

NGIA CLIPPINGS

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Jump to page

1 2 3 4

IN THIS ISSUE

Page 1

- Are you the best fisherman in the Industry?

Page 2

- NGI National Conference – what do you want?
- National Water Week
- Nursery & Garden Industry develops pest, disease & weed identification tool

Page 3

- Don't miss out on the NGI Fishing Day!
- 2010 Awards – submissions increased, unique Gala Dinner to come

Page 4

- New tool for Industry employers
- Student Scholarship Program Opens for Applications

This month's Nursery Paper... Training, Careers & Employment in Horticulture

According to recent research, Amenity Horticulture is one of Australia's fastest growing industries, closely linked to urban development and lifestyle.

Nursery and garden enterprises employ approximately 30 per cent of all workers in the 'agriculture' industry.

Does a 'fast-growing industry' require special attention by government to assist it in the skilling and employment of personnel into the industry? Or, does the responsibility of this role lie on the shoulders of industry bodies and/or individual employers?

The answer is both. In this Nursery Paper we look at training, careers and employment in the 'fast-growing' Amenity Horticulture Industry, how the Government is helping us in these areas and what we as an industry are doing to help ourselves.

Aussie Passion for Plants Continues to Bloom



To launch spring for 2009 and create a platform from which to steer Industry programs, Nursery & Garden Industry Australia (NGIA) commissioned Newspoll research in July which interviewed 1,200 respondents and highlighted the changing scope of the Australian backyard.

The results were announced to media at the NGIA Spring Launch held in Sydney on August 6. Implications for Industry will be discussed in upcoming editions of Clippings and used to map out the future direction of marketing and PR programs.

The research showed that while the landscape of the Australian backyard is changing, Australian's passion for spending time outdoors isn't. An astounding 86% of Australians believe that the health, wellbeing and relaxation benefit their garden provides is the top reason they spend time in their backyards.

Interestingly, over 70% of Australians believe that children today spend less time in the garden than when they were young. This is even higher when you speak to parents, and underpins the idea that Australians place a high importance on

outdoor lifestyles and want to continue to instil these values in the next generation.

Likewise, women are more likely to see the health benefits of gardening than men, with 73% saying that gardens have a positive effect on their happiness. 76% of women also gain most of their inspiration from enjoying other people's gardens, showcasing that gardens continue to play an important social role in our lifestyles as well.

NGIA CEO Robert Prince says: "The landscape of the Australian backyard is constantly changing and evolving, however our love of gardens has remained untouched. It's exciting to see Australians really enjoying their backyards and reaping the wellbeing and health benefits of spending time in their garden."

City dwellers are 5% more likely to see the benefit of gardens to our personal wellbeing than Australians living in the country. A third of Australians have balcony and potted gardens as more inner city dwellers adopt green life into their living space and actively incorporate plants into their space-poor homes.

Reinforcing current trends, young Australians are leading the gardening revolution, with 76% of Australians aged 18-34 planning on doing spring gardening this year, 5% higher than all older age groups. Young Australians also believe the aesthetics of gardens are vital with 65% of young Aussies placing a high importance on the look of their garden.



NGI National Conference – what do you want?



The 2010 Nursery & Garden Industry National Conference is to be held in Darwin from August 19 to 22, and we'd like to know what you want in the program.

Along with the whole of industry plenary sessions, there will be concurrent sessions where the program is split for growers and retailers and we would like you to tell us what you want to learn about, particularly in these concurrent sessions.

Perhaps you would like a more technical focus, or you want a session on managing staff, or maybe you would like tips on marketing your business.

To tell us what you want contact Jacqui Gibbs, NGIA, ph (02) 9876 5200, email jacqui.gibbs@ngia.com.au



Darwin - April 19 - 22, 2010

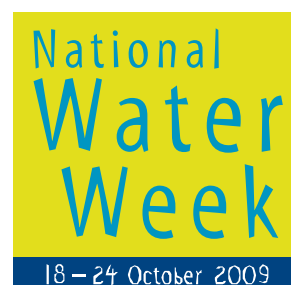
National Water Week

National Water Week 2009, held from October 18 to 24, is the premier week for community water awareness in Australia. National Water Week will see hundreds of events take place on a local, regional and national scale.

This year's theme is Securing our Water Future and will unite community, school,

environmental and industry groups holding events that encourage community participation in water protection and conservation.

Get involved! Go to www.nationalwaterweek.org.au for more information, tools and resources.



Nursery & Garden Industry develops pest, disease & weed identification tool



Nursery & Garden Industry Queensland (NGIQ) in collaboration with Nursery & Garden Industry Australia (NGIA) have produced an 'Insects, Beneficials, Diseases, Disorders and Weeds of Nursery Production' electronic identification resource.

The tool, which was developed through a voluntary contribution from Nursery & Garden Industry Queensland (NGIQ) matched with Horticulture Australia Ltd (HAL) funding, was designed as an on-farm resource but will also provide substantial benefits to garden centres as a pest and disease identification resource, providing real-time pest, disease and weed knowledge to help guide management decisions.

The resource has all the data stored on a Secure Digital (SD) system memory card that is inserted into a Personal Data Assistant (PDA), providing current and portable information on insects, beneficials, diseases, disorders and weeds in a format that is mobile and updatable. It has almost 200 fact sheets with 778 images and uses touch screen, menu navigation. With the right hardware, the SD system memory

card can also be inserted into a computer and used as a pest, disease and weed identification software program.

NGIQ Industry Development Manager John McDonald says: "Technology is moving ahead so quickly in the area of portable computer based hardware and it is important that industry takes advantage of this to improve information access and increase operational efficiencies where possible."

John continues: "We are looking at developing more resources for industry that will operate on these mobile platforms as they are now cost effective due to significant reductions in price over the past few years."

Main menus on the PDA include:

- Pest Insects
- Beneficial Insects
- Plant Diseases
- Weeds
- Nutritional Disorders
- Emergency Pest Insects
- Emergency Plant Diseases
- Emergency Pest Plants

SD system memory cards containing 'Insects, Beneficials, Diseases, Disorders and Weeds of Nursery Production' are available from NGIQ at a cost of \$55.

For more information please contact John McDonald, NGIQ ph: (07) 3277 7900, email: nido@ngiq.asn.au



Don't miss out on the NGI Darwin Fishing Day, get your expressions of interest in today!

What better way to kick off the 2010 Nursery & Garden Industry National Conference than with a fishing day.

The 2010 NGI National Conference is to be held in Darwin from April 19 to 22, 2010. The fishing trip will be held before the Conference officially begins on Monday the 19th.

Trophies are sponsored by Dracaena Farm Nursery and will be presented for:

- The heaviest fish (offshore)
- The longest combined meters of fish

Due to the popularity of fishing trips and limited numbers of boats in Darwin at this time of year we need to book the boats now! Therefore, we are asking for your expression of interest in being part of the NGI Fishing Day.

If you would like to take part in the fishing competition please email natalie.walker@ngia.com.au to receive a payment form today. Payment is required by August 31, 2009.

The day will cost around \$150 per person (prices may change subject to final numbers) and will guarantee you a spot on the boat and the chance to be named the best fisherman in the industry.



Bryan Hillier from Dracaena Farm Nursery who are sponsoring the Fishing Competition Trophies.



2010 Awards – submissions increased, unique Gala Dinner to come



Entries for the 2010 Nursery & Garden Industry (NGI) Awards have now closed and NGIA is pleased to announce there has been a 70 per cent increase in submissions from last year!

All submissions received, with the exception of the Young Leader and Supplier Award entries, will now be reviewed by the National Judging Panel. Garden Centre and Production Nursery State Finalists will then be visited onsite by judges who will determine the State Winners. State Winners will be announced at the State Awards Evenings held between October and December 2009. All State Winners will become National Finalists. National Winners will be announced at the Awards Gala Dinner in April 2010 in conjunction with the NGI National Conference in Darwin.

The 2010 NGIA Awards Gala 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 the outdoor event.

NGIA National Marketing & Communications Manager Jacqui Gibbs says she has been encouraged by the effort entrants have gone to. "This year it has been obvious that people have put in a lot of hard work and time into their submissions and it is exciting to see."

Presented by Nursery & Garden Industry Australia, the Awards recognise and reward excellence within the nursery and garden industry and acknowledge industry leaders as they strive to achieve best business practice.

For more information on the 2010 Nursery & Garden Industry Awards and National Conference go to www.ngia.com.au or contact Jacqui Gibbs ph (02) 9876 5200, email jacqui.gibbs@ngia.com.au

President's Comment

I believe the rate of change the Nursery Industry has experienced in the past five years will be matched and exceeded in the next five years. Factors for this include the impact of water restrictions; the demise of traditional garden centres; the growth of the landscape sector; the evolution of garden service businesses from lawn mowing contractors to large franchises and the growth of the 'Big Boxes'.

We are now all trying to get back on track after drought conditions. This can be made easier by innovative marketing and add-on sales. It is amazing how the public react to being able to garden after being restrained by tough water restrictions. This has been highlighted during June of this year in South Australia and to a lesser extent, in Victoria.

As our economy recovers from the downturn, the garden centres that have survived have great opportunity to strengthen their percentage of the market by prompting the garden services sector which is growing fast. This can be done by offering these services direct, or with franchised operations. Your National Board has been discussing with the State Associations how to work with franchised garden maintenance groups to drive back sales, thus allowing them to develop for mutual benefit.

Another major change in our Industry – with the 'Big Boxes' draw of plant stock, many growers have become very dependant, especially when one adds the value of the prompt payment the 'Big Boxes' offer. Now these growers need to not only produce what is required today, but to have an eye on the future by offering new stock lines that are suited to this style of retailing.

It appears we are also now a more computer-savvy industry. While we have been slow to utilise the benefits of new technology and computerisation, the response from recent email surveys conducted by NGIA have shown there has been a recent, rapid catch-up. None of us can afford to become email driven, but allocation of time in front of the computer is necessary to run a successful business today.

The healthy growth in the Nursery Industry over the past 12 months looks to continue. Now is the time to develop staff. Invest in them now; it will position you well to retain them



as the economy picks up. People are the life blood of any industry – train them, develop and reward them, and then you can really enjoy what the Nursery Industry has to offer.

Geoff Richards,
NGIA President

Upcoming events

August 18, 2009

NGINA Trade Day, Newcastle

Newcastle, NSW

Contact: Norma Peters

Ph: (02) 4982 8209

Email: info@ngina.com.au

www.ngina.com.au

August 25, 2009

NGINA Trade Day, Wagga Wagga

Wagga Wagga, NSW

Contact: Geoff Rapley

Ph: (02) 6922 5746

Email: info@ngina.com.au

www.ngina.com.au

August 25 -26, 2009

Green Expo, Sydney

Rosehill, NSW

Contact: Kay Vargas

Ph: (02) 9679 1472

Email: info@ngina.com.au

August 26, 2009

NGIQ Trade Day

Bowen Hills, QLD

Contact: Sarah Manser

Ph: (02) 3277 7900

Email: info@ngiq.asn.au

www.ngiq.asn.au

September 1, 2009

NGIV Trade Day

Caulfield, Victoria

Contact: Susan Okah

Ph: (03) 9576 0599

Email: ngiv@ngiv.com.au

www.ngiv.com.au

September 8, 2009

NGINA Dubbo Trade Day

Dubbo, NSW

Contact: Robert Lee

Ph: (02) 6548 2472

Email: merriwa.nursery@hunterlink.net.au

www.ngina.com.au

September 15, 2009

NGINA Trade Day

Rouse Hill, NSW

Contact: Kay Vargas

Ph: (02) 9679 1472

Email: info@ngina.com.au

www.ngina.com.au

September 15, 2009

NGINA Newcastle Trade Day

Newcastle, NSW

Contact: Norma Peters

Ph: (02) 4982 8209

Email: info@ngina.com.au

www.ngina.com.au

Is your business looking for staff?



The newly launched Green-Life Careers project includes a dedicated website www.greenlifecareers.com.au designed to assist those thinking about a career AND to those already working in the industry.

Are you looking for staff or wanting to advertise a position? The website is an ideal place to advertise a job vacancy or for a listing of those wanting a position within the industry. Listings are free and aim to bring together various stakeholders in the one place – everyone working together – that's got to be useful!

For further information and feedback contact Fiona Kelly, National Training & Recognition Manager on (02) 9876 5200 or careers@ngia.com.au



Student Scholarship Program opens for applications



The Certified Nursery Professional Student Scholarship Program is now open for applications. 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 on an all expense paid trip to the Nursery & Garden Industry's National Conference to be held in Darwin from April 19 to 22, 2010.

Students must be supported in their application by their employer and training organisation and submit academic results along with 300 words outlining why they think they should be awarded the scholarship and what they would do with the opportunity.

Feedback from last year's national finalists and winners has been overwhelmingly positive and many students have continued to be involved in the industry via the Green-Life Careers website design and content. Keep an

eye out for their enthusiastic faces and quotes throughout the site!

Thanks to Australian Horticulture magazine, media coverage of the national finalists and winners was, and will continue to be, extensive for this Program.

The Certified Nursery Professional Program (CNP) supports the Student Scholarship Program which encourages the students to learn the benefits of industry focused professional development, networking with industry professionals and aims to inspire each student into the future.

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



Australian Horticulture



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



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