispy on the outside, tender on the inside, they're the perfect way to kickstart your weekend or indulge in some home grown goodness!

## ZUCCHINI & HALLOUMI FRITTERS

### Ingredients

- 3 medium zucchini
- 4 spring onions thinly sliced
- 250g halloumi cheese, coarsely grated
- 1/4 cup plain flour
- salt & pepper
- 2 eggs
- 1 tbsp chopped dill (can substitute for coriander, parsley or chives)
- 1 lemon, cut into thin wedges
- 1/3 cup Greek yoghurt
- Vegetable oil for frying

**Option:** Can add in some crumbled fetta or grated parmesan cheese.

### Method

#### Step 1:

Preheat the oven to 120 degrees so you can keep the fritters warm while you cook in batches.

#### Step 2:

Coarsely grate the zucchini then, using your hands, squeeze out as much liquid as possible.

#### Step 3:

Lightly whisk the eggs then combine all the ingredients in a bowl (except the Greek yoghurt and lemon) and season well with salt and freshly ground black pepper.

#### Step 4:

On a medium heat, cover the bottom of a large non-stick frying pan with vegetable oil and spoon in a dollop of mixture for each fritter. Do not overcrowd the pan because if the heat drops too much, the fritters will become soggy rather than crispy. Turn and cook until both sides are lightly browned.

#### Step 5:

Drain on paper towel then transfer to the oven to keep warm while cooking the remaining fritters.

#### Step 5:

Serve the fritters immediately with yoghurt, a piece of lemon and a small sprig of dill.

#### Eat with:

Bacon or pancetta | Spinach or sauteed mushrooms | A fresh tomato, cucumber, red onion and coriander salsa | Eggs or Avocado



# Thank you to our NGINA Partners



## WHY PARTNER WITH NGINA?

### By partnering with us:

- ✓ **Your brand** will gain the benefit of reflected trust and authority, which is the cornerstone of the relationship between NGINA and its members.
- ✓ **Your business** will benefit from the opportunity of open communication with decision makers and key people in NSW and ACT's nursery and garden industry.

### NGINA Partner Benefits can include \*

- NGINA membership
- Display NGINA partnership logo on any of your print and digital marketing collateral
- Opportunity to speak at a Regional Group event
- CEO and/or NGINA Director escorted visits to meet with NGINA members
- Fulfilment report (a formal report that shows you exactly how we delivered on our promise)
- Advertising and Marketing  
N&G News | eNews | NGINA website | corporate email signature | social media | members packs
- Sydney Trade Day  
Advertising on Trade Day flyer | FREE exhibitor stand | FREE roaming stand | display promotional material | hand out promotional material/showbags
- Representation at other NGINA Events  
Complimentary tickets to awards night and gala dinner | Opportunity to speak at events | Presentation of an award | Major key partner recognition at events | Logo on event promotional material | Complimentary tickets to other NGINA networking events | Logo on pull-up partner banner at all events

\*See Partner Benefits Prospectus for more information and conditions

### Partnership Opportunities

#### Off-The-Shelf Packages

We offer various partnership packages; **diamond, platinum, gold, silver and bronze** all of which offer year-round access and exposure to NGINA members through events, print and digital media, and exclusive networking opportunities.

#### Customised Packages

In the event our off-the-shelf packages don't provide exactly what you're looking for, NGINA's flexible approach means that together we can tailor a package that meets your needs and requirements. To discuss this option further please call the office on (02) 9679 1472. All partners will receive a fulfilment report at the end of the 12-month period.

To become a partner or for more information scan the QR code or contact NGINA:

t: 02 9679 1472

e: [info@ngina.com.au](mailto:info@ngina.com.au)

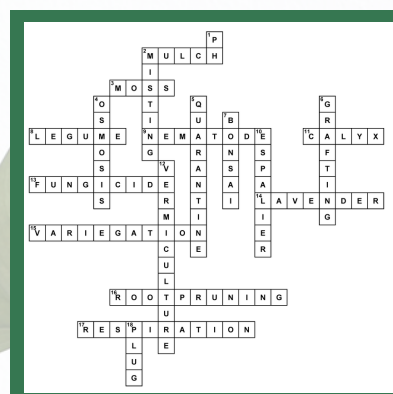


## ANSWERS

### SUDOKU

4	8	3	7	6	5	1	2	9
9	2	6	1	3	4	8	7	5
5	1	7	2	8	9	6	4	3
8	6	9	4	1	3	2	5	7
7	4	1	5	9	2	3	6	8
3	5	2	6	7	8	4	9	1
6	9	5	3	2	1	7	8	4
1	7	8	9	4	6	5	3	2
2	3	4	8	5	7	9	1	6

### CROSSWORD










Trusted Partners in Horticulture

# GARDEN CITY PLASTICS

Plant Health – Herbicide

## Pre-emergent Weed Control – Specticle

### Why use Specticle Herbicide

-  A significant step for resistance management (new mode of action)
-  Pre-emergent weed control for up to 8 months
-  Compatible with Roundup, Basta, Slasher
-  Provides long-lasting control against both grass and broadleaf weeds
-  A significant reduction of herbicide placed in the environment
-  No concerns about stains or odour

### Save with Specticle\*



Purchase a 250ml bottle of Specticle and receive a *free \$50 gift card*.

OR



Purchase 2 x 1L Specticle and receive a *free 250ml Specticle* – a saving of \$530.



Purchase 6 x 1L Specticle and receive a *free 1L Specticle* – a saving of \$1,980.

envu<sup>®</sup>  
SPECTICLE<sup>®</sup>



SAVE NOW!



### Order Information

Product Code: SPECTICLE  
Product Brand: Envu  
Product Size: 250 mL or 1L  
Active Ingredient: 200 g/L Indaziflam



To order online,  
**scan the QR CODE**  
Or reach out to any of the  
GCP team to get started.



\*Conditions apply. Offer is available to GCP customers who purchase Specticle between 6<sup>th</sup> November and 29<sup>th</sup> of March 2024. Limited gift cards and stock available.

Envu, the Envu logo, Signature<sup>®</sup> Xtra, Dedicate<sup>®</sup> Forte, Reserve<sup>®</sup> Stressgard, Interface<sup>®</sup> Stressgard, Banol<sup>®</sup> and Exteris<sup>®</sup> Stressgard are trademarks owned by Environmental Science U.S. LLC or one of its affiliates. ©2023 Environmental Science U.S. LLC.

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