



Nursery & Garden Industry
Australia

Grower case study

For immediate release

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Environmental credentials give Scotsburn a marketing edge

Overview

In today's competitive market, Scotsburn Nurseries have found an edge by promoting their sustainability credentials to the growing number of environmentally conscious consumers.

Founded 87 years ago, Scotsburn Nurseries supplies Melbourne and Victoria's best independent retail nurseries with flowers, vegetables and herbs from Keysborough, near Dandenong in Melbourne.

They were also Victoria's first EcoHort™ certified seedling nursery – an Environmental Management System which helps growers to demonstrate to industry, government and the community their sound environmental and natural resource stewardship.



The EcoHort™ Philosophy

Owner Peter Douglas says their philosophy is all about making the most of modern technology with a priority on the environmental benefits.



“When we first learned about EcoHort a decade ago, we thought it was a perfect fit.”

“We work with nature, not against it, and this was a great way to get recognition for the work we're doing.

“One significant customer specifically came to us because of our environmental credentials. The EcoHort logo, which is on all of our packaging and other visual material, is regularly stimulating positive interest amongst retailers and consumers alike.

“We encourage our retailers to think differently about plant production, and how being more environmentally conscious can attract more business, particularly with home gardeners.”



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Benefits of EcoHort™ accreditation

Mr Douglas says EcoHort has contributed to the overall improvement of the organisation.

“We’re working with our suppliers to introduce biodegradable pictorial labels and continuing to improve drip irrigation systems to save more water,” he said.

“These may not sound like major projects, but as we keep fine tuning our production processes and materials selections we get closer and closer to our goal of becoming organic.”



EcoHort
Certified

“It has provided us with tool kits to improve our business management, specifically in regards to improving processes, routines and documentation.”



EcoHort™ is based on the principles of continuous improvement. It encourages improvement through:

- Good planning and assessment
- Implementing actions or change
- Effective monitoring and recording
- Regular reviewing or auditing.

Scotsburn Nurseries have built upon the industry-wide framework and created their own program targeted at independent retailers and their consumers.

Mr Douglas says ‘EcoSmile’ gives gardeners five reasons to smile when selecting nursery products grown by Scotsburn:

- Resource use: Water use is carefully measured and managed using industry best practice application.
- Sustainability: Plastic containers are washed and reused on site or sent away to be washed and reground for recycling.



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- Environmental impact: Fertiliser and pesticide use are carefully managed in the nursery to minimise runoff affecting the environment.
- Invasiveness: Varieties grown are selected to minimise the possibility of them spreading as weeds.
- Plant Quality: Hygienic plant production ensures plant quality and helps prevent the spread of horticultural diseases and pests.

Next Steps for Scotsburn

Looking to the future, the team at Scotsburn are continually doing their best to improve their environmental footprint.

'We have just installed solar panels, cutting our first electricity bill by more than 60%. We're now looking to improve water recycling, which we hope will reduce the cost of our water to about a third of what it is now.

"Our next step is to become BioSecure HACCP accredited, which will work in parallel with our EcoHort efforts," Mr Douglas said.

EcoHort™ was developed by Horticulture Innovation Australia using nursery industry levies, in partnership with Nursery & Garden Industry Australia. For information on how to get involved, go to <http://nurseryproductionfms.com.au/ecohort-certification> or contact NGIA on 02 8861 5100 or info@ngia.com.au



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