



Arborwest becomes first to pass new tree stock specification audit

Western Australia's 'Arborwest' has raised the bar as a supplier of high-quality tree stock, by becoming the nation's first production nursery to pass the new Tree Stock Specification audit.

The specification marks the latest addition to the well-known Nursery Industry Accreditation Scheme Australia (NIASA), the national best management practice program for production nurseries.

With more purchasers specifying high-quality tree stock for landscape, the process provides certainty to clients that trees are grown to meet the specification, and ensure they are 'fit for purpose'.

Set on 25 acres in the suburb of Mariginiup on the outskirts of Perth, Arborwest Tree Farm grows more than 80 varieties of citrus, native, evergreen and deciduous trees in 45 litre to 500 litre container sizes.

As growers for landscape architects, landscape developers, local councils and retailers, Arborwest's Assistant Manager, Stephen Knight, said the NIASA accreditation keeps the business at the top of its game.

"Accreditation cemented our position as a progressive and quality supplier of mature and advanced trees to the Western Australia wholesale and retail market," Stephen said.

"Since becoming NIASA accredited, we've adopted a new approach to documenting and presenting our logging of batch records, to demonstrate to clients the rigorous testing of our trees.



Stephen Knight, Arborwest Tree Farm.

"It's been a way to set our own standards and provide assurance to customers that they are supplied with true to type stock, which meet the specification and accreditation requirements."

Introduced into the NIASA manual earlier this year, the Tree Stock Specification Appendix is designed for production nurseries supplying into the landscape and retail supply chains.

With guidance from a Nursery Production FMS auditor, Arborwest successfully conducted the audit on site and highlighted the following areas as key benefits:

- Better prevention of root disease and the spread of pathogens
- Increased cleanliness of the work areas around the production nursery
- Best practice when it comes to plant handling
- Consistent weed and pest monitoring and control procedures
- Improved water management and growing media conditions

Stephen said the accreditation was a great achievement for all involved and provided customer confidence that trees adhere to the new tree stock specification.

"It is industry's recognition that a business is adhering to the highest standards, so that when a tree leaves the nursery, it's guaranteed a better chance of surviving and thriving in the landscape," he said.

"I strongly recommend nurseries which are, or will soon be, NIASA accredited, to look into the specification and see how it can be applied to their business.

"Following accreditation, we envisage that Arborwest will continue to grow from strength to strength, increasing our production of larger stock from 1000 litre to 2500 litre bags."

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Stephen said the next step for Arborwest was to complete EcoHort™, a program to boost the business's green credentials, followed by BioSecure HACCP, a program to improve the plant protection system, mitigate biosecurity risks and streamline trade.

"Both programs lift the professionalism of the business by improving internal procedures, reducing the amount of waste, boosting environmental credentials, and improving plant health," he said.

The Tree Stock Specification forms Appendix 14 in the latest edition (7th) of the NIASA Manual. It provides instructions and a checklist for businesses to complete 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 and calliper, 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 treestock assessment

A Nursery Production FMS auditor or biosecurity officer must sight all records. To find out who your local auditor is and where they are based, click [here](#).

For more information about how to apply the Tree Stock Specification in your production nursery, please refer to Appendix 14 of the NIASA manual (seventh edition) available [here](#).

For more information, please contact Greenlife Industry Australia info@greenlifeindustry.com.au or on 02 8861 5100.



Arborwest Tree Farm, Western Australia.

**Hort
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