

# The Australian Nursery Industry 2023–24



Greenlife Industry Australia

The nursery sector remained resilient in 2023–24, with production nurseries supplying an estimated 2.2–2.3 billion plants, generating \$2.65 billion in sales. While this represents a 4% drop from the previous year, demand for greenlife remains robust across residential, commercial, and environmental markets.

Employing around 22,500 people (approximately 19,200 FTEs) nationwide, the industry continues to play a critical role in enhancing urban environments, supporting food production, and contributing to community well-being.

According to the *2023–24 Production Nursery Data Capture Report*, 72% of growers remain optimistic about the sector's future. However, expansion intentions are at their lowest recorded level (26%), particularly among smaller operators, as businesses contend with rising input costs, biosecurity risks (67%), severe weather events (66%), and growing challenges in securing affordable insurance (59%).

## INDUSTRY PROFILE

**\$2.65 billion** in sales (down 4% from \$2.78 billion in 2022–23).

**2.2–2.3 billion** plants sold nationwide.

**22,500 people** employed (19,200 FTEs).

**\$446,000** turnover per hectare.

**Average wage per FTE: \$67,000** (up from \$63,000), with wages representing 38% of total turnover

### SALES\*

2021-22	\$2.83 BILLION
2022-23	\$2.78 BILLION
2023-24	\$2.65 BILLION



### PLANTS SOLD\*

2021-22	2.3 BILLION
2022-23	2.26 BILLION
2023-24	~2.2–2.3 BILLION



### TURNOVER (PER/HA)

2021-22	\$454K
2022-23	\$456K
2023-24	\$446K



\* Excluding plants sold to wholesalers

FUNDED BY THE  
NURSERY LEVY

The 'Nursery Industry Statistics 2020-21 to 2024-25' (NY21000) project has been funded by Hort Innovation, using the nursery industry research and development levy and contributions from the Australian Government.

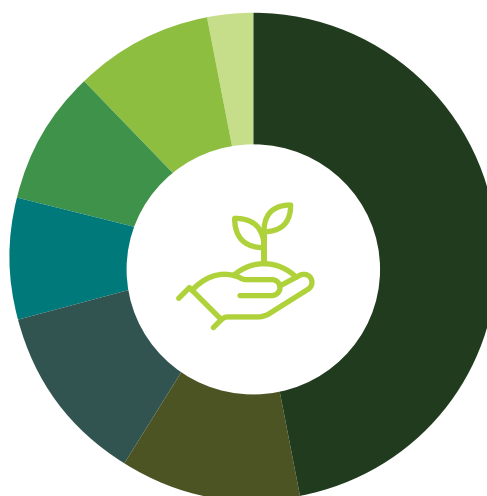
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# Industry profile

## INDUSTRY SUCCESS

- **72% of growers** are confident about the future of the sector.
- **48% of businesses** are investing in infrastructure, technology, and training (down from 54%).
- **The retail supply chain remains the largest sales channel**, accounting for 41% of total sales value, followed by other wholesale nurseries (22%). However, sales to both channels have declined over the past two years. In contrast, sales to the landscape, builder and developer channel have increased and now represent 15% of total sales value.



### DID YOU KNOW?

*90% of nurseries are impacted by rising input costs.*

*Skilled labour shortages affect 61% of businesses, with unskilled labour shortages impacting 47%.*

*Average turnover per FTE has risen to \$184,000 (from \$177,000 in 2022–23).*

*Only 25% of businesses invested in new technology – the lowest level since the survey began.*

47% Perennials, trees, and shrubs

12% Propagation plants

12% Indoor plants

8% Fruit trees, nut trees and vines

9% Bedding and potted colour

9% Herbs and vegetables

3% Other.

## BENCHMARKING AND GROWTH

The 2023–24 survey results contribute to the Nursery Industry Business Benchmarking Tool, helping growers compare their performance against peers, streamline operations, and identify cost-saving opportunities. Landscape, consumer, and environmental markets remain the strongest growth prospects over the next five years, with 41% of larger operators planning to expand.

## LOOKING AHEAD

Despite challenging market conditions, the sector's underlying strength is clear, with confidence particularly high among medium and large businesses. Tools like the Nursery Industry Business Benchmarking Tool equip growers to make data-driven decisions, optimise operations, and uncover growth opportunities as conditions improve.

### WANT TO KNOW HOW YOUR PRODUCTION NURSERY STACKS UP?

Use the Nursery Industry Business Benchmarking Tool to compare your performance and uncover opportunities to grow. To access the tool, contact Celeste Cook, GIA's Extension Officer TAS/SA, at: [celeste.cook@greenlifeindustry.com.au](mailto:celeste.cook@greenlifeindustry.com.au)

For more data and insights, view the full 2023–24 Production Nursery Data Capture Report: [www.greenlifeindustry.com.au/communications-centre/2023-24-data-capture-report](http://www.greenlifeindustry.com.au/communications-centre/2023-24-data-capture-report)