

# Your Levy At Work



Greenlife Industry Australia

*Your levy has funded this success story*

DECEMBER 2023

## Hills Transplants Nursery compliance with best practice helps achieve quality and reliability

**By following best practices, Hills Transplants has gained a renowned level of quality and reliability in the market. This has enabled the company to operate sustainably and run efficiently and reliably.**

That's according to Stephen Hill, second generation Nursery Manager of Hills Transplants, a leader of innovation of the seedling nursery sector located in Don, north-west Tasmania.

Hills Transplants was established over six decades ago by Stephen's parents John and Megan Hill and was originally set up to grow market vegetables. However, Stephen and his two sons now managing the nursery, and they grow vegetable and forestry seedlings, propagate berry cuttings for the berry industry, and grow and pack herbs for local supermarkets.

Hills Transplants employs between 20 and 50 staff members, depending on the time of year, and it has a key customer base including local farmers, wholesalers, processors and local supermarkets.

The success of Hills Transplants has been its adherence to Nursery Industry Accreditation Scheme Australia (NIASA) guidelines, underpinning its drive to run a clean, safe business to provide high quality seedlings to their customers.

### The importance of NIASA accreditation

Hills Transplants gained NIASA accreditation in 2006 and uses its best practice management principles and protocols to detect and control pests and diseases should they occur.

"When my father established the business, he set very high standards, that we still abide by, which makes our accreditation renewal process seamless.

"We work closely with a network of consultants, agronomists and research companies to monitor our crops and prepare us for pest and disease incursions," said Stephen.

"When my father launched the business, he initiated collaborations with field experts, a practice we've consistently maintained. Our consultants leverage research and development findings from levy projects and implement them throughout our operations.

"This has resulted in our family having a deep understanding of pest and disease management, which we are consistently reviewing and revising using levy-funded research programs and advice from our agronomists.



*Photo: Stephen Hill (centre) and his two sons.*

**Hort  
Innovation** 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](http://horticulture.com.au)

# Your Levy At Work



Greenlife Industry Australia

*Your levy has funded this success story*

Through adherence to the NIASA program Hills Transplants rarely has a pest outbreak as the program is one of the main tools in its pest and disease control toolkit.

This has allowed Stephen and his sons to access leading customers like major supermarkets, Coles and Woolworths.

## Finding value in early detection

Hills Transplants have taken a preventative approach to pests and diseases, reducing risk to their crops.

“My two sons and I check for pests and disease every day. We ride our pushbikes through the nursery, checking on our staff, our chemical use and our plants. It ensures we stay on top of any possible pest or disease incursion,” said Stephen.

“Checking everything associated with the nursery daily is in our family DNA.

“Not only are we NIASA accredited, which includes a yearly audit, we are also under Fresh Care audits as we supply major supermarkets.

“The audits act as a safety check for us, as we know we are following the guidelines to a tee. If we have questions about NIASA, we can always reach out the GIA extension officer network or our suite of experts.

By staying one step ahead of pests and diseases through NIASA accreditation, Hills Transplants has cemented the respect of its customers.

## The future of Hills Transplants

Looking ahead, Hills Transplants aims to continue its current pest management protocols and its NIASA accreditation to keep providing high-quality stock to its Tasmanian customers.

“We have many protocols in place to ensure our standards are maintained. We have a two-person check on mixing fertilisers or pesticides. But we will also go round to each greenhouse and do random checks to make sure everything is in order,” said Stephen.

Stephen hopes to continue sustainable operations, running a clean, tidy, and well-managed nursery known for offering excellent stock in the Tasmanian market.

“Being involved in the greenlife sector offers my family and I a wonderful work-life balance and we feel lucky to be in this situation. It truly is a great industry to be a part of.

“If you are considering NIASA accreditation, chat with your local GIA extension officer. They offer a wealth of knowledge and can recommend what might be best suited to your business.

“NIASA has provided us with a good yearly benchmark to make sure everything is in alignment. It ensures that our customers know we follow strict protocols and keep good records of all items within the nursery.”

The Nursery Extension Officer program is managed under the strategic levy-funded project *National biosecurity and sustainable plant production program (NY20001)*.

For more information about:

- The benefits of NIASA certification, visit [greenlifeindustry.com.au/credentials](https://greenlifeindustry.com.au/credentials)
- What's involved in certification? Visit [nurseryproductionfms.com.au](https://nurseryproductionfms.com.au) or contact Greenlife Industry Australia at [info@greenlifeindustry.com.au](mailto:info@greenlifeindustry.com.au) or on 1300 95 95 13.

**ENDS**