

# NURSERY PAPERS

MARCH  
2021

## NIASA NURSERY STOCK SPECIFICATIONS

### Sub-Programs for Specialist Growers

**Greenlife Industry Australia has a suite of horticulture specific sub-programs for specialist production nurseries across Australia, forming new appendices in the latest edition of the Nursery Industry Accreditation Scheme Australia (NIASA) BMP Manual.**

These recently developed sub-programs contain specifications which focus on providing additional accreditation pathways for specific crop types. The NIASA BMP Guidelines now include best management practice specifications for the production of avocado and banana nursery stock for fruit production, tree stock for landscape use and macadamia nursery stock for nut production.

This Nursery Paper looks at these sub-programs in detail, outlining the requirements and benefits of each to nursery businesses and the Australian horticultural industry.

### SUMMARY

- Guidelines have been developed for the production of avocado and banana nursery stock for fruit production, tree stock for landscape use and macadamia nursery stock for nut production.
- Each sub-program comes with its own accreditation program module.
- Accreditation for each of the sub-programs also requires NIASA certification.
- Accreditation supports the systematic approach for producing 'superior' planting material and includes regular audits with specialist technical advice and guidance from Australian Plant Production Standard (APPS) technical advisors and auditors.
- The sub-programs contribute to industry-wide protection of the production environment from serious pests and pathogens, as appropriate steps have been taken to reduce the chance of the introduction of organisms that harm the crop.
- Growers should head to <http://nurseryproductionfms.com.au/niasa-accreditation/> for more information or to seek accreditation.

### BACKGROUND

These new specifications mark the latest addition to the NIASA BMP Guidelines, the national best management practice program for production nurseries under the Australian Plant Production Standard (APPS).

The new sub-programs will guide business compliance to meet specifications required by NIASA, and the specific cropping sectors, to obtain industry accreditation building the professional image of the industry, improving opportunities for increased profitability and contributing to a sustainable future for the Australian nursery industry.

The specifications will also provide additional assurance to clients that the plants produced are to the highest industry health, quality and performance standards.

### The 4 New NIASA Accreditation Sub-programs:

1. Avocado Nursery Stock Specification
2. Banana Nursery Stock Specification
3. Landscape Tree Stock Specification
4. Macadamia Nursery Stock Specification





# Avocado Nursery Stock Specification



The NIASA Avocado Nursery Stock Specification (NIASA BMP Guidelines Appendix 13) is designed for avocado production nurseries supplying material to the avocado fruit growing industry and/or into the retail supply chain.

NIASA specification enables growers to apply for accreditation with Avocados Australia Limited (AAL), administrators of the Avocado Nursery Voluntary Accreditation Scheme (ANVAS), which is recognised as the Australian avocado industry's scheme to provide superior planting material to industry members. ANVAS accreditation is only granted to growers of avocado nursery stock who successfully obtain the **NIASA Avocado Nursery Stock Specification**.

## Requirements for ANVAS Accreditation

To be eligible to apply to AAL for ANVAS accreditation, the production nursery must:

- Be NIASA accredited with Greenlife Industry Australia;
- Implement the requirements specified within the NIASA Appendix 13 – Avocado Nursery Stock Specification;
- Be found at audit to have implemented the procedures within the Appendix to a Satisfactory standard;
- Demonstrate this through the provision of a NIASA Avocado Nursery Stock Specification accreditation certificate; and
- Upon meeting these ANVAS requirements, apply for accreditation with AAL under the scheme.

## CASE STUDY: ANDERSON HORTICULTURE

Anderson Horticulture Pty Ltd, one of Australia's largest avocado production nurseries having successfully operated for over 100 years, passed the new **Avocado Nursery Stock Specification** audit and received formal accreditation in 2020. This allowed the business to achieve ANVAS accreditation and demonstrate compliance to the specification, providing confidence within the supply chain that the trees are being produced to the industry standard.

As a specialist avocado nursery supplying young trees to avocado fruit growers and production nurseries throughout Australia, Anderson Horticulture Owner, Graham Anderson, said "the NIASA BMP accreditation and Avocado Nursery Stock Specification helps to maintain their highly regarded reputation as a leading avocado production nursery."

"We were one of the production nurseries from the inception of ANVAS over 40 years ago. Over the years science and experience has taught us that new protocols needed to be included to improve avocado tree production. I was involved in the recommendation being adopted by industry. Becoming an additional module to NIASA was the easiest, most efficient, and productive way to do this", Graham said.

With guidance from a GIA Technical Advisor, Anderson Horticulture successfully complied with the specification elements when independently audited on site and highlighted the following areas as key benefits:

- Better prevention of root disease, especially *Phytophthora* and the spread of pathogens. Virus indexing of trees, meaning that plant material has been guaranteed free of Sunblotch Viroid
- Strict hygiene practices with increased cleanliness of all areas within the production nursery



Anderson Horticulture.

- Quality control at all stages of plant production
- Enhanced weed and pest monitoring, including control procedures
- Improved water management and growing media conditions.

"The Avocado Nursery Stock Specification is industry's recognition that a business is adhering to the highest standards, giving the orchardist confidence these avocado trees are grown to the strictest specifications and have the best possible chance in the field for a healthy and highly productive orchard," said Mr. Anderson.

"I recommend avocado production nurseries which are considering NIASA accreditation, to do their homework on the Avocado Nursery Stock Specification and determine how it may be applied to improve their nursery operation."

## For ANVAS Accreditation Applications and Enquiries Contact AAL:

Upon achieving the above requirements, apply directly to AAL for ANVAS Accreditation. For further information, visit the Avocados Australia Limited (AAL) website <https://www.avocado.org.au/> or contact AAL by phone or email. Phone: **(61) 07 3846 6566** or toll free **1300 303 971** or send an email to [admin@avocado.org.au](mailto:admin@avocado.org.au) to receive an application form and to obtain the ANVAS terms and conditions.



# Banana Nursery Stock Specification



The NIASA Banana Nursery Stock Specification (NIASA BMP Guidelines Appendix 16) is designed for banana production nurseries and tissue culture propagators supplying material to the banana fruit growing industry and/or the retail supply chain. It is required to apply for QBAN (Quality Banana Approved Nursery) accreditation with the Australian Banana Growers Council (ABGC). The QBAN scheme is recognised as the Australian banana industry's scheme to provide clean planting material to commercial banana growers.

To support accreditation under the NIASA Banana Nursery Stock Specification, GIA has recently developed an online training course called 'Banana - Collecting suckers and/or bells for tissue culture initiation' which is located in the e-Learning portal at <http://nurseryproductionfms.com.au/elearning/>

## Requirements for QBAN accreditation

To be eligible to apply to ABGC for QBAN accreditation, the production nursery must:

- Be NIASA accredited with Greenlife Industry Australia;
- Implement the requirements specified within the NIASA Appendix 16 - Banana Nursery Stock Specification;
- Be found at audit to have implemented the procedures within the Appendix to a Satisfactory standard;
- Demonstrate this through the provision of a NIASA Banana Nursery Stock Specification accreditation certificate; and
- Upon meeting these QBAN requirements, apply for accreditation under the scheme.

## CASE STUDY: LOWES TC

Lowes TC is a commercial tissue culture specialist that recently passed the **Banana Nursery Stock Specification** audit and received formal accreditation in October 2020. With the certification in hand, the business was able to secure Quality Banana Approved Nursery (QBAN) accreditation providing confidence to its clients that it was following best management practices specific to the banana industry.

Natasha Marocik, General Manager, Lowes TC, said "Being NIASA accredited has reinforced the importance of best management practices to our entire business and has created a more detailed structure to our current system, providing support and confidence to staff that we are adhering to the industry standards."

"We are a contract service propagator and we only grow to order. With NIASA and QBAN certification we can give our clients the peace of mind that our stock has been propagated with the banana industry and its unique challenges in mind," said Ms Marocik.

With guidance from GIA technical staff, Lowes TC were able to make simple tweaks to processes which would ensure they would remain at the top of its game when it came to best management practice including:

- Strict hygiene procedures around the disinfestation of planting equipment, work areas and growing benches
- Quality control at all stages of propagation
- Enhanced health and nutrition of newly growing plants

"Ultimately, having an industry backed accreditation means that we have peace of mind that our best management practices are based on decades of mutual experiences and scientifically-driven outcomes.

## For QBAN Accreditation Applications and Enquiries Contact ABGC

Upon achieving the above requirements, apply directly to ABGC for QBAN Accreditation. For further information, call ABGC (07) 3278 4786 or send an email to [info@abgc.org.au](mailto:info@abgc.org.au). to receive an application form and to obtain the QBAN terms and conditions.

# Landscape Tree Stock Specification



The NIASA Landscape Tree Stock Specification is designed for production nurseries supplying into the landscape, wholesale and retail supply chains. Appendix 14 has been added into the NIASA BMP Guidelines to provide specialist grower guidance to these production nurseries and allows an interested business to become accredited for meeting the landscape tree stock production specification. The specification provides instructions and procedures, and an assessment checklist for independent auditing, for production nurseries to implement and adopt when producing tree stock for the landscape sector. These include areas such as:

- **General quality:** true to type and tree stock health
- **Above ground aspects:** height, trunk diameter, formative pruning, stem and branch structure, crown distribution, compatibility of graft unions and trunk position
- **Below ground aspects:** rootball diameter and depth, height of root crown, rootstock suckering, rootball occupancy, root direction, root division, self-supporting
- **Record Keeping:** Appropriate records completed and kept for tree-stock assessment





# Macadamia Nursery Stock Specification



The NIASA Macadamia Nursery Stock Specification (NIASA BMP Guidelines Appendix 15) is designed for production nurseries supplying material to macadamia nut growers and/or into the retail supply chain. Administration and auditing of the technical aspects for macadamia high-quality nursery production are now incorporated into the NIASA BMP program.

The NIASA **Macadamia Nursery Stock Specification** has been added into the NIASA BMP Guidelines to provide specialist grower guidance to these businesses and allows an interested business to become accredited for meeting the macadamia nursery stock specifications. It provides instructions and procedures, and an assessment checklist for independent auditing for production nurseries to implement and adopt when producing macadamia nursery stock for the macadamia nut growing industry and/or retail supply chain. All auditable requirements must be found to have been implemented to at least a Satisfactory standard for a business to be considered eligible to be granted accreditation.



*A macadamia nursery.*

Nursery production of high-quality macadamia planting material and establishing an industry specification is recognised within Australia as playing an important role in supporting the Australian macadamia nut production industry. Purchasers of macadamia

nursery stock require assurance that stock purchased meets an industry standard, is true-to-type, and that appropriate steps have been taken to reduce the chance of introduction of serious pests and diseases into the production environment.

## FURTHER INFORMATION

For more information about how to apply the new sub-programs production nursery or to gather information on the program, please refer to the relevant appendix of the NIASA manual (8<sup>th</sup> edition): <http://nurseryproductionfms.com.au/niasa-accreditation/> or email [biosecure@greenlifeindustry.com.au](mailto:biosecure@greenlifeindustry.com.au) or Phone: (02) 8861 5100

### More reading

- To purchase or view the latest edition of the NIASA BMP Guidelines: <http://nurseryproductionfms.com.au/product-category/niasa/>
- Australian Plant Production Standard (APPS): <http://nurseryproductionfms.com.au/>
- Access the Pest ID Tool: <http://pestid.com.au>
- Access the e-Learning portal: <http://nurseryproductionfms.com.au/elearning/>
- PAST EDITIONS OF NURSERY PAPERS ARE AVAILABLE ONLINE on the GIA website: [https://www.greenlifeindustry.com.au/Section?Action=View&Section\\_id=46](https://www.greenlifeindustry.com.au/Section?Action=View&Section_id=46)