

# Your Levy At Work



Greenlife Industry Australia

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**MARCH 2024**

## Growing success: Colourwise Nursery teams up with GIA Extension Officers

**Colourwise Nursery has greatly benefited from the guidance and ongoing support of Greenlife Industry Australia's (GIA) extension officers, leading to enhanced plant health, more efficient chemical use and improved training programs.**

Situated in Peats Ridge, New South Wales, and founded in 1981, Colourwise Nursery is a family-owned business under the leadership of Malcolm and Penelope Thompson. The nursery is dedicated to a simple yet impactful mission: delivering exceptional quality potted plants to support the success of their clients' businesses.

The nursery has a longstanding tradition of supplying quality flowering shrubs, ground covers, structural plants, succulents and plants suitable for landscaping. It prioritises premium quality in its marketing approach. Comprising carefully chosen specialists spanning operations, production, dispatch and propagation, Colourwise Nursery's dedicated team ensures the consistent production of top-quality plants throughout the year.

Colourwise Nursery's Production Manager, James Scorer is a key player in the nursery's success. Starting out as a horticultural apprentice at Colourwise, he eventually became the Production Manager in 2019.

The nursery employs 35 full-time staff, including a small marketing team, which has expanded its reach from small retailers to major players like Bunnings and larger independent nurseries and landscapers.

To maintain its momentum and a commitment to improvement, Colourwise Nursery has welcomed the expertise of GIA extension officers. By working together, Colourwise and GIA have created a robust partnership.

The GIA extension officer network operates nationwide, and access to these experts is available to all nursery levy-payers in all states and territories. The officers provide advice across a broad range of plant production topics, beyond plant health and biosecurity.



*James Scorer, Colourwise Nursery's Production Manager*

"Three years back, we teamed up with our state GIA Extension Officer, Emma De Landre, to gain NIASA accreditation, aiming for long-term goals and better practices. Since then, GIA's Colin Hunt has played a big role in the nursery, giving us a new way of thinking and encouraging creative ideas," James said.

Nursery Industry Accreditation Scheme, Australia (NIASA) is the national nursery industry best management practice (BMP) program for production nurseries, growing media manufacturers and greenlife markets. It underpins the Australian Plant Production Standard (APPS) – a holistic system designed to ensure a sustainable future for the Australian nursery industry.

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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](http://horticulture.com.au)

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"Colin's support has been instrumental in navigating the NIASA accreditation process, enabling the nursery to establish and maintain high standards in best practice management during processing and production.

He provides valuable advice and always takes the time to explain why things matter. If I have any questions, big or small, I can just give him a call," James said.

"Thanks to the guidance of Colin, we've made changes in processes related to plant health, chemical use and training programs.

"The tangible benefits are evident – streamlined chemical use, improved ventilation, recycling initiatives and increased plant health. Educational programs, such as mini tech courses, and pest and disease diagnosis classes, have elevated the knowledge base of our nursery staff, fostering a culture of continuous learning.

"Throughout the year, Colin runs through a list of different classes. The younger staff love the knowledge, appreciate it and love to sit in the classes," James said.

"Metrics used to evaluate success, including improved TAFE results, reduced wastage, decreased water consumption and efficient chemical use, reflect the positive impact of the collaboration and stand as commendable outcomes.

"Nurseries should contact their extension officers for valuable advice, guidance and support. Extension officers offer expertise in various aspects of plant production, helping nurseries address challenges, implement best

practices, and stay informed about industry updates.  
*Colourwise Nursery*

"They can assist with problem-solving, provide educational resources and contribute to the overall improvement and success of the nursery. Regular communication with extension officers also allows nurseries to stay connected with industry trends, regulations and networking opportunities, fostering a collaborative and informed approach to horticultural practices.

"Collaborating with GIA extension officers demonstrates the power of teamwork. By sharing knowledge, being creative and aiming for excellence, Colourwise Nursery not only resolved immediate issues but also charted a course for long-term success, establishing the nursery as an industry leader. Ongoing teamwork emphasises the significance of flexibility, continuous learning, and a shared vision for a sustainable and prosperous future."

If you're looking to improve your plant production processes, head to the Australian Plant Production Standard website at:  
(<https://nurseryproductionfms.com.au>) today or contact the GIA extension officer in your area:

- QLD/Northern NSW: Barry Naylor  
[barry.naylor@greenlifeindustry.com.au](mailto:barry.naylor@greenlifeindustry.com.au)
- NSW/Northern Vic: Colin Hunt  
[colin.hunt@greenlifeindustry.com.au](mailto:colin.hunt@greenlifeindustry.com.au)
- Vic: Stuart Burns  
[stuart.burns@greenlifeindustry.com.au](mailto:stuart.burns@greenlifeindustry.com.au)
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In addition, if you're interested in exploring NIASA certification, you can contact your relevant Extension Officer, visit [nurseryproductionfms.com.au](http://nurseryproductionfms.com.au) or contact Greenlife Industry Australia at [info@greenlifeindustry.com.au](mailto:info@greenlifeindustry.com.au) or on 1300 95 95 13.

For more information on accreditation and certification, visit [greenlifeindustry.com.au/credentials](http://greenlifeindustry.com.au/credentials)

## **ENDS**

*Funded by Hort Innovation under the 'National biosecurity and sustainable plant production program' (NY20001), the nationally mobilised network of extension officers engages with production nurseries now in every Australian state or territory to improve plant protection protocols and production outcomes across the country.*