

# NGIA CLIPPINGS

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## This month's Nursery Paper... Electronic Pest, Disease, Beneficial & Weed Identification Tool

The Nursery & Garden Industry Queensland (NGIQ) has completed an innovative project transferring a popular pest and disease identification handbook to an electronic format. This resource has been developed for use on portable platforms such as Personal Digital Assistants (PDAs) and some Smartphones. The project was jointly funded by NGIQ and Horticulture Australia Limited (HAL) and released to industry in August 2009. In this Nursery Paper John McDonald, NGIQ Industry Development Manager, provides an overview on this industry innovation.

## Grasp your opportunities at the 2010 NGI National Conference



The April 2010 NGI Conference – Grasp Your Opportunities - will address key industry issues such as biosecurity, marketing, staff development and Industry trends. Whether you are a grower, or a retailer or an allied you will come away from this conference with at least one idea to help your business.

Held in the tropical location of Darwin, the 2010 Conference is an event not to be missed. Why not take a few days before or after the Conference and have a Top End holiday?

As Darwin is a prime fishing destination, a fishing competition will be held prior to the official Conference commencement on Monday, April 19. Trophies for the winners will be sponsored by Dracaena Farm Nursery. On the Monday evening there will be a welcome function for all Conference delegates to mix and mingle and welcome one another to the Territory.

Tours sponsored by Yates will be held on Tuesday, April 20. These tours are a great opportunity to see how other Industry businesses operate and get inspirational ideas to grow your business. For 2010, three tours are on offer; a retail tour, a production tour, and a tour to Katherine Gorge for those who wish to play tourist for the day.

On the morning of Wednesday, April 21, there will be a Certified Nursery Professional (CNP) breakfast. This is an exclusive opportunity for Industry members with

professional recognition to network and learn from one another. Plenary sessions will be held during the day, and that evening OAMPS Insurance Brokers are sponsoring the casual theme night. Come along in your best Territory rig and compete for the prize of best dressed. The night is being coordinated by the NextGenerations so it is sure to be a lot of fun.

On the last day of the event, Thursday April 22, Conference delegates will welcome the day with breakfast and a presentation sponsored by Scotts. Concurrent sessions, where the program is split for growers and retailers, will then take place.

To finish the Conference on a high note, the Best of the Best will be celebrated on Thursday evening at the 2010 NGI Awards Gala Dinner. The dinner will be held at one of Darwin's premier function venues, on the grounds of the Northern Territory Museum and Art Gallery. The backdrop of Fannie Bay and the picturesque Museum gardens will provide a unique and memorable venue for this outdoor event.

Make sure you are part of the 2010 NGI National Conference. As Darwin is a sought-after holiday location, cheap deals on flights will go quickly, so book now to get a good price! Keep your eye on the NGIA website [www.ngia.com.au](http://www.ngia.com.au) and Clippings and eCommPost for more information on the Conference program and associated activities.



Darwin - April 19 - 22, 2010



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## Australian Springtime Flora Festival a spectacular event

The 23rd Australian Springtime Flora Festival ran from September 10 to 13 at Kariang on the NSW Central Coast.

The event was held during one of the sunniest weekends spring 2009 has had to offer, with 50,000 visitors visiting the gardening spectacular over the four days.

The festival is one of the largest and most popular flora events in Australia; featuring plant stalls and displays, food, wine, outdoor furniture, arbor care, garden talks and more. With vibrant colour, constant entertainment and an atmosphere of fun, it was an event for the whole family to enjoy.

Nursery & Garden Industry NSW & ACT (NGINA) was a sponsor of the event and provided a plant advisory service. Workers on the stand handed out 'free' tomato leaflets to visitors. The aim of the leaflet was to drive consumers into their local garden centre by encouraging them to redeem an attached coupon in exchange for a free tomato seedling.

Peter Whitehead *CNP*, NGINA Events & Marketing Officer, says: "NGINA wishes to thank Oasis Horticulture, Marian Grove Nursery, Engall's Nursery and Debco who provided us with the product to create the impressive display that attracted so many passers-by to the NGINA marquee."



The NGINA stand at Flora Festival, held on the Central Coast last month.

## Queensland IDM tests out Pocket Diagnostic™

John McDonald, Nursery & Garden Industry Queensland (NGIQ) Industry Development Manager (IDM), did a two week study tour based in York, England to investigate the technology, application and value of the Pocket Diagnostic™ Test Kits developed by Forsite Diagnostics.

The tour consisted of two weeks comprehensive training with Forsite Diagnostics and the UK Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs.

Pocket Diagnostic™ Test Kits are portable in-field plant pathogen diagnostic tools based on the Lateral Flow Device (LFD) technology (commonly used in home pregnancy tests) and are capable of detecting specific plant pathogens including bacterial, viral and fungal organisms.

The concept of plant pathogen diagnostics being delivered through LFD technology has been in operation for more than 10 years in the UK. The full commercialisation of the technology via Pocket Diagnostic™ Test Kits is about three years old and has been accepted into many plant pathology labs across the UK and Europe.

In Australia, diagnostic tools currently used within the horticultural industry are focused on laboratory based processes managed by state government departments.

According to John, the study tour provided a greater insight into LFD technology and the current constraints and opportunities for future development of Pocket Diagnostic™ Test Kits.

"The Pocket Diagnostic™ is portable, rapid and cost effective," he says. "A significant advantage

of the Pocket Diagnostic™ Test Kit is the ability to get a reading within a three to ten minute time frame which allows the user to move management options quickly."

John believes there is a great potential for the Test Kits to serve the Australian horticultural industry over a range of levels – both for service providers and on-farm.

"NGIQ aims to investigate the opportunities for developing further test kits for common endemic diseases in Australia, however no funding has yet been committed," John says.



## Nursery & Garden Industry releases Environmental Sustainability Position



Nursery & Garden Industry Australia (NGIA) is pleased to announce the release of the industry's Environmental Sustainability Position.

This document firmly cements our industry as a true, green industry and provides us with added credibility in moving forward with government bodies, private sector entities, academia as well as other peak industry bodies.

It captures the nursery and garden industry's many environmental achievements and reaffirms that we are mindful of the environment and committed to the sustainable development of industry.

A PDF copy of this document can be downloaded from [http://www.ngia.com.au/Category?Action=View&Category\\_id=439](http://www.ngia.com.au/Category?Action=View&Category_id=439) It is a living document and consequently there will only be minimal hard copies available.

NGIA's National Environmental & Technical Policy Manager Dr Anthony Kachenko says: NGIA's Environmental Sustainability Position demonstrates NGIA's commitment to environmental sustainability, the appropriate management of the association and its operations, the engagement of businesses in principles and applications of sustainability, and the engagement of, and collaboration with, the broader community."

Dr Kachenko continues: "I would like to thank all those who contributed to the development of this document."

## Life is a garden website re-launched!



NGIA has revamped the consumer website [www.lifeisagarden.com.au](http://www.lifeisagarden.com.au)

Re-launched in late September, the Life is a garden website is a gardening site for everyone; garden novices, green thumbs, and everyone in between. It aims to inspire the consumer to garden, with the key call to action being "Get down to your local garden centre for further advice and information."

The new Life is a garden website has a modern design, is simple and easy to navigate and gives the consumer growing tips, advice on sustainable gardening, GYO garden ideas, explains the environmental benefits of trees and green-life, and lists member garden centres, Certified Nursery Professionals (CNP's) and Australian Garden Centre Accreditation Scheme (AGCAS) members.

Life is a garden is the Nursery & Garden Industry's consumer brand. It was created in 2006 after consumer research commissioned by NGIA found that although

gardens mean different things to different people, Australians overwhelmingly agree that gardens evoke positive images and emotions; gardens are Australian for good times and green-life, gardens and gardening are all about creating the space to enjoy life. Life really is a garden!

Browse the new website at [www.lifeisagarden.com.au](http://www.lifeisagarden.com.au)

### Life is a garden.



The NGIA consumer website [www.lifeisagarden.com.au](http://www.lifeisagarden.com.au) has been revamped and re-launched.

## Industry reviews show what we need to know

Recently your Industry has undergone two separate reviews.

The first review was the Industry Development Needs Assessment Survey which was mailed out to levy payers with the purpose of gaining feedback on key areas or programs for investments. The Horticulture Australia Ltd (HAL) Board required all horticulture industries to complete the process to ensure levy payers get input into project development.

The data from the survey will be utilised in formulating programs which will be submitted to HAL in November.

This report highlighted the need for effective supply chain management and efficient systems with State Governments for plant movement. It also showed that Industry is greatly dominated by "small businesses" that are dependent upon good customer relations and market demand generated by others.

The second review was a business case analysis review of levy investments for the period 2003 – 2007. The review was requested by the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry to ascertain the benefits accrued to the industry from the investment of taxpayer's money via the nursery levy matched funds.

This review showed that there was a lack of reporting on how the industry has been affected by large-scale economic issues such as drought and the Global Financial Crisis. As a result, it is now a requirement that NGIA project reports include economic impact/benefit reporting.

Recently NGIA has reviewed a very powerful report on the Canadian Industry conducted by Deloitte on behalf of the Canadian Ornamental Horticulture Alliance.

In highlighting the importance of the industry, the report states; "Ornamental horticultural production is significant and represents over 40 per cent of Canada's horticultural industry." The report concluded that Canada's ornamental horticulture sector has a major economic impact in Canada, and significant potential to develop and expand. "As such the sector should be a target for growth by government at all levels."

We will be looking to get a similar project undertaken in Australia and request that Industry engages with us to provide honest and accurate data to enable a report that will elevate our Industry in the eyes of politicians and financiers for the benefit of all.

Robert Prince  
NGIA CEO

## Online national invasive plants questionnaire - where does your business stand?



Following part one of the national invasive plants survey, Nursery & Garden Industry Australia (NGIA) is requesting vital Industry participation in an online questionnaire to gauge how familiar Industry businesses are with invasive plant issues.

National Environmental and Technical Policy Manager Dr Anthony Kachenko says: "The response to part one of the survey saw NGIA receive an astounding 350 production/availability lists from nurseries across Australia. NGIA sincerely thanks all participating nurseries who are clearly focusing on the future of invasive plant management by removing those plants currently deemed invasive or potentially invasive from their lists."

The online questionnaire is open to all retail and production nurseries across Australia. To participate go to the NGIA website [www.ngia.com.au](http://www.ngia.com.au)

There are four parts to the survey which cover invasive plants:

- awareness
- resources
- extension
- management

The survey takes no more than 10 minutes to answer and all completed surveys will remain confidential and used only for research purposes. Business details will

not be disclosed in the final report, to be released in December 2009.

"Nursery & Garden Industry Australia is committed to protecting Australia's rich biodiversity," says Dr Kachenko. This questionnaire will provide NGIA with important and relevant data that will assist us to establish the level of awareness growers and retailers have regarding the plants they sell. It continues to build on the success of the Grow Me Instead campaign, nationally launched in April this year to further educate industry and consumers regarding the prevention and spread of environmental weeds.

**With an increasing focus on environmentally sound business practice, it is vital for industry to participate.**

If you would like to know more about this project, contact Del Thomas ph/fax (02) 6557 2727 or email: [delwyn.thomas@ngia.com.au](mailto:delwyn.thomas@ngia.com.au). Del has been engaged by NGIA to lead this project.

*Note: NGIA is aware that the lists of garden plants known to be invasive vary considerably from region to region. However, we will address this when evaluating production lists and writing the final report.*

## Upcoming events

October 14, 2009  
**NGIQ Trade Day**  
Bowen Hills, QLD  
Contact: Sarah Manser  
Ph: (07) 3277 7900  
Email: info@ngiq.asn.au  
Web: www.ngiq.asn.au

October 18, 2009  
**Irrigation Australia 2009 National Conference**  
Swan Hill, VIC  
Contact: IAA  
Ph: (02) 9476 0792  
Email: info@irrigation.org.au  
Web: www.irrigation.org.au

October 18 – 24, 2009  
**National Water Week**  
Web:  
www.nationalwaterweek.org.au

October 20, 2009  
**NGINA Trade Day Newcastle**  
Contact: Norma Peters  
Ph: (02) 4982 8209  
Email: info@ngina.com.au  
Web: www.ngina.com.au

October 27, 2009  
**NGIV Trade Day**  
Contact: NGIV  
Ph: (03) 9576 0599  
Email: ngiv@ngiv.com.au  
Web: www.ngiv.com.au

October 27, 2009  
**NGINA Trade Day Wagga Wagga**  
Contact: Geoff Rapley  
Ph: (02) 6922 5746  
Email: info@ngina.com.au  
Web: www.ngina.com.au

November 3, 2009  
**NGINA Trade Day**  
Contact: Kay Vargas  
Ph: (02) 9679 1472  
Email: info@ngina.com.au  
Web: www.ngina.com.au

November 10, 2009  
**NGINA Trade Day Dubbo**  
Contact: Robert Lee  
Ph: (02) 6548 2472  
Email: merriwa.nursery@hunterlink.net.au  
Web: www.ngina.com.au



## Green-Life Careers Update



Since the launch of the Green-Life Careers website in mid June 2009, there has been a concerted effort to get the word out about careers in the Nursery & Garden Industry.

The site, www.greenlifecareers.com.au, has received around 4,500 hits, with the Careers and Employment pages being the most popular with visitors.

The Employment page has listed over 28 fabulous industry 'positions vacant' and 12 listings on the 'positions wanted' page. It is great to see that industry employers now have a national, dedicated site for their job listings. It will continue to increase in popularity as word gets out.

There have been 32 Educators (TAFE and University) so far who have asked to be listed on the Educator page, which includes their logos and the contact details of a dedicated Horticulture staff member to answer any inquiries.

Recently, Green-Life Careers has also featured on the SkillsOne website www.skillsone.com.au with NGIA National Training Manager, Fiona Kelly, scoring a valuable 'guest blogger' spot for one week, extolling the virtues of a career in the industry and promoting Green-Life Careers.

The SkillsOne electronic newsletter - which included promotion of the 'guest blogger' of the week - is distributed to a database of over 10,000 individuals. The majority of these subscribers are from the Education and Training sector (80%) with the primary users being Career Counselors.

The Nursery & Garden Industry has also recently worked with the Institute for Trade Skills Excellence (ITSE) on a national advertising campaign for Nursery & Garden Industry featuring targeted advertisements in News Limited newspapers all over the country. This commenced in August and will continue for 12 months.

Distribution of the recently printed Green-Life Careers brochure has commenced also. Brochures have been sent around the country for use at conferences, career days and for use as career councilor stock material.

The next stage of this project will be the promotion of the website to other industry associations. We hope that other industry associations will assist in building up the career information we have created in each of the sectors.

We are also looking for industry input into job descriptions and other information. So, if you are keen to share your knowledge and experience with us, go to the Employer Assistance page of www.greenlifecareers.com.au and download the 'industry journey' document.

Finally, Green-Life Careers is a proud joint sponsor of the CNP Student Scholarship for 2009. Student applications close on November 12.

For further information, questions or suggestions about the Green-Life Careers project, please contact Fiona Kelly on 02 9876 5200, or via careers@ngia.com

## Do you know a high achieving Horticulture Student?

The Certified Nursery Professional (CNP) Student Scholarship Program closes for applications on November 12. After the successful launch of this program in 2008, this year's program is expected to attract even more motivated Horticulture students from around Australia.

With the valuable support of sponsors Australian Horticulture Magazine and Green-Life Careers, the 2009 Program aims to send one Metropolitan and one Regional Horticulture student in their final year of study to the Nursery & Garden Industry's National Conference to be held in Darwin from April 19 to 22, 2010.

Student applications must be supported by their employer and training organisation and include their current academic results, along with 300 words outlining why they think they should be awarded the scholarship and what they would do with the opportunity.

The Certified Nursery Professional Program (CNP) supports the Student Scholarship Program which encourages Horticulture students to learn the benefits of industry focused professional development and networking with industry professionals.

Further information and application forms are available from the Green-Life Careers website www.greenlifecareers.com.au, via email request to careers@ngia.com.au or by phone on (02) 9876 5200.



October edition of NGIA Clippings compiled and edited by Sarah McMahon, NGIA Communications & PR Coordinator.



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