

# Your Levy At Work



Greenlife Industry Australia

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## Get involved: Contributing to growth and stability in the Australian nursery industry

With over 12 years' experience in research and strategic insights services, Dan Watson, Research Director at Down to Earth, has honed a deep understanding of the power of data-driven decision-making. Indeed, his expertise was instrumental in developing the 2022-23 Production Nursery Data Capture Report, highlighting the significance of reliable insights in shaping industry strategies.

The 2022-23 report marks the seventh annual statistics survey funded by Hort Innovation, falling under the NY21000 Project umbrella for the third time. This initiative aims to provide timely and reliable data, insights, and trends crucial for decision-making processes across greenlife businesses and the wider industry.

Mr Watson said the survey's role in collecting both point-in-time and tracking metrics, delivers timely and precise insights crucial for industry decision-making, resource prioritisation, and strategic planning.

"The results of the survey drive the development of an interactive benchmarking tool, empowering participants and Hort Innovation levy payers to assess their business performance against aggregated survey data," Mr Watson said.

This tool, produced by ACIL Allen, serves as a valuable resource for businesses seeking to optimise their strategies and performance in the ever-evolving agricultural landscape.

### **What is the process of developing the survey?**

To ensure robust participation rates and maintain consistency for reliable data comparison with previous

years, the 2022-23 data collection methods mirrored past Hort Innovation-funded nursery statistics surveys.

Mr Watson said, "The process kicks off with a meticulously crafted survey questionnaire, tailored to capture the industry's current state,"

Assuring absolute confidentiality, Mr Watson said growers interested in participating need not worry about their information being linked to them. "We provide various engagement channels—email, phone or personalised reminders—to accommodate participant preferences," Mr Watson added.

"Over a six-week period, we carefully gather and analyse data, aiming to minimise errors and enhance clarity."

This year, the project team received 303 completed surveys, slightly surpassing the target of 300 and up from 266 in 2022.

These responses were collected through 180 Computer Assisted Telephone Interviews (CATI), 60 emails, and 63 online submissions.

### **What were the survey questions?**

The survey delves into a comprehensive range of topics crucial to understanding the dynamics of the production nursery industry, exploring metrics such as sales value by

supply chain and plant category, operational costs, adoption of automation technology, and anticipated business challenges. Additionally, it examines factors like water sources, use and security plans, as well as employment numbers, profitability and investment figures.

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"The survey continuously evolves to address the changing landscape of the Australian nursery sector," Mr Watson said.

"It aims to equip growers with insights that foster efficiency and innovation amid challenges like COVID-19 and the adoption of automation technology."

## What are the key findings?

Despite sector headwinds, the report reveals a robust performance, with total production nursery sales reaching \$3.54 billion.

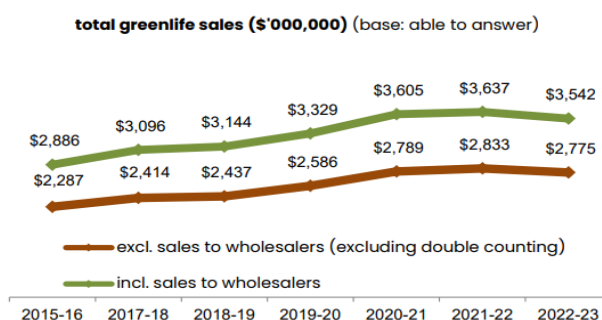
### Key Findings:

- an estimated 2.26 billion plants were sold by production nurseries in 2022–23, despite a slight dip year-on-year
- the retail supply chain remained the largest sales channel, delivering 42% of total sales
- overall confidence in the industry's future remains positive in the face of challenges to the sector.

These findings suggest that despite concerns, such as a slight decrease in year-on-year sales and supply chain issues, the nursery industry is holding strong.

The fact that total production nursery sales reached \$2.78 billion and 2.26 billion plants were sold indicates resilience and ongoing demand. Additionally, the dominance of the retail supply chain as the largest sales channel demonstrates the industry's adaptability and ability to reach consumers effectively.

Overall, the positive outlook and confidence in the industry's future signal potential for continued growth and stability despite the existing challenges.



## Get Involved

It is important for growers to get involved in this process, because it offers timely and reliable insights, trends and benchmarking tools vital for informed decision making, resource prioritisation and strategic planning within the greenlife industry.

High survey participation rates in 2023 highlights the need for an effective communication campaign and the importance of having the opportunity to emphasise the benefits of participation.

If you're interested in learning more about the process or keen to participate in the next survey, contact Dan Watson at [daniel@dter.com.au](mailto:daniel@dter.com.au).

**ENDS**