

NURSERY PAPERS

NOVEMBER 2010 Issue no.10

Nursery and Garden Industry Strategic Plan 2010-2015

The nursery and garden industry has a new Strategic Plan following extensive consultation with all sectors of industry.

In December 2009 a one day facilitated planning meeting was held that brought together national and state presidents, directors, executive officers, members of Horticulture Australia Limited (HAL), industry program managers and industry sector representatives.

The resulting plan was circulated to all attendees for further input with the final plan being approved by the Industry Advisory Committee (IAC) and NGIA Board in March 2010. The Plan was then endorsed by the HAL Board in May 2010.

This Nursery Paper highlights some of the projects/initiatives that will be undertaken by Nursery & Garden Industry Australia (NGIA) in the next two years to help the nursery and garden industry (NGI) achieve the objectives of the Plan.

Nursery and Garden Industry Strategic Plan 2010-2015

Australian nursery and garden businesses make up a multi-billion dollar industry that plays a vital part in the human (community and personal), environmental and economic well being of Australia. The industry is far broader than the perceived 'ornamental' market, and supplies greenlife to a wide array of end users including the forestry sector, revegetation/landcare sector, landscapers, fruit orchardists, cut flower and vegetable growers. With many challenges confronting the industry, the Australian NGI seeks to muster its creative and productive capabilities to ensure its ongoing growth so that it continues to serve the interests of both its members and the nation.

This is a broad strategic plan for the whole of the industry sector, and therefore carries with it a range of implementation challenges. NGIA, as a peak industry body, will play a vital role in helping ensure there is accountability in the investment of industry levy funds by HAL through the plan. Moreover, as a key industry service provider, the NGIA will help deliver many aspects of the plan through contract provision, facilitation of industry partnerships and advising industry sectors on the role they can play and the benefits they can gain by aligning investments to the strategies of the plan.

Our previous plan was focused on a united and sustainable industry; the new plan includes these elements but also focuses on productivity and profitability as being fundamental to our future.

Industry representatives have identified a range of desires for the Strategic Plan to achieve, including:

- Promotion of the industry as valuable career choice;
- Positioning the industry's values/benefits with all sectors of the Australian community, and promoting the value of 'Green-life' to consumers;
- Establishing benchmarks and key performance indicators (KPIs) for the industry;
- Establishing industry as the key to climate change solutions;
- Rallying a unified industry that has unity of purpose and common goals;
- Enhancing the market awareness of industry participants;
- Enhancing the adoption of best management practice and use of technology;

- Effective communication that enhances cooperation, commitment and trust within and across the different supply chain sectors;
- Expansion into other industry sectors;
- Growing an alliance of 'green industries' based on common aspirations;
- Better utilisation of industry skills to foster efficiency and growth;
- Growing the industry membership base to provide a sound financial platform for industry investment and
- Improving interaction with Government to win its support and acknowledgment for the industry's value and contribution to the public good.



VISION

A unified Australian NGI that is productive, profitable and sustainable

Objective 1 - (Markets)

Increase the sales value of green-life products and services through marketing and promotion

It is important that industry develops a united approach to promoting common messages about plants to boost the marketing investment and gain recognition with the consumer. The messages need to convey the value of plants from all perspectives including the environmental, health and well-being, financial and aesthetic benefits.

This objective also recognises the need to build the next generation of nursery and garden customers and identify new or underutilised markets for specific campaigns.

This will be addressed through a range of initiatives including:

- The implementation of a national marketing promotion encouraging people to have more plants in their lives and educating them on the benefits of plants
- Encouraging whole of industry to participate through the provision of resources including logos, signage and branding templates, press releases and ideas for involvement
- Utilising social media as a means of engaging with younger generations and developing a community of fans to communicate with
- Pursuing opportunities for Kidsgrow within schools through sponsorship and government initiatives
- Showcasing the benefits of green-life at the Melbourne International & Flower Garden Show in 2011



An umbrella positioning for industry that benefits all sectors.



Social media offers a vehicle to reach new audiences and educate them in a fun and engaging way



A new generation of gardeners

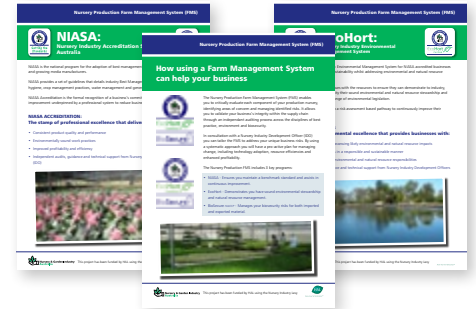
Objective 2 - (Capacity)

Enhance the capacity and efficiency of the industry's resources through upgrading industry skills, knowledge and practice

This objective recognises the need for continuous business improvement as a means of improving the efficiency and professionalism of industry. It also acknowledges the need for continued promotion of industry as a career path and for businesses to have access to appropriately trained staff as they need them.

NGIA will play an integral role in helping industry achieve this objective by:

- Continuing support of the industry development officer network
- Enhancing the effectiveness and profile of the industry's accreditation programs as well as increasing industry's participation rate in these programs.
- Working with Agrifood Skills and other organisations like TAFE to ensure consideration is being given to the needs of our industry
- Continuing to develop workshops focusing on areas of specific need that cannot be serviced through external sources



Increasing the promotion and protocols of nursery industry accreditation programs is one of the ways in which NGI will help facilitate continuous business development.

Objective 3 - (Communication)

Build industry support through shaping government, public and related industry understanding of the industry's benefits, and enhance these benefits through communication.

Having the 'ear of government' is critical to the recognition of our industry when it comes to legislation, policy formulation and specific issues that directly or indirectly affect the nursery and garden industry. The new strategic plan aims to position industry as a community leader on environmental issues such as water, invasive plants, pest management and climate change.

NGIA will assist NGI members and representative bodies to develop and strengthen relationships with both media and various key organisations in fields such as biosecurity, environment and water.

Meetings with key environmental ministers and influencers have already occurred and raised awareness of industry and its capacities within the climate change debate and urbanisation. This will continue. A public relations strategy and plan is currently being mapped out and is designed to raise awareness of the value of green-life at all levels of business and government.

Through the role of the Environmental & Technical Policy Manager we will continue to ensure a voice for industry at relevant forums and maintain an awareness of the value of green-life in the sustainability of our cities and people.

Communication of initiatives with governments and key stakeholders, development in research and outcomes of levy funded projects will be achieved through:

- Keynote presentations and workshops at the NGI Bi-annual National Conference
- Regular updates in the NGIA monthly industry publications, Clippings
- Practical applications detailed in the monthly technical and business periodical Nursery Papers
- Media releases to industry publications such as Greenworld, Australian Horticulture, Hort Journal and State Magazines



Government will listen to us with confidence and develop their policies using our input.

Objective 4 - (Innovation)

Invest in green-life product/service development to enable the industry to respond to growth opportunities and challenges

As the larger percentage of levy investment, research and development is important on two fronts: improving business practices and outcomes for industry and utilising the money in the most effective manner. Through the role of the Environmental and Technical Policy Manager and in consultation with all state NGI Associations, NGIA's goal is to establish a communication channel which facilitates the appropriate selection of projects to meet the NGI's requirements.

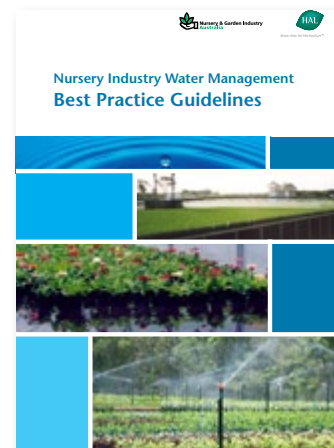


The strategic plan prioritises the efficient use of revenue from the 'pot' levy.

In the coming year industry funds will be invested in the development of:

1. Minor Use Permits for the NGI
2. Water Management Calculators based off the popular Industry book 'Managing Water in Plant Nurseries'
3. A revised and updated Nursery Industry Water Management Guideline
4. Energy efficiency calculators
5. A feasibility study that investigates the role of controlled atmosphere as a quarantine treatment

NGIA is also forming collaborations with various universities and research organisations across Australia including the CSIRO to increase the NGI's capacity for innovation, and make a positive contribution towards the education of tomorrow's Industry professionals.



The NGI is committed to investing industry levy funds into tools which promote best practice and improve profitability.

Objective 5 - (Governance)

Support the industry through services and resources that enhance its capacity to respond to issues, capture opportunities and achieve the vision of this strategic plan

The first four objectives are geared towards growth and making the industry more profitable and efficient: the fifth objective addresses how this will be achieved

Achieving the industry's vision of 'A unified Australian nursery and garden industry that is productive, profitable and sustainable' depends on a whole-of-industry approach.

The final objective outlines effective communication and industry collaboration increased funding, appropriate risk management and strong leadership as critical to achieving our goal of 80% of industry being actively engaged in programs by 2015.



Collaboration and effective communication are vital to achieving our vision

It is envisaged that the plan will need to adapt to changing circumstances and this will be assessed by the NGIA Board in consultation with the entire industry (and not just its members). The Plan will be reviewed annually along with the levy program at an event held in conjunction with the annual general meeting of the NGIA.