



Greenlife Industry Australia

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MEDIA RELEASE

Australian wholesale nurseries sell over 2 billion plants in 2018-19

5 March 2020 - Sales from production nurseries continue on their upward trajectory with two billion plants sold and total farmgate sales reaching \$2.43 billion in 2018-19, a slight increase from 2017-18.

According to the latest *Nursery Industry Statistics 2018-19* survey report, the steady growth has been a result of increasing consumer demand and solid industry confidence.

Funded by Hort Innovation and managed by Greenlife Industry Australia (GIA) with social researcher, Down To Earth Research and market analyst ACIL Allen, the report assessed data from 305 production nursery growers across Australia.

Peter Vaughan, GIA CEO, said the increases in both volume of plant sales and overall value of sales is reflective of positive sentiment from consumers, retailers and wholesalers.

“Over three quarters (76%) of growers surveyed said they were confident in our industry’s future, which is really encouraging,” Mr Vaughan said.

“Growers remain just as optimistic about the success of their own businesses with over half of respondents planning on expanding their businesses over the next five years.

“This optimism is manifesting in an increase in the number of businesses that are investing in their own operations with 63% of businesses focusing on improving infrastructure, new technology and education.”

According to Mr Vaughan these investments appear to be paying dividends for the industry in the form of increased productivity.

“Our growers are becoming more productive with turnover per hectare reaching \$407,998 which represents a 4% increase on the previous year,” he said.

Of the 2 billion plants sold in 2018-19, the retail channel continues to be the primary driver for sales with 63% of growers supplying greenlife to retailers accounting for 51% of total sales. The Landscape market is the next largest market, followed by primary industry which are consistent with previous years.

For the first time, respondents were asked about gender ratios in production nurseries and data confirmed that almost half (47%) of the nursery industry workforce is comprised of women, a higher proportion than most agricultural industries¹.

This is the third iteration of this project and Mr Vaughan thanked the industry for their participation in the survey.

“This is an incredibly important project. Not only do the findings help us demonstrate the contribution of greenlife to the national economy and community, it also supports a useful benchmarking tool for individual businesses.

“This year, 305 growers completed the survey, a 4% increase from the previous year. Without the commitment from nursery growers the data would not be as robust and reliable as it is.

¹ Workplace Gender Equality Agency - <https://data.wgea.gov.au/industries/1>



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“In May, the latest edition of the benchmarking tool will be released. Growers are encouraged to use the tool as it enables them to inform short-term decision making and long-term strategy,” he said.

Quoted figures of industry values, plants sold and turnover per ha are estimates based on a sampling margin for error at the 95% confidence level of +/- 5.1% on national results.

For more information on how Australian nursery growers are making use of the benchmarking tool, refer to this [case study](#).

The ‘Nursery Industry Statistics 2017-21’ (NY17008) project is funded by Hort Innovation using nursery research and development levy and funds from the Australian Government.