

Your Levy At Work



Greenlife Industry Australia

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DECEMBER 2024

Meeting today's needs, safeguarding tomorrow: Chislett Nursery's commitment to excellence

"Every tree we grow starts with a commitment to innovation and continuous improvement," said Jonathan Chislett, Manager at Chislett Nursery.

"This focus is essential as Australian horticulture navigates emerging challenges, including climate change and rising input costs."

As the greenlife sector evolves in response to environmental and market pressures, Chislett Nursery plays a pivotal role in Australia's horticultural landscape.

Producing between 800,000 and one million container-grown trees annually, the nursery's trees are the backbone of Australia's commercial orchard industry, supporting enterprises ranging from small family farms to large corporate operations.

But beyond the numbers lies a deeper story – one of resilience, innovation, and a commitment to driving sustainable practices within the greenlife sector.

A family legacy of growth and improvement

For over 30 years, the Chislett family has helped orchards thrive. When Jonathan Chislett returned to the family business in 2012 after a decade as a chemical engineer, he brought a fresh perspective and a relentless drive for continuous improvement. Under his leadership, Chislett Nursery has cemented its reputation for combining tradition with innovation to deliver long-term business resilience in a competitive industry.

Best practices as a cornerstone

At Chislett Nursery, best management practices (BMPs) are not just guidelines – they are woven into every aspect of operations, from day-to-day tasks to strategic planning. These practices underpin the nursery's ability

to meet its clients' expectations while addressing broader challenges within the sector.

"BMPs have driven our high standards for decades," Jonathan said.

"It's not just about meeting industry benchmarks but about consistently improving plant health and delivering a product that our customers can depend on."

One of Chislett Nursery's key achievements has been maintaining the Nursery Industry Accreditation Scheme (NIASA) certification. This third-party accreditation process goes beyond compliance, offering annual audits that reveal opportunities for innovation and improvement, enabling the nursery to stay ahead in a dynamic market.

Quality at every step

Every tree at Chislett Nursery begins its journey with virus-indexed seeds and budwood sourced from trusted supplier Auscitrus. Sourcing high-quality plant material is critical to ensuring climate resilience, biosecurity, and the long-term health of both plants and the environment.

High-health propagation environments, precise watering schedules, and balanced nutrition are cornerstones of Chislett Nursery's operations, aligning with the sector's push for sustainable water and resource management.

Additionally, practices like keeping trees and root systems off the ground to prevent root rot and promoting strong root development further ensure healthy growth.

"Our mission is to help orchards establish robust, long-living trees," Jonathan said.

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“That’s essential for our customers’ success and for us to maintain their trust and loyalty.”

Turning challenges into opportunities

Rising input costs, labour shortages, and biosecurity risks are constant challenges for the industry, but Chislett Nursery views these obstacles as opportunities for innovation. The annual NIASA audit process serves as a platform for evaluating and refining practices to maintain resilience in a changing landscape.

“Challenges push us to think creatively,” Jonathan said.

“Whether it’s investing in infrastructure or enhancing our water sanitation systems, every improvement helps us adapt and thrive.”

Sustainability as a business imperative

Sustainability is at the heart of Chislett Nursery’s approach. From infrastructure upgrades to water and resource management practices, every investment supports the nursery’s operations and contributes to broader industry resilience.

“High standards come at a cost, but the rewards are invaluable,” Jonathan said.

“Our practices not only ensure a steady supply of healthy trees but also strengthen the sustainability of our customers’ orchards.”

This forward-thinking approach positions Chislett Nursery as a leader in quality and environmental stewardship, aligning with the growing emphasis on sustainable practices within Australia’s horticultural sector.

The road ahead

Looking ahead, Jonathan envisions further growth in production, reputation, and industry influence. As the greenlife sector faces challenges such as shifting climate patterns and evolving consumer demands, Chislett Nursery is poised to help orchards adapt and thrive.

“Best management practices aren’t just about today – they’re about setting us up for tomorrow and beyond,” Jonathan said.

By blending tradition with innovation, Chislett Nursery is cultivating more than trees; it is fostering a legacy of resilience and value in a competitive and ever-changing industry.

For more information on accreditation and certification, visit greenlifeindustry.com.au/credentials

In addition, if you’re interested in exploring NIASA certification, visit nurseryproductionfms.com.au or contact Greenlife Industry Australia at info@greenlifeindustry.com.au or on 1300 95 95 13.

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Funded by Hort Innovation under the ‘National biosecurity and sustainable plant production program’ (NY20001), the nationally mobilised network of extension officers engages with production nurseries now in every Australian state or territory to improve plant protection protocols and production outcomes across the country.