

Nursery Papers

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Professional recognition for individuals

The Certified Nursery Professional (CNP) program is the nursery and garden industry's professional recognition scheme for individuals.

While CNP members are first and foremost recognised for their exceptional skill and expertise, they are also required to maintain their membership status by engaging in ongoing learning.

This month's *Nursery Paper* profiles five industry members who have taken the opportunity to invest in themselves and join the program. Find out how being a CNP has strengthened their industry relationships and business profiles.

• Your Levy at Work •

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Nursery & Garden Industry
Australia



Know-how for Horticulture™

Get the recognition you deserve – the Certified Nursery Professional program

Why become a CNP?

The Certified Nursery Professional (CNP) program is the nursery and garden industry's professional recognition scheme for individuals.

CNP members are acknowledged for their skill and expertise within the industry. To maintain membership, individuals are required to be continuously active in training and attend industry events.

“CNP provides an opportunity for individuals to gain formal recognition of their knowledge, experience and continual learning,” says National Training and Recognition Manager, Candice McNamara. “It’s a program for people who invest in themselves.”

The program is currently being promoted to industry and consumers via a Winter Campaign that is running now until 31 August.

Make your mark

As a CNP, you are singled out as a highly trained and experienced nursery professional.

Stringent membership criteria and program requirements mean that you stand out from the crowd. The nation-wide CNP program gives you invaluable industry recognition for your demonstrated professional integrity.

A CNP's experience and credibility within the industry are easily identified by:

- Use of Post-nominals*



- Personalised CNP badge
- CNP Certificate of Recognition
- NGIA Trade Register listing
- NGI website listing
- NGIA Consumer Website listing.

* *Post-nominals may only be used with the name of the qualified CNP and not the business name.*

As a member of CNP, you will enjoy continued support via ongoing promotion of the program, such as the current Winter Campaign. The program is marketed extensively to industry and consumers Australia-wide via a range of mediums including websites, trade shows, newsletters and advertisements.

Stay in-the-know

Being a part of the CNP program puts you in the best position to keep up with industry trends and be 'in-the-know'.

It also offers valuable networking opportunities and access to ongoing professional development activities.

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Professional standards guaranteed

When you are dealing with new customers and other businesses, it's invaluable to have certified CNP support to ensure your professional image is maintained.

CNP membership provides people with the assurance that you have the knowledge and skills to provide superior services.

Industry recognition

CNP recognises that you have made a valuable contribution to the industry via education and training, work experience and involvement in industry events.

Raising your industry profile

The nursery and garden industry will continue to grow and mature through the nurturing of highly skilled professionals. The CNP program recognises that this is a valuable industry with people who make a big contribution to the community as a whole.

Criteria for Recognition

To be eligible to join the CNP program,

you must meet the following criteria:

Specialist Level

- Any relevant qualification at Diploma Level or higher and 10 years experience; or
- 15 years experience, no qualification

Professional Level

- Certificate III Horticulture and 5 years experience; or
- 10 years experience, no qualification

Maintaining your CNP Membership

The continued status of the CNP program depends on the quality of the membership.

All members are required to demonstrate ongoing professional development in order to retain membership status.

Professional development activities are recorded under a point-score system. To maintain CNP status, you must accrue a total of 20 activity credits over a 24 month period.

There are a range of activities that count towards maintaining CNP status including attending state/national conferences, attending seminars/study tours, receiving subscriptions and more.

Membership Fees

The fee for participation in this program is:

- \$95.00 bi-annual membership or renewal
- \$70.00 upfront (one-off) joining fee

CNP Member Profiles

Mirella Jakimoff of Alexander's Nursery, QLD

Mirella Jakimoff is passionate about the nursery and garden industry.

"If you want to be part of an industry, you should get involved in some form or another," says Mirella.

Mirella and her husband Alex own and run Alexander's Nursery in Coombabah, QLD. Established in 1979 and registered as a NIASA accredited nursery in 2001, Alexander's is a wholesale production nursery that supplies to the landscape market in South East Queensland.

"We take professionalism very seriously," she says. "We are very particular about our service and our professionalism."

The CNP program also motivates her to invest more time into developing the hallmark of her business – education and training.

"It helps you within your business and it also helps you to keep reading, attending conferences, and generally stay up-to-date, because you constantly have to update your knowledge," she says.

On a more personal level, the program also gives credit to the years of hard work and achievement that make her stand out as a nursery professional.

"It acknowledges your ongoing contribution to the industry," says Mirella. "I've given 15 years of my life to the industry, and it's good to have some recognition for that."



The CNP program recognises years of experience, knowledge and hard work: "I've given 15 years of my life to the industry, and it's good to have some recognition for that" – Mirella Jakimoff, CNP.

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Rosemary Vulcz of Mr Fern, VIC

Rosemary Vulcz is optimistic about her industry and her business.

"It's a very positive industry and I think it's heading in the right direction," says Rosemary.

Rosemary and her husband Les established their business, Mr. Fern, in 1980. A wholesale nursery specialising in growing and distributing mature tree ferns, the nursery is situated in the Otway Ranges, VIC.

Like Mirella, Rosemary joined the CNP program for industry recognition.

"Being a CNP is very important to the business," she says. "The industry recognition gives you credibility when dealing with people you've never met."

The program also keeps her informed about what's going on in the industry.

"The CNP program keeps me in touch, particularly as it's so isolating up here. It broadens my horizons and keeps me up-to-date with the latest on products and trends."



CNP membership raises your industry profile. For Rosemary (pictured here with Les Vulcz, CNP), being a CNP "gives you credibility when dealing with people you've never met."

Recognition of personal achievement is also important. "It means a lot to put all the qualifications together achieve CNP status," she says.

"I'd like to see more people take the opportunity to join the scheme," she enthuses. "It's a great program."

Paul Rawlings of WA Primary Industries Training Council

Paul Rawlings strongly believes in the value of training.

Currently the Executive Officer of the WA Primary Industries Training Council, Paul speaks candidly about his thoughts on the issue.

"I have a big belief in the value of education, especially in horticulture. I don't believe we do it justice and more people could be engaging in it," says Paul.

Former president of NGI SA with 20 years on the Board, he has been a nurseryman for 28 years.

Paul pinpoints the CNP program as an important step in developing training within the industry.

"Skills shortage is one of the biggest problems in the industry, which is why CNP is important," he says.

Paul became a CNP while he was on the CNP development committee in 2005. He sees the program developing the professional image of individuals and the industry as a whole.

"I very strongly believe that we need to enhance the professional image of the



The CNP program enhances industry professionalism: "CNP is a weapon when talking to government bodies...it's the professional armoury with which the state and national bodies can approach any organisation" – Paul Rawlings, CNP.

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industry,” he says. “Hopefully it will give the industry the credibility it deserves.”

Paul explained that it can also be used to enhance relations with external organisations.

“It’s a weapon when talking to government bodies. CNP is the professional armoury with which the state and national bodies can approach any organisation,” says Paul.

Dion McAlister of Cowra Advanced Trees, NSW

Young and passionate about his profession, Dion recently joined the CNP program.

“I think it’s a very beneficial program,” says Dion. “I hope more people join it and future employers see it as an advantage for people who are looking for work.”

Dion has been a CNP member since October 2005. He works for Cowra Advanced Trees, which is a NIASA accredited advanced tree and shrub nursery situated in Cowra, NSW.

For Dion, training and professionalism were the main reasons for joining.

“I want to keep up-to-date with what’s going on in the industry,” he says. “I think it’s beneficial to get more training and make sure my skills meet industry expectations so I’m not just on my own.”

Developing a profile within the industry is also important to him.

“I want to get my profile out there and get some recognition in the industry.”

Dion has found that his professional development has accelerated since he’s become a member. He’s had more correspondence with other people in the industry, and he’s started a Bachelor of Management, which he directly links to starting the CNP program.

He encourages other people to join the



CNP is about maintaining a high level of skill and professionalism: “It’s beneficial to get more training and make sure my skills meet industry expectations” – Dion McAlister, CNP.

program, which he sees as an essential component to developing the industry.

“I’d recommend joining the CNP program,” he says. “It’s important for the industry to have people know what’s expected of them in terms of training and skills development.”

Peter Ives of Bassett Barks, QLD

Peter has been in the nursery trade for 16 years, and says that professionalism and recognition were his motivation to become a CNP.

“The main reason I joined was for industry recognition,” he says.

Peter now works for Bassett Barks as a Technical Services Representative.

Bassett Barks is Queensland’s largest landscaping and potting media supply company and is an accredited growing

media supplier under the Nursery Industry Accreditation Scheme of Australia.

Peter strongly believes in education and training for himself and in turn, his customers.

“I see membership with the CNP program as a long term thing,” says Peter.

Want more information?

If you would like more information on the Certified Nursery Professional program please refer to the NGI website www.ngia.com.au/cnp or contact your state association or the CNP Coordinator, on (02) 9876 5200 or email: cnp@ngia.com.au.