



Greenlife Industry Australia

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International Year of Plant Health launches in Australia

6 February 2020 – The 2020 International Year of Plant Health (IYPH2020), as declared by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), is officially underway in Australia following the local launch at Parliament House in Canberra this morning.

Newly appointed Minister for Agriculture, Hon David Littleproud MP declared International Year of Plant Health open in Australia in front of around 150 representatives from government, industry, media and community groups. He acknowledged the importance of protecting the livelihood of Australian plant industries and the need to continue to invest in research and development.

Led by the United Nations FAO, the year will focus on bringing government, industry and community together to help prevent the spread of pests and diseases that have a negative impact on our crops, our environment and ultimately our health.

John McDonald, National Biosecurity Manager, Greenlife Industry Australia and member of the Australian IYPH2020 Steering Committee is urging all Australians to embrace International Year of Plant Health.

“We must elevate the importance of plant industries in our collective national consciousness. Our food, fibre and foliage, physical health and mental wellbeing, are all deeply connected to the health of our plants and plant industries. Protecting our plants is protecting our Australian way of life, our economy and our environment,” Mr McDonald said.

“With production nurseries growing much of the plant material going into fruit, vegetable and forestry cropping systems, as well as the urban greenlife plantings, the industry can be severely impacted by the introduction of exotic plant pests and diseases.”

“International Year of Plant Health 2020 is a critical platform from which to initiate the national conversation, with all sectors of the community, on how plants play such an integral part in our lives, and importantly, the future role plants have in mitigating the effects of a warming climate and our food security. It will take a coordinated effort between government and industry as well as the wider community, to better manage and mitigate the risks posed by plant pests and diseases.”

Peter Vaughan, CEO, Greenlife Industry Australia encouraged all members, partners and plant industry stakeholders to get involved with International Year of Plant Health 2020.

“Join us in actively supporting the UN’s mission to protect plant health. All members of the industry have an important role to play in educating and inspiring the community to acknowledge and understand the importance of plant health,” Mr Vaughan said.

Plant protection is a top priority for Australia’s nursery industry. John McDonald leads several strategic levy investments under the Hort Innovation Nursery Fund. These biosecurity



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programs aim to inform and prepare industry to prevent and protect the Australian horticultural sector against exotic and endemic plant pests and diseases.

Whether it be focusing on specific, potentially disastrous, threats such as *Xylella fastidiosa*, or building comprehensive strategies to improve national plant protection, the industry is devoted to ensuring that our plant industries remain healthy, profitable and resilient in 2020 and beyond.

Greenlife Industry Australia will be continuing to lead the conversation on plant health at its national conference in Perth taking place on March 3-5. The conference theme is Healthy Plants, Healthy People and will directly support the mission of International Year of Plant Health 2020.

Find something unusual on a plant? Call the Exotic Plant Pest hotline: 1800 084 881

To register for the Healthy Plants Healthy People conference or to find out more about exhibitor and sponsorship opportunities visit: <https://www.greenlifeindustry.com.au/>

National Nursery Industry Biosecurity Program (NY15004) and Building the resilience and on-farm biosecurity capacity of the Australian production nursery industry 'Nursery industry communications program' (NY18001) are funded by Hort Innovation using nursery industry levies and funds from the Australian Government.

**Hort
Innovation**
Strategic levy investment

**NURSERY
FUND**

This project has been funded by Hort Innovation using the nursery research and development levy and funds from the Australian Government. For more information on the fund and strategic levy investment visit horticulture.com.au