

LEAFLET

magazine

Greenlife
INDUSTRY QLD

SPRING 2025

Green Expo
p. 8

Showcasing
excellence across
the industry

Queensland
Garden Show
p. 13

A blooming success

New Essential
Business Services
p. 16

Our business experts
are ready to help you

Planting for the
Brisbane Olympic
Games p. 30

Get your nursery ready for
the Olympics in 2032



ESSENTIAL
SUPPORT
FOR EVERY
QUEENSLAND
NURSERY

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

SEPTEMBER

Wednesday 24	Brisbane Trade Day	Redland Showgrounds
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OCTOBER

Monday 6	King's Birthday Public Holiday	
Wednesday 8	Toowoomba AGM & General Meeting	
Friday 10	Mt Nathan Nursery Tour	Mt Nathan Nursery
Wednesday 15	Spring Spectacular Sunshine Coast Trade Day	Nambour Showgrounds

NOVEMBER

Wednesday 5	Brisbane Trade Day	Redland Showgrounds
Friday 14th	GIQ AGM	Surfair, Sunshine Coast
Friday 14th	GIQ End of Year Celebration	Surfair, Sunshine Coast
Wednesday 26	Brisbane Trade Day	Redland Showgrounds
Wednesday 26	Toowoomba End of Year Dinner	

DECEMBER

Thursday 25	Christmas Day Public Holiday	
Friday 26	Boxing Day Public Holiday	



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If you would like to contribute to the next edition of Leaflet, please get in touch with us on info@greenlifeindustryqld.org.au

CEO'S WELCOME



Phew! What a couple of months it has been for the Greenlife industry! As we step into Spring, I'm delighted to welcome you to the first Spring edition of Leaflet—now a quarterly magazine with a fresh new look and more content to enjoy.

Since our last edition of Leaflet, the Greenlife Industry QLD team has delivered another fantastic Queensland Garden Show—complete with bustling plant stalls, a thriving giant kitchen garden, award-winning landscape displays, and inspiring talks from well-known gardening personalities.

Not long after, we brought the industry together for our annual Green Expo, which showcased more than 70 top-quality exhibitors over two full days. The event was capped off with a memorable dinner celebration at Sea World Resort, where conversations and connections flowed long into the evening.

And then, over the past 10 days, we've put our industry front and centre at the Ekka with a special greenlife showcase in the agricultural pavilion. Thousands upon thousands of visitors stopped by to enjoy the incredible variety of ornamental plants on display, a true testament to the talent and passion of our growers.

At the same time, the GIQ team has been on the road—visiting farms, representing growers in government and policy discussions, and coordinating education and training opportunities across the state.

What has stood out most is the energy and enthusiasm of our members throughout all these activities. Your commitment—to our association and to each other—is what drives us to keep improving and delivering more value on your behalf.

A 25-Year Plan for Queensland Agriculture

The new Crisafulli Government has set ambitious goals for Queensland agriculture, pledging to grow the industry's value from \$24 billion to \$30 billion within five years.

GIQ has been working alongside other primary industries to help shape the government's long-term strategy. With our sector currently valued at \$1.03 billion annually, greenlife is a vital piece of the puzzle if these targets are to be met.

The finalised blueprint, Prosper 2050, has now been released. It lays out clear priorities to ensure agriculture—and our industry in particular—remains strong and sustainable well into the future. Importantly, the plan will be supported by rolling 5-year action plans, which local industry leaders are already helping to design.



- refreshing our look by aligning with our national brand and updating the website for easier access and usability
- refining our emails and e-newsletters to deliver more targeted, essential information
- reverting the Queensland Garden Show to a grower-friendly three-day format
- taking stronger action on fire ant compliance concerns

While I don't have all the answers, I do think I'm asking the right questions—and I'm confident that will allow GIQ to make an even bigger impact in the year ahead. If you have suggestions or ideas, please get in touch at colin@greenlifeindustryqld.org.au or (07) 3277 7900.

What Can You Do for Your Industry Association?

Our industry thrives on strong connections and shared commitment. One of the most meaningful ways you can contribute is by stepping into a leadership role within GIQ.

We're currently inviting members to volunteer to lead a local branch or to nominate for our Board of Directors. Both roles are vital: branches keep our communities connected and deliver grassroots initiatives, while the board sets direction and advocates on the big issues shaping our future.

If you're passionate about the greenlife industry and want to play a role in strengthening its growth and resilience, I encourage you to put your hand up. Now is an exciting time to be involved, and your voice and leadership can make a real difference.

Warm regards,

Colin Fruk
CEO

GIQ Review

Just as the government is reviewing its goals, GIQ is taking stock of our own. Now that I have had the chance to experience our two major events, and before the festive (and storm) season begins, I'm looking ahead to the next financial year and asking my team:

- Are all our activities aligned to our strategy?
- Are we resourcing the projects appropriately?
- Are we connecting effectively with our customers?
- Are our products and services offering good value for money?

(They're questions I encourage you to reflect on for your own business too.)

It's been almost a full year since I stepped into the role of "Chief Engagement Officer". Much of this time has been spent listening to members and shaping our direction based on your feedback. Some of the early changes include:

- putting the industry's key positions into writing through the Our Growth Agenda policy platform
- strengthening the association by hiring a permanent customer service representative and a company accountant
- reshaping membership packages with a more affordable base-level option

BRISBANE TRADE DAY - AUGUST



Rotary Club QLD making breakfast



John Murray from Norwood



Peter (Topiary Madness), Russ and Megan (GCP)



Emma, Tim and Gerard from The Grow Centre

NURSERY VISITS & MORE



Colin with Martin Duncan and Aunty Dale from My Dilly Bag



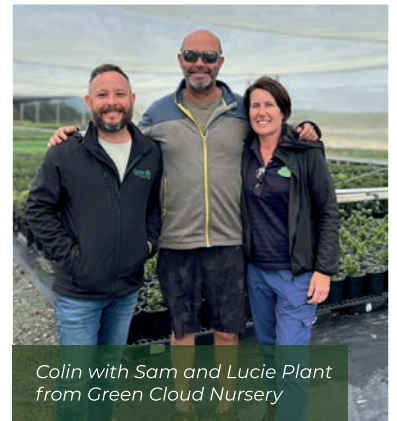
Colin and Janne from Bamboo Land



DPI Minister Tony Perrett launches the Prosper 2050 agriculture blueprint



QFF Members with Environment Minister Andrew Powell (first row, centre)



Colin with Sam and Lucie Plant from Green Cloud Nursery



Colin with Paul Washuta and Andrew Milner from Grovelly TAFE

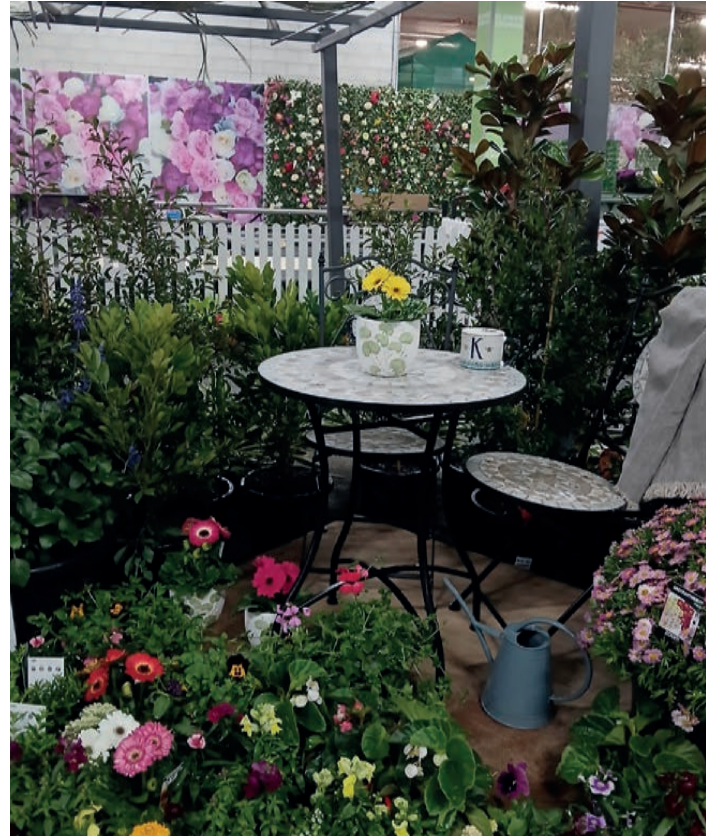


Colin, DDG Primary Industries Rachel Chay and QFF's Jo Sheppard

WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING



Kim Marks (left), Amy Carter (centre) and Chantal De Vere (right).



QLD GREENLIFE SHINES AT THE EKKA

At this year's Ekka, we showcased a stunning stand designed by the talented Chantal De Vere, supported by Robin McLay from Brookfield Gardens, Amy and Anie from GIQ, and Kim Marks. The display featured a vibrant selection of plants, from tropicals to natives, edibles to potted colour, all generously sourced from some of our valued member nurseries, highlighting the diversity and beauty of Queensland-grown plants.

As part of our ongoing campaign to encourage people to buy local, we proudly launched the first-ever Greenlife Living magazine. This publication features inspiring stories from nurseries like Outback Orchids and Epic Gardener, showcasing the passion and expertise behind Queensland's retail nursery industry. Through this initiative, we aim to connect gardeners and plant lovers with the knowledge and resources they need to support their local nurseries and grow thriving, sustainable gardens.

We're thrilled to bring the best of Queensland's greenlife to the Ekka and invite everyone to discover the difference local makes.

A special thank you to our members who made this year's stand possible: Blue Sky Nursery, Brookfield Gardens, Cactus Anonymous, Greenstock Nurseries, Ibrox Park Nursery, Shamrock Plants, STEPS Garden Centre and zoomgarden. Thank you to the following nurseries who showcased their stunning plants as part of the feature plants stand: Blue Sky Nursery, Brisbane Valley Wholesale Nursery, Calara Cacti and Succulents, Heatons Nursery, Pearce's Nurseries and Pohlmanns Nursery.



GREEN EXPO 2025



Green Expo 2025 once again proved why it is Australia's largest premier horticultural trade event, bringing together the industry in a vibrant, inspiring, and collaborative atmosphere. This year's Expo showcased an exceptional variety of displays from the Greenlife sector, featuring everything from tubestock, succulents, and ornamentals to exotics, natives, and tropicals, along with striking foliage, grasses, advanced trees, shrubs, and a wide range of landscape products. Exhibitors travelled from across the country and internationally, reflecting the event's strong and growing national and international reach. Allied exhibitors complemented these displays with an extensive range of horticultural essentials — pots, machinery, plant care products, irrigation systems, garden centre supplies, and growing media — alongside experts delivering business solutions, and valuable industry insights.



Outdoor Area

The outdoor space at the Turf Club once again provided the perfect backdrop for exhibitors, with fresh air, natural light, and a lively atmosphere enhancing the visitor experience. This year saw an increase in exhibitors in the outdoor area, making it an even more dynamic and engaging space for networking and product showcases.





Spotlight Competition

The Spotlight area looked amazing and attracted the highest number of entries ever received, with 35 submissions. This year, the Green Expo Spotlight Competitions were approached differently, featuring a dedicated judging panel comprising Jo Cave, Kerry Battersby, and Stephen Walters. This panel awarded the Best New Product and Best of Expo categories, while Display Awards were peer-chosen. We would like to congratulate our Spotlight Competition winners:

Best of Expo Greenlife went to **Sunflora Group** for **Hydrangea Houseplant**.

Best of Expo Allied Trade was awarded to **Fernland** for **FloraFert Fertiliser Tablets**.

Best New Product Greenlife was **Australian Plant Specialists** for **Tristaniopsis Sprite**.

Best New Product/Service Allied Trade was **Hortraco Trading Pty Ltd** for **Electrical Pot Mover**.

The People's Choice Awards went to **Big Leaf** for **Most Innovative Display** and **Best Greenlife Display**, and **Rocky Point** for **Best Allied Trade Display**.



Exhibitor Networking Function

The Monday night Exhibitor Networking Function, proudly sponsored by Quality Plastic Products and The Grow Centre, gave exhibitors the perfect opportunity to relax and connect after a busy day of bump-in. Guests were also treated to exceptional live entertainment by Taylah accompanied by her talented saxophonist, adding a lively and vibrant atmosphere to the evening.





Green Expo Gala Dinner

The Green Expo Dinner reached new heights in 2025, with over 210 guests in attendance, making it one of the largest and dinners in recent history. The evening featured a lively photo booth, surprise guest appearances from Ron Burgundy, Veronica Corningstone, and Brian Fantana, plus audience participation for a fun twist. Kris Wason & The Flipside Band kept the dance floor full with an energetic mix of music, creating an unforgettable atmosphere. This elevated evening experience was made possible thanks to the support of our event partners Garden City Plastics and Rocky Point.



With the continued enthusiasm of our exhibitors, sponsors, and visitors, GIQ and the Green Expo Committee are excited to build on this year's success. Planning is already underway to make next year's Expo and networking events even more dynamic, innovative, and rewarding for all involved.

Thank You

GIQ and the Green Expo Committee extend sincere thanks to all sponsors and partners whose ongoing commitment ensures the success of Green Expo year after year. Our major event partner was Garden City Plastics, with Australian Retirement Trust joining us as Gold Partner. Premium Exhibitors included Big Leaf Wholesale Nurseries, Dracaena Farm Nursery, EvergreenConnect, Fernland, Greener Publishing & Media, Heaton's Nursery, Power Plants, Proptec, Quality Plastic Products, Rocky Point, Syngenta Ornamentals, The Grow Centre, and zoomgarden. We were also pleased to have the support of Norwood and JD Propagation as our Event Supporters. A special thanks also goes to Martin Duncan for capturing the essence of Green Expo and sharing it live with our audience — his energy and creativity bring an extra spark to every event.







A Blooming Success

2025 QUEENSLAND GARDEN SHOW WRAPS UP ON A HIGH

THE 41ST QUEENSLAND GARDEN SHOW HAS OFFICIALLY WRAPPED, CAPPING OFF THREE SPECTACULAR DAYS OF SUNSHINE, INSPIRATION, AND COMMUNITY SPIRIT AT THE NAMBOUR SHOWGROUNDS. WITH THOUSANDS OF PASSIONATE PLANT LOVERS THROUGH THE GATES, THIS YEAR'S EVENT WAS ONE OF THE BIGGEST AND MOST SUCCESSFUL IN THE SHOW'S FOUR-DECADE HISTORY.



QUEENSLAND'S PREMIER Gardening EVENT



Held across more than seven hectares, the Show featured its largest-ever lineup of exhibitors, speakers and hands-on activities. Over 360 exhibitors — including dozens of nurseries — created a gardener's paradise, with more than 60,000 plants for sale each day. From rare plant collections and boutique garden products to floral displays and expert advice, there was something for every kind of green thumb.

Crowd favourite Costa Georgiadis from ABC's *Gardening Australia* once again lit up the stages with his trademark enthusiasm, connecting with audiences of all ages. His message of sustainability, community and connection through gardening resonated strongly with

visitors, particularly young families enjoying the interactive kids' zones. "This event grows more beautiful every year," said Costa. "It brings generations together and celebrates the best of what gardening has to offer."

The Show's six speaker stages hosted over 100 free talks and demos, making it the largest garden speaker program in the country. Audiences heard from gardening greats including Jerry Coleby-Williams, Sophie Thomson, Millie Ross and — making his event debut — Better Homes & Gardens host Charlie Albone. Sessions were packed with practical tips, emerging garden trends and real-world advice.



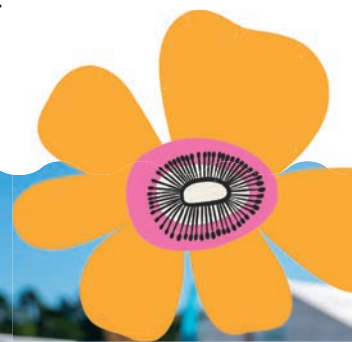


A standout feature this year was the Giant Kitchen Garden installation, designed by artist and landscaper Tohm Hajnci using recycled materials. Supported by volunteers and students from the Compass Institute, the display celebrated creativity, sustainability and collaboration — values that echoed throughout the event.

In the Cook's Garden marquee, renowned chefs including Matt Golinski, Tom Hitchcock, Peter Kuruvita and Sophie Phipps treated guests to paddock-to-plate cooking demonstrations that championed local produce and seasonal, sustainable ingredients.

The Living Backyard precinct remained a favourite among nature lovers, with expert insights on wildlife gardening, biodiversity and how to make home gardens more eco-friendly and habitat-rich.

This year also marked a milestone, with the Queensland Minister for Tourism attending for the first time — a recognition of the Show's economic and cultural impact on the region. Over the past 40+ years, the event has generated more than \$200 million for the local economy. Many visitors travelled from outside the Sunshine Coast, supporting not just the gardening industry but also local accommodation, cafés, retail and small businesses.



QUEENSLAND'S PREMIER Gardening EVENT



Event Manager Marion Beazley expressed her heartfelt thanks to all involved. "This year's Show was a true celebration of gardening, innovation and community spirit. Every corner of the Showgrounds was alive with connection and creativity, and it was an honour to share this experience with so many passionate visitors, exhibitors, volunteers and sponsors."

Planning is already underway for the 2026 event. Until then, green thumbs across Queensland will be buzzing with ideas and inspiration sparked by what was truly a garden show to remember.

For more information, visit www.qldgardenshow.com.au.

The event showcased the nursery and garden industry and achieved the aim of growing future gardeners, the next generation of year-round nursery customers.





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upphr.com.au

WORKPLACE HEALTH & SAFETY **Bespoke Safety Group**

With a degree in Risk Management from Glasgow and experience working on offshore oil and gas platforms, Sarah Alexander brings deep expertise to safety consulting. Now based in Australia, she created Bespoke Safety Group to simplify workplace safety and help businesses stay compliant and confident.

bespokesafetygroup.com.au





BUSINESS SALES & VALUATIONS
Benchmark Business Sales & Valuations

With a strong background in sales and brokering, Penny Lee is a dynamic force at Benchmark Business. She has helped businesses across many industries grow and transition successfully. Her expertise in strategic sales, negotiations, and valuations makes her a valuable partner for buying or selling a business.
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UPP.HR

A photograph of two women standing outdoors. The woman on the left is wearing a black sleeveless dress and a watch. The woman on the right is wearing a white short-sleeved top and a leopard print skirt, with her arms crossed. They are both smiling at the camera.

PLANTING THE SEEDS OF A STRONGER WORKFORCE

By Sarah Winwood
Director & HR Consultant | UPP HR

HUMAN RESOURCES

At the GIQ Green Expo, I had the opportunity to meet and speak with many members about their current HR and workforce challenges. Common themes emerged around managing transient and young workforces, motivating employees in harsh climates, retaining good staff in repetitive manual labour roles, and creating career pathways in small to medium-sized businesses. So, my hope is for this article is to get your creative juices flowing about the never-ending strategies to address those key topics, and also provide some practical strategies to make managing a workforce, a little easier. Sometimes, even modest HR investments can yield significant returns.

1 Addressing Transient Workforces

Offer retention (stay) bonuses to incentivise consistent seasonal participation. In 2024, Australia's voluntary turnover rate reached 8.9%, with staff replacement and training costs starting from \$20,000. That makes well-structured retention bonuses a cost-effective alternative. For example, if you pay a \$1,500 bonus and avoid replacement costs upwards of \$20,000, that maths tells us the retention bonus would still yield over twelve times the ROI compared to the cost.

BUT FIRST, ASK YOUR TEAM: 'What's one thing that could make your workday better?' Do this before implementing any initiatives. Often, a small, inexpensive change, like providing basic breakfast items for backpacker staff before shifts and having those breakfast options available for lunch if someone runs out of time to make their lunch, can often be the deciding factor between someone turning up for work or calling in 'sick'. One size doesn't fit all; tailor small perks to what individuals actually value.

2 Enhancing Motivation in Tough Conditions

Use low-cost tactics like micro-recognition, brief team huddles, and improvements to basic working conditions (e.g., hydration stations, zooper doopers, cooling gear). A 1% improvement in retention can significantly reduce training costs, freeing up budget and delivering meaningful ROI, even for small businesses.

ASK YOUR TEAM FIRST: Staff may suggest simple comfort-focused adjustments, like better gloves, more comfortable shoes, or on-site coffee options, those costs aren't great, but can have the potential to greatly increase morale and attendance.

3 Retaining Talent in a Repetitive Labour Environment

Invest in staff through training, feedback systems, and career progression pathways. An AHRI (Australian Human Resources Institute) study found the most effective retention strategies in Australia include training and development (73%), flexible work (65%), and performance feedback systems (60%).

ASK YOUR TEAM FIRST: Even in repetitive work, staff often know what would make their job more satisfying. By collecting ideas, like varying daily tasks, offering a say in scheduling, or adding small recognition perks, you can boost engagement without significant cost.

4 Sustaining Culture in Harsh Environments

Build connection through daily huddles, 'culture captains', recognition boards, and rotating light morale-boosting tasks. Engagement and a positive environment have been shown to reduce turnover by up to 50% in some industries.

ASK YOUR TEAM FIRST: Culture thrives when it reflects the people in it. Give employees a voice on what small rituals,

treats, or team-building activities they'd genuinely enjoy. The team building activities don't need to be entire day away from usual task activities either, they can be fun and silly little (safe) games played while doing the day-to-day tasks but that build connection and share laughter.

5 Limiting Entry-Level Turnover

Set honest job previews, rapid feedback loops (e.g., 30-day check-ins), and team lead/manager training in recognition. Talent management research commonly suggests that timely and caring management, especially right from the start can drastically improve retention.

ASK YOUR TEAM FIRST: Entry-level staff may highlight surprising 'quick wins' to make work easier, such as clearer signage, lighter tools, or basic pantry items, which can be a minimal cost, or option when it comes time to replace existing aged tools.

6 Unlocking Career Progression

Introduce simple job tiers (e.g., Nursery Worker Level 1-3) or task-based leadership roles, plus regular check-ins about growth. In 2018, AHRI found 63% of employees left due to lack of career progression, doubling from 2015.

ASK YOUR TEAM FIRST: Even when promotions aren't possible, staff can guide you on which projects, responsibilities, or skill-building opportunities would keep them feeling valued and challenged.

Conclusion

The simplest and most cost-effective retention strategy often starts with one question: 'What's one thing that could make your job better?' When paired with targeted HR initiatives, these conversations can dramatically improve retention, motivation, and operational resilience, proving that in people management, the small things are often the big things.

Scan the QR code to book a free consultation with UPP HR:



WORKPLACE HEALTH & SAFETY



DON'T LET THE COMPLEXITY OF WHS STOP YOU FROM PROTECTING YOUR WORKERS AND YOUR BUSINESS

By **Sarah Alexander**

Managing Director | Bespoke Safety Group



Workplace Health and Safety (WHS) can be overwhelming; sometimes it's hard to know where to start. We have developed the following simple approach which is supported by helpful tools and tips for nurseries. A deep dive on each step will be provided in later editions of Leaflet, or you can contact Bespoke Safety Group through GIQ's Essential Business Services to learn more now.

- 1. Identify hazards:** Apply a structured approach to identify what can cause harm or loss.
- 2. Develop controls:** Use a hierarchy to select the most effective controls and review how they are used.
- 3. Plan for incidents:** Nobody wants things to go wrong, but this step will ensure a speedy response that reduces consequences.
- 4. Consult and train workers:** This step keeps everyone informed with an eye open for change.



IDENTIFY
HAZARDS



DEVELOP
CONTROLS



CONSULT
AND TRAIN
WORKERS



PLAN FOR
ACCIDENTS

IDENTIFYING HAZARDS – A CRITICAL STEP IN MANAGING SAFETY

Why It Matters

Proactively identifying and managing hazards not only protects workers; it also improves productivity, reduces downtime, and ensures compliance with WHS laws. Safety is a shared responsibility, and it starts with knowing your risks.

What is a WHS Hazard?

A **hazard** is anything that has the potential to cause harm. It's a source of danger that exists in the workplace, even if no one has been hurt yet.

Examples:

- A quad bike with faulty brakes
- Storage of bulk chemicals

Hazards are identified **before** something goes wrong. The goal is to spot and control them early to prevent harm.

An **incident** is an event where the hazard was released, and harm or damage has occurred. It includes injuries, illnesses or damage to property or products.

Incidents are what we try to **prevent** by identifying and managing hazards.

How to Identify Hazards

Gather information from:

- Workplace inspections
- Consultation with workers and supervisors
- Previous incident and near-miss reports
- Industry bodies, manufacturers, safety data sheets, regulators and specialists

Look for hazards in all aspects of work, including:

- The physical work environment
- Equipment, materials and substances used
- Work tasks and how they are performed
- Work design and work management

Understanding Hazards Through the Hazard Energy Model

The Hazard Energy Model helps identify hazards by focusing on sources of energy that can cause harm if not controlled. By identifying where energy is present and how it could be released or transferred, businesses can better understand and manage risks.

Nursery Industry Examples:

- **Temperature energy** – from heat exposure or hot surfaces

HAZARD ENERGY MODEL



TEMPERATURE



GRAVITY



MOTION



MECHANICAL



ELECTRICAL



PRESSURE



SOUND



BIOLOGICAL



CHEMICAL

- **Gravitational energy** – from working at heights and falling or suspended loads
- **Motion energy** – from moving plant or manual handling
- **Mechanical energy** – from machinery like quad bikes or moving parts
- **Electrical energy** – from power tools or overhead power lines
- **Pressure energy** – from hydraulic lines, compressors or irrigation systems
- **Sound energy** – from noisy equipment like chainsaws
- **Biological energy** – from plant poisons, bacteria, animal bites or viruses
- **Chemical energy** – from pesticides, fertilisers, and fuel

Additional Resources

- Safe Work Australia: Model Code of Practice: How to Manage Work Health and Safety Risks
- WorkSafe Queensland: Serious About Farm Safety Guide
- WorkSafe Queensland: IPaM Safety Fundamentals

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BUSINESS SALES & VALUATIONS

PRESERVING HORTICULTURAL LEGACY: WHY SPECIALIST BROKERS MATTER

By Penny Lee

Specialist Business Broker in Horticulture | Benchmark Business Sales & Valuations



In Australia's horticulture industry, we're witnessing a troubling trend: the quiet disappearance of specialist nurseries and the irreplaceable intellectual property (IP) they hold. When these businesses close, it's not just the owners who exit the industry—skilled staff, plant knowledge, and decades of growing expertise vanish with them.

All too often, these businesses are simply shut down, with land sold to developers and the business component disregarded. This represents a significant loss not just to the owners, but to the entire sector. Horticulture isn't just about land; it's about relationships, specialist knowledge, and the ability to cultivate plant lines that in many cases are grown by only a handful of people nationwide.

And this comes at a time when horticulture is more important—and more valuable—than ever. As a growing industry aligned with sustainability, biodiversity, and climate resilience, horticulture plays a vital role in replacing what's been taken from the environment. Nurseries support carbon offset initiatives, urban greening, and regenerative landscaping. The propagation of native and endangered species contributes to ecosystem restoration, while commercial growers and landscapers are increasingly part of Australia's environmental solution. Every plant propagated is a step toward bio-diverse, climate-conscious land use—but only if we keep the knowledge alive.

Rather than winding down, there's an opportunity to rethink how we transition ownership—by treating the sale

of nurseries as a means to inject new blood into the industry. Commercial landscapers and allied businesses, for example, could see value in acquiring wholesale nurseries to vertically integrate and boost margins.

But that potential can only be unlocked with the right guidance.

That's why it's critical to engage brokers who truly understand horticulture—not generalists used to flipping cafes and fish and chip shops. Horticulture businesses are nuanced. The value isn't just in the land or stock—it's in the plant IP, propagation techniques, grower relationships, and the staff who know how to bring it all to life.

If we want to preserve and grow the future of Australia's horticulture industry—economically, environmentally, and culturally—we need to sell with purpose.

Scan the QR code to book a free consultation with Benchmark Business Sales & Valuations:



SPRING IS HERE — MORE PEOPLE OR MORE FROM WHAT YOU HAVE?

By Dean Borch

Production Engineering Specialist | Transform
Production



BUSINESS PRODUCTIVITY

Orders are climbing, deadlines are tightening, and the pressure is building. Most nurseries already know how they'll handle it: bring in more people, spread the load, and push harder. It's the way it's always been done. But is it the only way?

Every year, the same challenges dominate conversations: rising insurance premiums, electricity bills, pot levies, labour costs, and the struggle to find skilled staff. While some of these pressures are external, others — like labour cost and reliance on highly skilled staff — can be reduced through better systems. The factor with the greatest potential to lift profitability is **PRODUCTIVITY**, yet it's rarely discussed. Why? Because "busy" is still mistaken for "productive" — leading to more people, more hours, and more cost.

The truth is, you're running a tree factory. And factories don't manage growth by simply adding more people — they improve the way the work flows. That means designing the system before growing the headcount. A business is never too small to have efficient systems. The question is: what comes first — growth, or the systems that enable growth?

When people focus only on "tuning" what they already have, they risk adding fluff — or even refining processes that shouldn't exist. Real gains come from going deeper: understanding the desired outcomes, then designing the systems, layout, workflows, and digital tools to make those outcomes inevitable. That's the role of production engineering — a skillset standard in factories but rare in nurseries.

Nurseries already have the horticultural expertise. They already have the work ethic. What's missing is the skillset that drives operational excellence. In factories, this is the production engineer — the person responsible for making sure work flows efficiently, quality is built in, and the system supports the business goals. It's not about automation (though it can help) — it's about removing waste, making work easier, and enabling teams to achieve more with less effort.

Adding more people is the most expensive option. This spring, it's time to think differently and open our mindsets to other possibilities. As a GIQ member, you have access to a free 30-minute discovery call. Bring your biggest operational challenges, and let's explore practical, proven ways to achieve more with what you already have — without unnecessary cost or complexity.

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SPRING IS COMING. ARE YOU READY TO GROW?

5 SMART WAYS HORTICULTURE BUSINESSES CAN MAKE THE MOST OF PEAK SEASON

By CEMOH – Fractional Marketing Experts

Spring is the biggest opportunity of the year for nurseries, growers, and garden retailers. Whether you're selling direct to consumers, supplying plant centres and landscapers, or tendering for government projects, spring brings demand, decisions, and doors opening.

But with competition increasing and customer attention divided, it's not enough to just be busy. The businesses that grow fastest are the ones that combine seasonal readiness with strategic marketing.

Here are five ways to prepare and position your business for success this spring:

1 Don't Just Prepare Your Stock. Prepare Your Brand.

Most businesses in this space invest heavily in inventory, logistics, and staffing in spring. But your visibility matters just as much. If people don't know who you are, what you offer, or why you're better, they won't buy from you.

Whether your customer is a weekend gardener or a procurement manager, they need to feel confident in your professionalism, consistency, and value.

Start here:

- Refresh your website and social media presence. Does it reflect what you sell and who you serve?

- Make sure your signage, proposals, and pitch decks are cohesive and credible.
- Capture images or videos of your team, product quality, or past work for use in tenders and content.

2 Create a Simple, Strategic Marketing Plan

Most businesses in this industry do marketing. Few have a plan. A clear strategy not only saves you time, it dramatically improves your return on every dollar and hour spent.

Whether you're aiming for foot traffic, trade orders, or council contracts, your plan should define:

- Who you're targeting (for example, homeowners, landscapers, buyers)



- What messages and offers matter to them
- How you'll reach them (social, email, industry channels, direct contact)
- What success looks like (for example, weekly enquiries, larger average order value, a signed tender)

You don't need a big budget. Just focus and consistency.

3 Strengthen Your Relationships and Data

Spring isn't just about attracting new business. It's a golden time to strengthen relationships with past customers, trade buyers, and contract partners.

Tactics to build lasting loyalty and grow lifetime value:

- Send tailored communications to existing customers or contract clients.
- Offer early access to seasonal stock or volume-based incentives.
- Launch or relaunch a loyalty program, trade portal, or email series.
- If you sell wholesale or to government, ensure your contact database is up to date and reintroduce your capabilities.

The more you know about your audience, the more relevant and profitable your outreach can be.

4 Position for Government and Civic Contracts

Spring is also prime time for councils, developers, and landscape architects to source suppliers for upcoming projects. If you're not front of mind or not easy to find, you're already out of the running.

Ways to make yourself tender-ready:

- Highlight completed projects and professional accreditations online.
- Keep capability statements, ABNs, insurance, and sustainability info up to date.
- Attend local council events or trade expos where buyers and procurement officers are present.
- Join supplier directories or pre-qualified panels early. They often close before tenders go live.
- Regular brand presence can be the difference between a cold call and an invite to quote.

5 Measure What Matters

In a peak season, it's easy to get caught up in the rush. But the best businesses take a moment to measure and improve.

Track key numbers like:

- Sales by customer type (retail, trade, government)
- Cost per lead or sale from different marketing channels
- Repeat order rate from past customers
- Growth in your customer database or contact list

You don't need a fancy dashboard. Just a habit of asking what worked, what didn't, and what should be repeated or improved next Spring.

Want to Know Where You Stand?

Before you invest more time or money in marketing this Spring, take 5 minutes to assess your current position. Scan the QR code to take the Horticulture Marketing Health Check.



You'll uncover what's working, what you're missing, and where the biggest growth opportunities lie, whether you're selling punnets, pallets, or large-scale planting solutions.

This spring, don't just ride the wave. Drive the growth.

Scan the QR code to book a free consultation with Cemoh:



CEMOH

SUSTAINABILITY IN ACTION

Contributing authors: GIQ, in collaboration with Garden City Plastics (GCP)

Our industry thrives when the environment thrives. By making smart, sustainable choices part of business, we can cut waste, save resources, and protect the natural world that sustains us.

Here are simple, practical actions your nursery can take to make a real difference.



Return Used Materials Through Recycling Programs

Close the loop by giving plastics a second life instead of sending them to landfill.

Example: Nurseries can return a wide range of used PP5 plastic items to Garden City Plastics (GCP) for recycling – including pots (black and coloured), nursery carry trays, labels, and corflute tree guards. All materials are sorted, cleaned, and processed locally, then repurposed into high-quality horticultural products.



Reuse and Repurpose in the Nursery

Find new uses for materials before recycling or disposal.

Example: Reuse pots and containers where possible, provided they are cleaned and sanitised correctly to prevent the spread of pests and diseases. For instance, sanitised pots and trays can be safely reused for new propagation or planting, helping reduce waste while maintaining plant health standards.



Partner with Local Collection Points

Join forces with industry initiatives to make responsible disposal easy.

Example: bagMUSTER, operated by Agsafe, helps the agricultural sector dispose of single-use polypropylene (PP) plastic bags. Collection sites are already running in Western Victoria and coming soon to QLD! Interested in being part of the QLD rollout?

Register your interest today:





Stock Locally Manufactured Products

Support Australian jobs, reduce transport emissions, and choose products built to last.

Example: All of Garden City Plastics' (GCP)'s Australian-made products are designed and tested to meet commercial-grade standards, ensuring strength, consistency, and dependability in tough growing conditions. By choosing locally manufactured products, you are supporting Australian industry while relying on products built to last.



Support Recycled, Biodegradable & Reclaimed Products

Consider choosing products made with alternative materials or processes — and weigh the full life cycle to make the most sustainable choice.

Example: Garden City Plastics (GCP) offers the Jiffy pot range made from biodegradable materials, along with a wide selection of pots and containers manufactured using Post Consumer Recycle (PCR) plastics. These products support closed-loop recycling by reducing waste and giving plastics a second life, while helping growers choose sustainable options that maintain strength and quality.



Engage & Educate Your Customers

Turn your customers into sustainability partners through clear communication and incentives.

Example: Use signage, QR codes, or rewards to encourage customers to return used items. These actions promote responsible behaviour and make sustainability part of your brand story.



PLANTING FOR THE BRISBANE OLYMPIC GAMES 2032

By Arno King

Landscape Architect, Horticulturalist, Broadcaster & Presenter

The 2032 Summer Olympics — “Bris32” — may be seven years away, but there’s less and less time for nurseries to start growing the massive volumes of plants that will be needed. Venues, accommodation, streetscapes, infrastructure, hotels and hospitality spaces will all need greening — and planners likely expect our nurseries to be brimming with mature trees and shrubs, ready for ‘instant landscapes’ that look great in media releases. So what plants do we need to grow?

The Olympics is more than sport — it’s a moment for cities to showcase their identity and charm future visitors. The media will arrive by June, with tourists coming early for sightseeing and leisure. The Games run from 23 July to 8 August, followed by the Paralympics from 24 August to 5 September. Plants will need to be at their peak for a 3½-month period.

How do we reflect Brisbane, South East Queensland, Toowoomba or Cairns authentically? Visitors from interstate and overseas are often struck by the vibrancy here — saturated flower colours, large glossy leaves, bold textures, and the sheer volume of greenery. They’re amazed by our outdoor lifestyle and shaded streets. Meanwhile, many

locals still try to replicate ‘southern’ gardens, overlooking the richness of our subtropical landscape.

What Plants Will Be Wanted?

We can’t yet predict which species will be specified, especially for shrubs and groundcovers, which are quicker to grow. But the window for growing advanced trees is closing fast. I expect many designers will fall back on the same limited tree list — *Brachychiton acerifolius*, *Cupaniopsis anacardioides*, *Lophostemon confertus* — the “Tract list” seen from Melbourne to Cairns. These are already being grown at scale, particularly in NSW, with likely lower margins due to competition.

“Bris32” follows Los Angeles 2028, where the emphasis is on biodiversity, climate adaptation and carbon reduction. Hopefully Brisbane’s Games can do the same — encouraging a more diverse plant palette, improving long-term sustainability, and allowing nurseries to specialise again.

Species from Ayr, Bowen and Cape York are already outperforming some local natives in our urban heat islands. Scientists now encourage us to plant for future climates — for what will thrive 40 years from now. Expect to see more figs like *Ficus benjamina*, *F. virens*, *F. microphylla* and *F. rubiginosa* specified for streets and precincts.

The Sizzle: Floral Colour

At the 2012 London Olympics, flowers captured global attention. Their meadows drew more visitors than some sports events. What will our floral icons be?

Surely the Cooktown Orchid (*Dendrobium bigibbum*) — Queensland’s floral emblem — deserves the spotlight. Surprisingly, we no longer grow it at scale, despite its ease of cultivation and popularity overseas. With light-controlled greenhouses, we could time flowering perfectly and supply these stunning plants for use in foyers, interviews, banquets and victory bouquets.

Brisbane’s original floral emblem, the Poinsettia, still

features on the city's coat of arms. Flowering pots could be massed in parks or used indoors during the Games. The newly appointed native floral emblem, Brisbane Wattle (*Acacia fimbriata*), flowers from late winter into spring and aligns well with the Olympic colours — though it is short-lived and wind-prone.

Bougainvillea — Brisbane's unofficial emblem — will no doubt be seen in force, particularly hybrids developed in Ipswich during the 1930s. Their brilliant bracts peak in winter and early spring, and they're ideal for large pots or even creative installations like the Olympic rings. Cultivars such as 'Golden Tango' and 'Aussie Gold' tie in perfectly with our national palette.

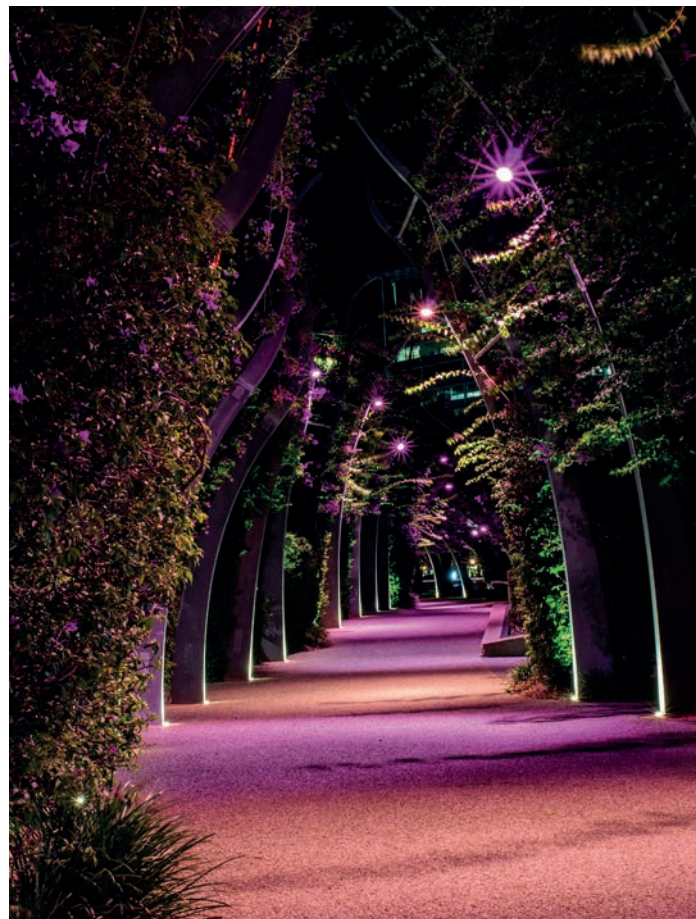
Other contenders include the Golden Penda (*Xanthostemon chrysanthus*), which flowers after good rainfall. In containers, flowering can be timed to coincide with the Games. Rotating pots could keep displays fresh for the duration of the season.

Foliage Features and the 4Cs

Visitors often comment on our colourful foliage — much of which comes from the "4Cs": Cordylines, Colocasias, Coleus and Crotons. These staples, native to Queensland and the South Pacific, have been selected for colour over generations by Indigenous growers.

Cordyline fruticosa grows wild in north Queensland and is culturally significant, even cited in the Mabo Decision. Taro (*Colocasia esculenta*), genetically traced to north of Cooktown, is both ornamental and edible. Its ornamental varieties are now in global demand.

Other foliage standouts include *Acalypha*, *Graptophyllum*, *Alternanthera*, and bold bromeliads like *Aechmea blanchetiana* and *Alcantarea imperialis* — all suitable for spectacular potted or massed displays.



Pergolas, arbours and climbing colour

Games imagery suggests pergolas and arbours will be key features. Yet there's little supply of advanced climbers in Queensland. There's a niche here — plants like Bougainvillea, *Thunbergia mysorensis* (Slipper Vine), and *Pyrostegia venusta* (Orange Trumpet Vine), all Olympic-season bloomers, could be grown up supports and pruned for installation like advanced trees.

Palm Appeal

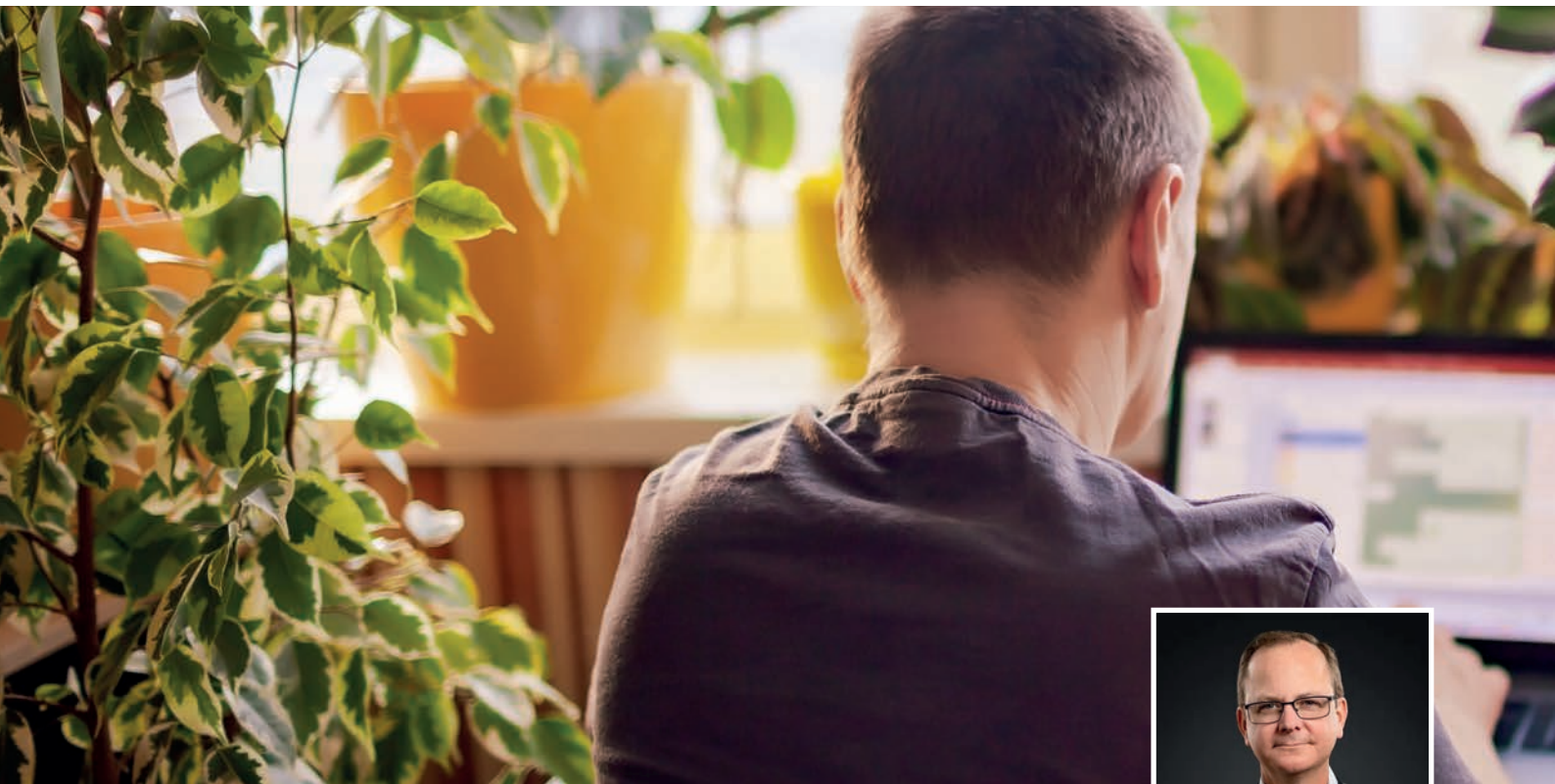
Palms scream "tropics" — and while locals gripe about their mess, visitors are enchanted. They add vertical height and shade for lush underplanting. It's too late now to grow large specimens, but existing stock across Queensland and northern NSW can still be sourced.

Expect to see iconic species like Alex Palms (*Archontophoenix alexandrae*), Fan Palms (*Licuala ramsayi*), Livistonas, Black Palm (*Normanbya normanbyi*), Macarthur Palm (*Ptychosperma macarthurii*) and Foxtail Palm (*Wodyetia bifurcata*). And yes — the Coconut Palm (*Cocos nucifera*), with its rich Indigenous and scientific heritage, could well make a comeback.

What Next?

Providing plants for "Bris32" will be a once-in-a-generation opportunity. Expect strong demand for high-quality potted plants, floral features, and decorative troughs across venues, hotels, and entertainment precincts.

What species will be specified remains to be seen — but the time to prepare is now. Expo '88 changed how Brisbane saw its gardens — let's ensure the Olympics challenges and inspires us again.



GROWING GREEN OPPORTUNITIES: HOW TO PREPARE FOR GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS (AND THE OLYMPICS!)

By Thomas Pollock

Author of *Winning Government Business: The 6 Rules and 9 Absolutes* & Founder of Gov Ready

Let's not beat around the bush – the Queensland Government is spending big. And with the 2032 Olympics on the horizon, that spend is only going to grow.

For those of you in the greenlife sector – nurseries, growers, landscapers, irrigation specialists, maintenance crews – this isn't just a city thing. There's real opportunity to get involved.

Why? Because governments don't just buy stadiums. They buy the plants, the turf, the shade, the beautification work, and everything that makes a place feel welcoming, liveable and resilient.

We're already seeing contracts for:

- Streetscape upgrades and urban tree planting
- Event village installations and temporary greening
- Native revegetation and restoration works
- Irrigation systems and water efficiency projects
- Long-term maintenance of public parks and facilities

And it's not just for the Olympics. These kinds of projects are being funded now, across Queensland – through councils, state departments, and major infrastructure programs.

But here's the thing: the businesses winning this work aren't always the biggest. They're the ones who look ready, show up early, and make life easier for government buyers.



So how do you do that?

You make your business easy to trust – and easy to buy from. That starts with a few simple but powerful steps:

■ Update your website.

Make sure it's clean, mobile-friendly, and clearly shows:

- ▶ What you do
 - ▶ Who you've worked with
 - ▶ The regions you cover
 - ▶ Strong contact info
- Bonus points for project photos, testimonials, and a story-driven "About" page.

■ Create simple project case studies.

These don't need to be flashy. Just tell the story:

- ▶ What the job was
 - ▶ Who it was for
 - ▶ What you delivered
 - ▶ What outcomes or benefits were achieved (e.g. sustainability, community value, plant survival)
- Add before-and-after photos if you have them.

■ Build a capability statement.

This is a 1–2 page document that outlines:

- ▶ Your core services
 - ▶ Key personnel
 - ▶ Licences, insurances, and certifications
 - ▶ Past projects
 - ▶ Contact details
- Write it in language that government buyers understand – clear, confident, and focused on delivery and compliance.

■ Start (or strengthen) relationships.

Government work often flows through who you know – and who knows you.

- ▶ Reach out to your local council procurement team and introduce yourself.
- ▶ Connect with Tier 1 and Tier 2 contractors delivering public projects – they often need trusted suppliers.
- ▶ Attend industry briefings and networking events. Show up where decisions are being made.

How to Find Local Procurement Briefings

One of the best ways to get ahead is by attending government supplier info sessions and briefings. Here's where to look:

- **Your local council's website** – search for "Doing Business with Council" or "Supplier Information". Many councils list upcoming briefings and contact points.
- **GIQ updates and newsletters** – these often promote relevant procurement opportunities and events.
- **Government agency LinkedIn pages** – follow councils, Transport and Main Roads, Housing, and others. They frequently post events and supplier news.
- **QTenders and council supplier portals** – registering ensures you get alerts about tenders, panels, and upcoming opportunities.

Ready to Begin?

You don't need to chase every tender or overhaul your business overnight. But you do need to take the first step.

Here are three things you can do today:

- **Take our free 10-minute Gov Ready Pulse Check** to see how 'government-ready' your business really is: <https://govready.com.au/pulse-check>
- **Download a free copy of my book, *Winning Government Business: The 6 Rules and 9 Absolutes*** – packed with practical, real-world advice for businesses just like yours: <https://govready.com.au/free-ebook>
- **Keep up to date with upcoming events and webinars**, and learn how to get government-ready and answer your questions: <https://govready.com.au/events>

And if you ever have a question or get stuck, feel free to reach out. I'm always happy to help.

thomas@govready.com.au

The greenlife sector is in the perfect position to help shape Queensland's future. But government buyers can't buy from you if they don't know you exist – or if you're not showing them what they need to see.

Now's the time to step forward.



WHEN PLANT NURSERY CHALLENGES SPROUT, TALK TO QRIDA

QRIDA client Heaton's Nursery with QRIDA's Brian Coe and David Ayre (right)

Disasters, drought preparedness and ag-tech were some of the key topics nursery growers spoke with the Queensland Rural and Industry Development Authority (QRIDA) about at Greenlife Industry Queensland's Green Expo 2025.

QRIDA Regional Area Manager for South East Queensland and the Lockyer Valley, Brian Coe, said the Expo was a great opportunity to catch up with local nursery growers and discuss how QRIDA's financial assistance could help their operation succeed.

"At the Green Expo 2025, Queensland nursery growers spoke with me about several issues which included improving the resilience of their operations to disasters and droughts," Brian said.

If these challenges resonate with your nursery, it's important to know support may be available through QRIDA. QRIDA's disaster grants of up to \$75,000 and loans with interest rates of 2.14% can help nursery operations clean-up and recover from recent extreme weather events including Tropical Cyclone Alfred and Associated Severe Weather.

"Our Sustainability Loans of up to \$1.3 million are also offered at concessional interest rates and can help growers prepare for droughts, purchase the latest innovations, and carry out a range of other development works to improve productivity."

QRIDA's financial assistance has helped many nursery growers including Eumundi Palms owner Phil Rehead whose family business is now flourishing after using a disaster grant and concessional loan to recover from flooding in 2022.

"We had a 1-in-200-year flood which affected our business in a terrible way. One hundred per cent of the property was under water," Phil said.

"QRIDA allowed us, very quickly, to get back on our feet and we feel really proud of what we've built and what the future holds."






For more information about how QRIDA could help your nursery operation overcome challenges, visit qrlda.qld.gov.au or call **1800 623 946**.






QRIDA's Brian Coe (far left and David Ayre (far right) with QRIDA client Waterworth's Nursery.



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-  Establish your new farm enterprise in stages to achieve viability

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Talk to your local Regional Area Manager on 1800 623 946 or scan to find out how QRIDA could help start your farming business*.



**Eligibility criteria applies. The information contained herein is for general information purposes only. You should not rely upon this information as a basis for making any business, legal or any other decisions.*

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NURSERY PAPERS

SEPTEMBER
2025

WHAT'S IN A POT?

How container choice affects root development and plant quality



Colin Hunt, Levy-funded
GIA Extension Officer

Pot selection plays a surprisingly big role in how plants grow, roots form and production systems perform. From drainage and media stability to root pruning and freight efficiency, your container choice can drive quality cost and consistency across a crop.

WHY CONTAINER CHOICE MATTERS

Most modern nursery pots are made from 100% recyclable PP5 plastic and come in a wide range of sizes and shapes. Their role is to support growing media, create stable conditions for air and moisture balance and promote strong root development. But different pot designs produce very different outcomes – especially when it comes to water retention, root structure and long-term plant health.

WHY MOST POTS ARE MADE FROM PP5 PLASTIC

Most nursery containers are made from PP5 plastic – short for polypropylene, marked with the recycling code 5.

It's the standard for a reason:

- durable under sun, water and fertiliser
- lightweight but strong
- withstands multiple crop cycles
- compatible with automation and stacking
- cost-effective to manufacture.

PP5 is accepted in some local recycling systems, but not all – check with your local waste facility. All pp5 pots are able to be recycled via the plastics recycling programs available via Australian pot manufacturers.



KNOW YOUR CROP

Some plants prefer a deep root run; others need high drainage or consistent moisture. Understanding your plants' needs helps match them with the right container and media combination.

A HANDY RULE OF THUMB:

The bottom 25–30 mm of any container will hold excess water after free drainage. In general, the taller the pot, the less water it holds after drainage – so depth matters even with the same volume.

POT MATHS – VOLUME, SHAPE AND PERFORMANCE

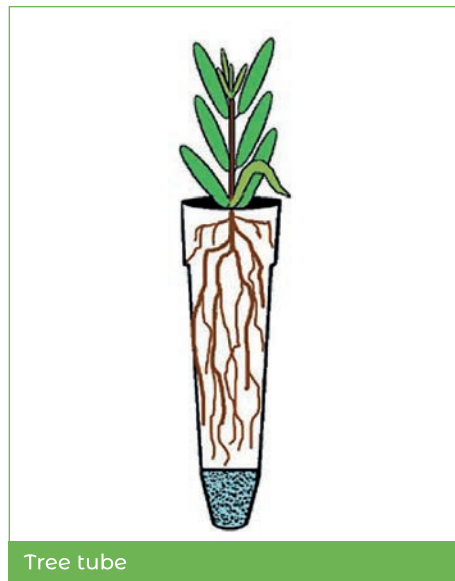
Pot dimensions affect moisture retention, oxygen availability and how efficiently you use space. Here are a few concepts to keep in mind:

- a tall narrow pot holds less water post-drainage than a short wide one of the same volume
- a small change in pot diameter can significantly impact volume of media required.
- air pruning pots often dry out faster than plain-sided containers
- pots that are too large can lead to overwatering, root rot, and poor root occupancy, while pots that are too small can restrict root growth creating more root defects

- if you expect plants to grow significantly, choose a pot that allows room for the root system to expand and occupy the given volume matched to your production scheduling.

KNOW YOUR MEDIA

Think about how long your growing media needs to last. Crops with longer grow cycles may need more durable media than short-run crops (under 12 months). For long-term crops, choose components with greater structural integrity — and talk with your media supplier about the right mix for your needs. If early breakdown is a concern, consider adding more potting-up stages to your program. This lets you refresh the media volume, manage root development and top up nutrients below the surface. Keep in mind that overwatering is one of the main causes of media breakdown, so irrigation must suit the media, pot type and plant's water requirements.





Container Types – Pros And Cons

TYPE	PROS	CONS
STANDARD NURSERY POTS	Low cost, widely available, suitable for many crops, good moisture retention	Encourage root circling and deflection, less air flow
ROOT-DIRECTING POTS	Help guide roots to reduce circling	Limited choices available, root deflection may need to be addressed
AIR PRUNING POTS	Promote lateral roots, reduce circling and root deflection	Need more regular irrigation in exposed growing systems
OPEN BASE POTS	Can encourage lateral root growth by air pruning main root	Only effective in systems with good air gap under pots
PLANTER BAGS	Cost-effective for larger sizes or final stages	Can cause issues if not used well, most not able to be readily recycled
CUSTOM-BUILT CONTAINERS	Tailored to specific needs	Higher initial costs



Pot with root directing ridges



Plain walled pot



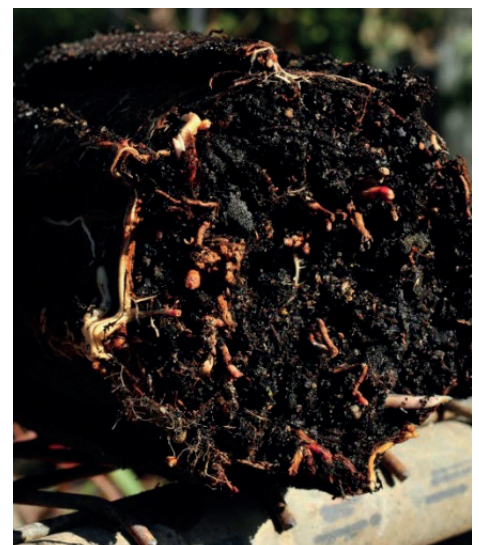
Various styles of air pruning pots



Root growth with root directing ridges



Root growth without directing ridges



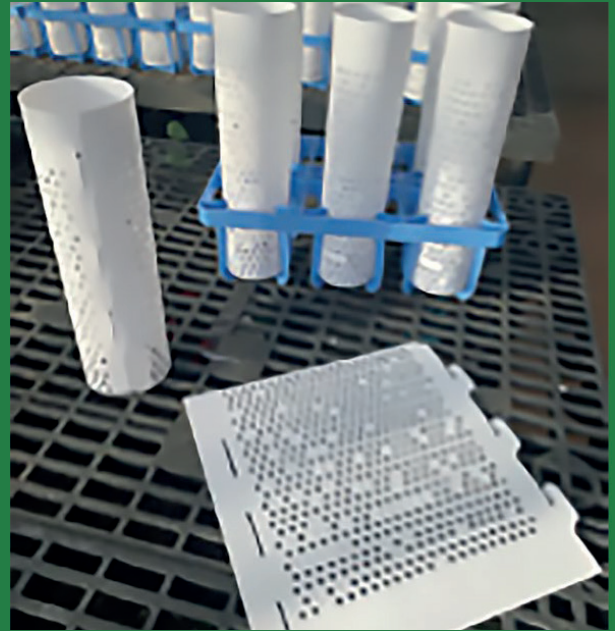
Roots mostly air pruned at the base of open base pot



INNOVATION SPOTLIGHT:

From flat sheet to field

The SheetPot – a roll-up container made from flat plastic sheet – has been trialled overseas in reforestation and restoration projects as a cheap, root-pruning alternative to conventional pots. The design allows for air flow, drainage and better lateral root development, and cuts freight and material costs. While not yet used in mainstream nursery production, it's a reminder that interesting ideas can take root anywhere.



THINK ROOTS, NOT JUST POTS

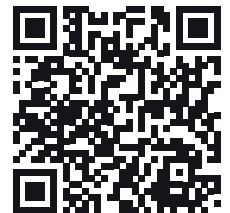
No one pot is perfect, but the pot you choose does more than hold a plant upright. It shapes roots, controls moisture, affects freight, and helps (or hinders) your crop from day one. Whether you're growing advanced stock or fast-turn annuals, the right container choice can cut losses, improve outcomes and help your media and irrigation perform at their best.

TALK TO YOUR NURSERY EXTENSION OFFICER

Not sure where to start? Your local levy-funded GIA Extension Officer can help you review your setup, growing systems, or container options.

Contact Colin Hunt if you're in NSW or northern Victoria on 0418 667 558 or at colin.hunt@greenlifeindustry.com.au

Find your local levy-funded extension officer at <https://www.greenlifeindustry.com.au/contact-us>



REFERENCES

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The Spring Spectacular

SUNSHINE COAST TRADE DAY

Come along and see what's on offer this Spring!

Wednesday 15th October 2025

We're bringing the buzz back to the Sunshine Coast with a revamped trade event you won't want to miss!

WHAT'S HAPPENING:

A vibrant showcase of Greenlife and Allied Trade exhibitors

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Catch up with industry friends and discover fresh opportunities

Whether you're a buyer, grower, supplier or just keen to see what's new — this event is for you!

Registrations are now open for both Standholders and Visitors.

Don't miss your spot at the Sunshine Coast's must-attend trade day of 2025 held at Nambour Showgrounds!



WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

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📍 34 Hauton Road, Burpengary, QLD 4506
🌐 brisbanebromeliads.com.au

COAST TROPICAL PLANTS

📍 563 Petrie Creek Road, Rosemount, QLD 4560
☎ 0418 811 162
✉ vic@coasttropicalplants.com.au
🌐 get.coasttropicalplants.com.au



FLINDERS AGRICULTURE

📍 New Chum, QLD 4303
☎ 1300 895 988
✉ info@flindersagriculture.com
🌐 flindersagriculture.com



IRRIBIZ

📍 Unit 1/37 Moroney Place, Beerwah, QLD 4519
☎ 1300 477 424 | 07 3129 8900
🌐 irribiz.com.au



JIMBOOMBA TURF

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☎ 07 3114 8281
✉ info@jimboombaturf.com.au
🌐 jimboombaturf.com.au



TROPICAL HOUSE PLANTS

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☎ 0468 654 335

VALLEY PASSIONS

📍 674 Beenham Valley Road, Beenaam Valley, QLD 4570
☎ 0417 606 693
✉ hannamillard@me.com
📘 facebook.com/BeenhamValleyPassions





NEW MEMBER

PINE MOUNTAIN NURSERY

Pine Mountain Nursery was established as a family run business with a strong passion for plants at Pine Mountain Queensland in 1993 by Gail and John Craigie. John has a special interest in plant breeding having been on the board of CSIRO/ BSES Plant Breeding joint Venture.

Pine Mountain Nursery has been a specialist breeder of *Agapanthus*, *Clivia miniata* and other warm climate bulbs. Some recent creations include Agapanthus Queen Mum™, Agapanthus Cloudy Days, Agapanthus Bella™, Agapanthus Lilibet™, Agapanthus Maxsie™, Agapanthus Madison™, Agapanthus River Garden White™ and Agapanthus Blitzza™. Intellectual plant breeding property rights are held in a separate company called Pine Mountain Botanics Pty Ltd.

In 2023, Pine Mountain Greenlife Pty Ltd was established with a view to restructuring the nursery business from a partnership into a proprietary limited company. The company also produces a range of landscaping plants, olives, finger limes and other fruit trees.

✉ sales@pinemountainnursery.com.au

☎ John Craigie 0409 277 785 or Gail Craigie 0409 277 790

🌐 www.pinemountainnursery.com.au





NEW MEMBER

TOOWOOMBA OUTDOOR POWER PRODUCTS

Toowoomba Outdoor Power Products (TOPP) commenced operation in 1992. When John and Jodie Fogarty purchased TOPP in 2016, they brought with them 40 years of industry experience, including 30 years running their own business.

Currently one of the top twenty Husqvarna outdoor power equipment dealers in Australia, TOPP is also one of the most successful outdoor power equipment dealers in the Toowoomba/Darling Downs region.

TOPP's custom-designed workshop, equipped with state-of-the-art tools, ensures top-notch service and repairs by trade-qualified mechanics who handle all brands and models with precision. In store, customers and clients will find an extensive range of accessories, spare parts and safety equipment to suit a variety of product ranges for the outdoor gardening enthusiast and professional contractors.

For the environmentally conscious, in addition to stocking Husqvarna's robotic range (world leaders in robotics since 1995), TOPP has now partnered with Greenworks, one of the largest exclusively battery powered platforms in the

world. The Greenworks extensive battery range includes handheld product up to large commercial mowers, side-by-sides and recreational vehicles.

The customer base for TOPP's products is a broad demographic and encompasses homeowners (suburban and acreage), farmers, professional operators (lawn mowing/landscaping contractors, grounds keepers etc.), professional timber and firewood contractors and Local and State government bodies including schools and aged care facilities.

As of May 2025, the product range includes Husqvarna, SCAG, Country Clipper, Masport, Sneddens Fencing Equipment, BAR, Grillo, Super X log splitters and Solo sprayers. As well as an extensive range of Greenworks battery products.

✉ sales@topp.com.au

☎ 07 4632 8455

🌐 www.topp.com.au



NEW MEMBER

STAR 8 AUSTRALIA



Star 8 Australia offers a range of innovative, affordable, and independent energy solutions such as solar lighting, solar electric vehicles, and endurance off-grid systems.

Star 8's domestic and commercial solar lights are a quick and easy complete DIY outdoor lighting solution. Especially for areas where running grid power or diagnosing cabling issues for grid lighting will be cost ineffective and time consuming. The lighting is suitable to light up walkways, buildings, signage, large trees and highlighting gardens for nurseries while keeping the overall cost to a minimum. The Star 8 lighting range includes, sunlight-tracking solar bollard lights, integrated solar pole-top lights, versatile solar wall lights, shelter lights (with separate solar panels), bullet proof and submergible road marker lights, as well as fairy lights and other garden and feature lighting. Star 8's solar lights can be found at many caravan parks (Discovery Parks and Ingenia Holiday Parks), along Victoria

waterways (Dromana Pier), school carparks, retirement villages, townhouse estates, universities, and backyards.

As well as solar lighting, Star 8 supplies a range of charge-as-you-go solar electric vehicles. Depending on range, these vehicles can run purely off solar energy without ever needing to be plugged in. Their vehicle range includes solar maintenance carts, solar linen carts, 4 and 6 seaters as well as off-road UTVs which are all applicable for use in nurseries and large garden properties either for transporting customers, general maintenance, or faster staff and cargo transport.

✉ anthony.elms@star8.green

☎ 0499 018 842

☎ 1300 717 141

🌐 www.star8green.com.au





NEW MEMBER

SUNSCAPE BROMELIADS

Sunscape Bromeliads next to the highway in Rochedale Brisbane is owned and operated by husband and wife team Shane and Sarah Serek. Having grown bromeliads on the collector's scene for the past 20 years and having success with producing highly colored beautifully shaped bromeliads, with many happy customers, they decided to grow the hobby into a fulltime business.

Sunscape Bromeliads primary focus is to provide a range of the highest quality sun hardened Alcantarea varieties possible, to retail nurseries and landscapers. It is all too often we see Alcantarea grown in shade houses make their way into a beautiful landscape setting only to be badly burnt in the first couple days. Sunscapes Alcantarea are grown in full sun from the very beginning to ensure they are as hardy as possible.

The team pride themselves on taking the time and space required to produce an intensely coloured, bromeliad with an abundant multi layer of leaves. Sourcing and growing only the most consistent, robust and colorful strains they can find. They are always searching for and creating new hybrids for the future. You won't find any tissue culture at Sunscape.

Shane and Sarah are also working hard to provide a full range of neoregelia, selected pattern leaf vriesea and aechmea.

✉ sunscapebromeliads@gmail.com | ☎ 0406 073 858

📘 www.facebook.com/p/Sunscape-Bromeliads-61566443874436/



NEW MEMBER

WATERGARDENS NURSERY

Watergardens Nursery opened their doors to Cairns in 2021 after several years of preparation and hard work. The original plan was not a retail nursery, but to grow tropical palms to sell wholesale, but like all good plans - it evolved and changed.

Adam Griffiths, the owner, decided to use his 2-acre block for plant production to solely supply what was to be a new independent retail nursery for the Northern Beaches of Cairns. An old vet surgery on the Captain Cook Highway in Smithfield Cairns was chosen as the site, and a complete renovation and new build was undertaken to create what is now Watergardens Nursery.

Watergardens Nursery has grown to be a full-range plant nursery and stocks ancillary garden products along with pots, water-features and pond products. "Over the last 4 ½ years we've received a lot of positive feedback from customers about our nursery, plants and customer service, which we are very proud of. The staff at Watergardens are all passionate about plants and plant health, and the Watergardens Nursery team are really what makes this business work".



Adam grew up in the nursery industry as his parents, Pam and Bob Griffiths established and ran Panorama Nursery and Pamela's Garden World in Cairns in the 1980s and 1990s. He enjoyed the growing side of nursery work, and on his growing site not far from the nursery, he grows a range of palms, tree ferns and tropical plants suited to the Far North Qld climate, with Lipstick Palms being his number one seller. Adam can also be found in the retail nursery on weekends where he loves talking with customers to help plan their garden, and to give advice about plant health and problems. Looking ahead, we feel positive about the future for Watergardens Nursery.

✉ admin@watergardensnursery.com

☎ 07 4281 6789

🌐 www.watergardensnursery.com

WHAT DO MEMBERS ENJOY AT GIQ?



Trade Days: Sell your stock at our monthly trade-only events in Brisbane, Nambour, and Toowoomba



Business Performance Coaching: Farm Business Resilience Program; helping support and grow your business



Essential Business Services: Free, expert business advice tailored to the greenlife industry — including HR, WHS, business sales & valuations, business productivity, marketing and more.



Queensland Greenlife Awards: Celebrate excellence and innovation in the horticulture industry



Nursery Tours: Learn, connect and have fun with exclusive nursery tours across the state



CEO's Circle: Exclusive access to high-level networking, industry influence, and member benefits



Green Expo: Connect, learn, and grow your business at Green Expo



Nursery Trade Register: Connect with the right businesses and get discovered



Online and Offline Workshops: Access practical training at exclusive member rates to help your business thrive



Industry Alerts & Magazine: Stay informed with the latest industry updates and insights



QLD Garden Show: Showcase your business at Queensland's premier RETAIL gardening event





GREENLIFE INDUSTRY QLD (GIQ) IS THE VOICE FOR NURSERIES AND NOW IS THE TIME TO BE STRONGER; TOGETHER.

We believe that when nursery businesses thrive, communities and environments flourish.

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Listing on and access to members directory	✓	✓	✓
Leaflet member magazine (4 issues per year)	✓	✓	✓
Member window sticker	✓	✓	✓
Business Performance Coaching	✓	✓	✓
Green Expo trade show	✗	✓	✓
Queensland Garden Show	✗	✓	✓
Trade Days	✗	✓	✓
Annual Dinner & Greenlife Awards	✗	✓	✓
Essential Business Services	✗	✓	✓
Best Practice Nursery Tours	✗	✗	✓
High level supply chain networking	✗	✗	✓
Online business improvement series	✗	✗	✓
Special rates on essential services	✗	✗	✓

SEED MEMBERSHIP

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Protect your business with timely and relevant greenlife industry information, access to our member directory, a window sticker, and the GIQ magazine delivered to you (4 editions per year).

\$90+GST joining fee for new members

NURTURE MEMBERSHIP

\$1,699 p.a. + GST

Get involved in our growing community for more connection and direct selling opportunities, including Trade Days, Qld Garden Show, Green Expo and the Qld Greenlife Gala Dinner & Awards.

\$90+GST joining fee for new members

THRIVE MEMBERSHIP

\$2,499 p.a. + GST

Take your business to the next level with exclusive access to nursery best practice tours, high level networking with government and corporate buyers, personal CEO updates, and special rates on essential business services.

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Let's stand together to make things better.

Be part of the strongest voice for nursery, become a member today!





A GLIMPSE UNDER THE CANOPY

GROWING SOLUTIONS AUSTRALIA

By **Jamie Currie**
Growing Solutions Australia

How did your nursery business get started?

After starting an apprenticeship straight out of school and working my way up into nursery management, I always knew I wanted to have my own nursery one day. Then, about 10 years ago, while on a road trip visiting nurseries, I sent a text to my wife saying, “We should start our own nursery,” and she replied, “Let’s do it.” That simple exchange kicked off our journey. We packed up our little family, moved to Queensland, bought a nursery site, and, drawing on over 20 years of industry experience and relationships, Growing Solutions Australia (GSA) was born. Little did I know that the relationships I had forged within the industry over the years would play such a key role in helping us establish and grow GSA.

Can you tell us a bit about your nursery and what you specialise in?

We are based in Cabarlah, just 15 minutes north of Toowoomba, Queensland. Our site includes over 9,000m² of production area, with 6,000m² under controlled greenhouses.

We began by working with a small customer base, contract growing to meet their specific needs. In the years that followed, we expanded into tissue culture work, and in 2022 we acquired the Highsun Foliage business. This was a turning point that helped grow our young plant operations.



Today, we specialise in deflasking tissue culture, propagation, and growing young plants to order. We work closely with our customers to tailor production based on their specific requirements. Our main plant lines include ornamentals, berries and fruit trees, landscape plants, and select agricultural crops. We take pride in producing clean, healthy stock and consistently delivering high-quality young plants to production nurseries across Australia.

What do you enjoy most about working in horticulture?

I love working with plants. There is nothing better than standing back and admiring the beautiful quality we've been able to produce and then watching those plants leave the nursery, ready for the next stage of their journey.

What changes in the nursery or horticulture industry excite you the most right now?

To be honest, I'm not sure there are any particular changes right now that I'd call exciting — our industry is facing some challenges that we all need to work through together. That said, I am encouraged to see that there are people in the right positions working toward positive change, which gives me hope for the future. Looking further ahead, the Brisbane Olympics presents a great opportunity to showcase the value of our industry and the role it plays in shaping green, vibrant spaces across Queensland.

Who are the key people in your team, and what roles do they play?

We have a great team here at GSA, and to highlight anyone in particular wouldn't do justice to the rest, everyone plays an important role in what we do. Our staff genuinely enjoy coming to work and take pride in making sure every plant that leaves the nursery is the best it can be. It's a great feeling when your team tells you this is their "happy place."

Outside of work, my family is my biggest support. They understand what the nursery means to me and the role it plays in my life.

Have you made any recent innovations or upgrades that have changed the way you operate?

Yes, we've made significant investments in improving our growing environments and refining our propagation processes to boost plant health and consistency. These upgrades have helped us maintain the high quality our customers expect.



What's been one of your biggest challenges as a nursery business owner?

Like many in the industry, managing staffing and labour shortages has been a challenge, especially during peak seasons. Balancing production demands with staffing capacity requires constant planning and adaptability.

And what's one of your proudest achievements?

I'm proud of the relationships we've built with customers who have grown with us over the years. Being trusted to supply plants that form the foundation of their production is a huge responsibility, and one I don't take lightly.

If you weren't running a nursery, what would you be doing instead?

To be honest, I haven't really thought much about doing anything else. Before leaving school, this was the path I wanted to follow, and I consider myself lucky that, 32 years on, I'm still doing what I love.

What advice would you give to someone wanting to get into the industry?

All I know is my own journey, starting from the bottom and learning hands-on. The biggest challenge has been taking little steps forward and staying focused, knowing that tomorrow is a new day. It is about persistence and keeping your eyes on the future, even when things get tough.



INTERESTING PLANTS OF THE WORLD

Chlorophytum orchidastrum 'GREEN ORANGE'

At first glance, you might mistake this plant for a strappy Cordyline or even a colourful ginger. But take a closer look and you'll discover something far more unusual — a close cousin of the humble spider plant!

Native to the tropical regions of West Africa, *Chlorophytum orchidastrum* 'Green Orange' is an evergreen, herbaceous perennial that brings a splash of vibrant colour to any space.

Growth & Habit

'Green Orange' has a clumping growth habit, forming an attractive rosette of deep green, strap-like leaves highlighted by striking pink-orange petioles and midribs. In spring and summer, greenish-white, star-shaped flowers emerge from the centre of the plant. Unlike many other members of the *Chlorophytum* genus, 'Green Orange' does not produce plantlets.

Growing Conditions

This plant thrives in well-drained, loamy soil enriched with organic matter. It prefers bright, indirect light but will tolerate light shade, making it suitable for both indoor and sheltered outdoor locations. Avoid prolonged direct sunlight, as this can scorch the leaf tips. Keep the soil evenly moist during active growth, but allow the top layer to dry slightly between waterings in cooler months.

Uses & Appeal

Loved for its easy-going nature, 'Green Orange' is an ideal choice for indoor spaces, sheltered patios, and underplanting in shaded tropical gardens. It thrives with minimal care, is generally pest- and disease-free, and offers year-round visual interest. Whether grown as a statement pot plant or as part of a lush tropical display, it's sure to draw attention.

The rare and striking *Chlorophytum orchidastrum* 'Green Orange' proves that even spider plant relatives can make a bold and surprising statement.



Shade



Up to 50cm



High



Yes



Up to 50cm





WEED WATCH THIS SPRING

RED CAUSTIC WEED (*Euphorbia prostrata*, syn. *Chamaesyce prostrata*)

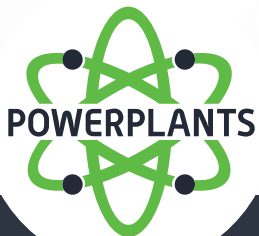
As the weather warms in Queensland, warm-season weeds are quick to appear — particularly in container-grown plants, where they can rapidly establish and compete with young stock. One to watch out for this season is **red caustic weed** (*Euphorbia prostrata*, syn. *Chamaesyce prostrata*).

This fast-growing, prostrate annual forms slender stems with small, oval green leaves and a reddish tinge along the stems and leaf margins. It is a prolific seeder, with seeds spread by wind, water, vehicles, machinery, and contaminated agricultural produce. With no dormancy period, seeds germinate rapidly under suitable conditions,

making infestations quick to establish.

Tiny flowers appear in summer at the leaf axils, often going unnoticed until seeds have already begun to form. The plant's milky sap is toxic and can cause skin irritation, so caution is advised when handling.

Red caustic weed is common in gardens, roadsides, pathways, and nurseries — anywhere soil is disturbed and sunlight is plentiful. To minimise the risk of spread, any plants removed should be disposed of carefully to prevent seeds from dispersing into new areas.



Your Vision, Powered by Our Solutions



Projects



Water



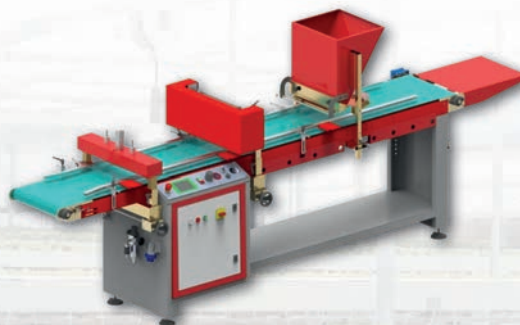
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September 9th

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THE
DATE**



SAVE THE DATE

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INCORPORATING THE

2025 Greenlife Industry Awards

FRIDAY
14TH
NOVEMBER
FROM **6** PM

**SURFAIR
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CENTRE,
MARCOOLA**

Expressions of interest are now
open for sponsorship.



Martin Duncan AKA the 'Sunshine Coast Foodie / Moreton Bay Foodie / Garden Show Ambassador' has a passion for showcasing restaurants, cafes, producers and products. He is a former chef and restaurateur, and a true connector of people in food agribusiness, including the plant nursery and hospitality industries. Martin's other passion is Sconetime – a wonderful opportunity for older people, along with their carers, companions and family, to establish social connections and come together with other people from the community over scones.

MARTIN'S SCONE RECIPE

Ingredients

- 1 egg
- 2 1/2 cups milk
- 1 cup of yoghurt
- 1 tsp vanilla essence
- 1kg self-raising flour
- 1 1/2 tsp baking powder
- 125g chilled salted butter

Method

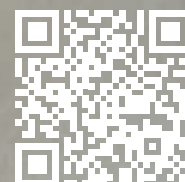
- Set the oven to 180 degrees (fan-forced).
- Mix wet ingredients: 1 egg, 2 1/2 cups milk, 1 cup of yoghurt and 1 tsp vanilla essence.
- Put 1kg self-raising flour & 1 1/2 tsp baking powder into a bowl then grate 125g chilled salted butter, over flour and rub it into mix (gloves make it easy for mixing in wet)
- Combine the wet and dry ingredients, without overmixing them. Add more milk if required for a moist dough.
- Pat the dough onto a floured board and chop it into pieces.
- Bake for 15 -20 minutes.
- Top with lashings of jam and cream.
- Enjoy!

Watch Sconetime in action

ABC Landline segment:



Facebook teaser with Martin's now-famous scone recipe (420K+ views!):





THE GCP ROADSHOW

The GCP Roadshow has become a fixture on the national calendar, with events in Melbourne, Sydney, Perth, Adelaide, and Brisbane. This year held special significance as Garden City Plastics celebrated 50 years in business.

At the Brisbane event, Colin Fruk and Amy Carter from GIQ were in attendance alongside growers from Queensland and Northern NSW. The morning opened with Jason Durham presenting an engaging history of GCP, highlighting the Wilson family, the proud heritage that grew from humble beginnings, and acknowledging Brian Durham for his 40 years of service to GCP and the industry.

Susan Porchun, Director of Plant Biosecurity and Product Integrity at Queensland's Department of Agriculture and Fisheries, followed with an insightful session on biosecurity and the importance of state border protections.

John McDonald, drawing on nearly 40 years of experience, reminded nursery owners of the world-class resources available to Queensland production growers. John currently leads the national levy-funded Biosecurity and Sustainable Plant Production program for GIA.

Next, Andrew Manners, Principal Entomologist with HFS GrowHelp DAF QLD, shared his expertise. Since 2012, Andrew has managed GrowHelp Australia, a diagnostic

laboratory that identifies plant pests and diseases while providing growers with practical management advice. He also reminded attendees that every production nursery in Australia is entitled to send in six free samples each year.

After lunch, attendees took part in an engaging Supplier Partner Panel featuring:

- **Elliott Akintola** – Agronomist & Category Manager, Garden City Plastics
- **Daniel Docherty** – Business Manager ANZ, Syngenta
- **Robert Megier** – Regional Manager NSW, ACT & QLD, ICL
- **Scott Wallis** – Territory BDM Turf & Ornamentals QLD/SA/NT, ENVU

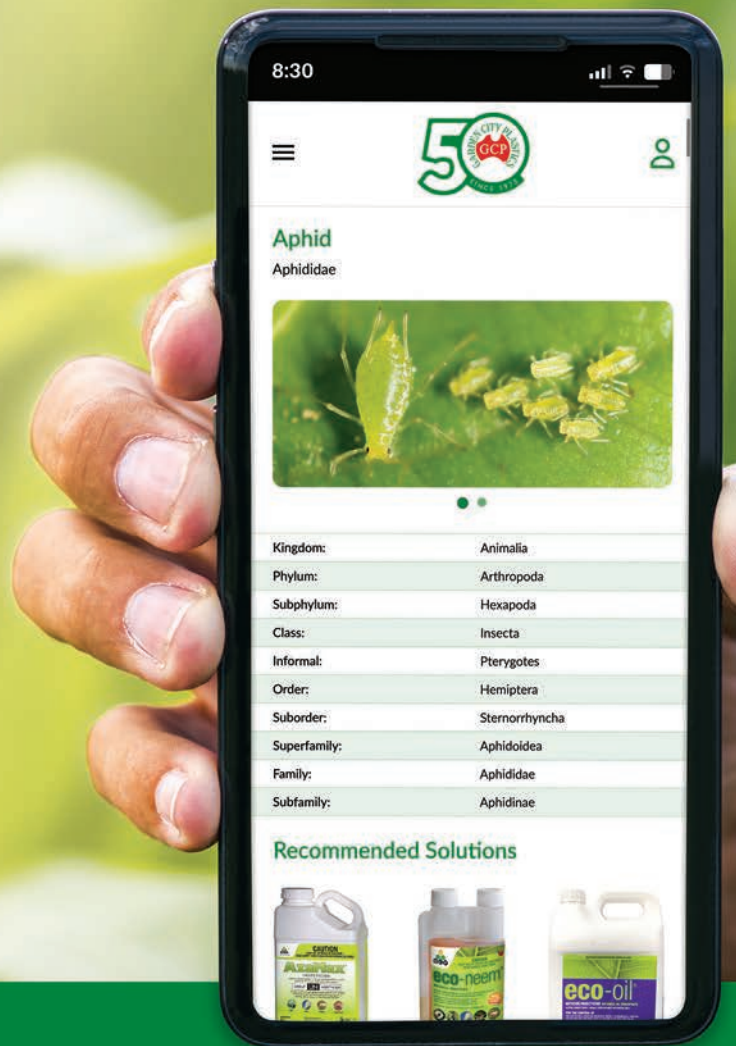
The afternoon concluded with Colin presenting on priorities for a flourishing nursery sector.

A big thank you goes to Garden City Plastics for bringing the industry together through these invaluable sessions, and to Megan Williams for organising such a well-run and informative event. On behalf of GIQ we congratulate GCP for 50 years in business and thank them for all their support, expertise and contribution to industry.



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