

# **Queensland Cut Flower Industry Development Unit**

Denyse Corner  
Flower Association of  
Queensland Inc

Project Number: FL04004

## **FLO4004**

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Horticultural Australia Ltd

Level 1

50 Carrington Street

Sydney NSW 2000

Telephone: (02) 8295 2300

Fax: (02) 8295 2399

E-Mail: [horticulture@horticulture.com.au](mailto:horticulture@horticulture.com.au)

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**HAL Project FL04004**

**Final Report**

**Queensland Cut Flower Industry Development Unit**

**Completion Date: 30<sup>th</sup> May 2007**

**Author: Denyse Corner**

**Horticulture Australia Ltd Project No: FLO4004**  
**Queensland Cut Flower Industry Development Unit**  
**Report date 30/05/07**

**Contact Details:**

Flower Association of Queensland Inc.  
P.O. Box 327  
Cleveland Qld 4163  
Australia  
Phone: +61 7 3824 9537  
Fax: +61 7 3286 3094  
Email: [faqj@flowersqueensland.asn.au](mailto:faqj@flowersqueensland.asn.au)

**Project Leader:**

Denyse Corner  
Senior Extension Officer, Department of Primary Industries & Fisheries, Queensland – South East  
Regional Development Team  
Industry Development Officer, Flower Association of Queensland Inc.  
[denyse.corner@dpi.qld.gov.au](mailto:denyse.corner@dpi.qld.gov.au)

**Skills and capabilities of the Project Team:**

Denyse has been with FAQI since 2005 as the Industry Development Officer developing, promoting and implementing grower focused extension and communication services which address the cut flower industry issues in Queensland. Denyse has worked for DPI&F for 10 years working in the area of training and consulting in Quality Assurance, Food Safety and Approved Supplier Programs for the food and fibre industries.

In this role Denyse directly supervises and is supported by the FAQI Administration Officer and also oversees the work of other FAQI project staff as well as casual employees and a school-based trainee.

- DPI&F Client Service Awards April 2007 Finalist – Denyse Corner  
South East Regional Development Team for outstanding contribution to the primary industries sector and the Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries  
Refer Appendix 1

**Other key personnel:**

Shane Holborn – Industry Development Officer 2003-2005  
Jacqueline Rainbow – Administrative Assistant 2001 – 2005  
Vanessa Bagrowski - School based trainee completed Certificate (111) in Business Administration (2005)  
Wendy Lawton – Administrative Assistant - 2006-current (Undertaking Certificate 1V in Business Administration)  
Amanda Macauliffe – Editor, Australian Flower Industry magazine March 2006-current  
Lodi Pameijer – Advertising Coordinator, Australian Flower Industry magazine 2006-current  
Duncan McGregor – Industry Development Officer – Water (Regional Queensland Rural Water Use Efficiency (3) Program January 2006 - to current

Sam Plant – Industry Development Officer – Water (Sth East Qld-Industry Futures Program)  
January 2006 - to current  
Siane Nipperess – School based trainee undertaking Certificate (111) in Business Administration  
April 2007 – to current

**Purpose of the Report:**

This report outlines the project outcomes of the Queensland Cut Flower Industry Development Unit, analyses processes undertaken and suggests recommendations for future activities.

**Funding Sources:**

- Horticulture Australia Ltd (HAL)
- Flower Association of Queensland Inc. (FAQI)
- Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries (DPI&F), Queensland
- Rural Industries Research & Development (RIRDC)
- FarmBis Queensland
- Dept. Natural Resource & Water, Queensland (NR&W)

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**Milestone Outcomes:****Milestone Outcome (1) If applicable, traditional flower conference conducted and a report presented to the FAQI Executive Committee****Summary Report****Flowers 2006 – The Australian Flower Conference**

Flowers 2006 The Australian Flower Conference was held at the Holiday Inn Surfers Paradise on the 29-31<sup>st</sup> August 2006. In conjunction with the Conference, a trade exhibition attracted 28 exhibitors, offering new and innovative technology solutions to growers.

Flowers 2006 was the first conference of its kind for the industry in Queensland. It encompassed all aspects of the flower industry "chain", from research and development through production and processing to the end market. The Conference program carried an important international component aimed at further developing production technologies and networking opportunities. It was designed to stimulate and educate, with a strong focus on providing participants with ideas and concepts that had immediate practical and commercial application.

Delegates met in eight full sessions and four parallel workshops to hear keynote speeches and presentations and a closing dialogue on key findings and next steps.

**Executive Conference Committee**

The Executive Conference Committee was made up of growers, industry representatives from the Flower Association of Queensland together with a representative from both the NSW Department of Primary Industries and Queensland Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries.

- Denyse Corner – Chair
- Bettina Gollnow – (DPI NSW)
- Wendy Lawton
- Brian Shannon
- Lodi Pameijer
- Lyle Dodwell
- Shane Holborn

**Conference Program**

A comprehensive program was prepared, with 25 Australian and International speakers presenting in eight (8) themed sessions:

1. Flower Industry Trends
2. Marketing, Promotion and Consumer Trends (Keynote Speaker Veronica Richardson UK)
3. Managing your Business
4. Exciting New Varieties and Production Systems
5. Water & Irrigation
6. Technology
7. New Innovations in Pest and Disease Management
8. Plant Quality – Getting it Right Pre and Post Harvest (Keynote Speaker Michael Reid USA)

**Conference Outcomes**

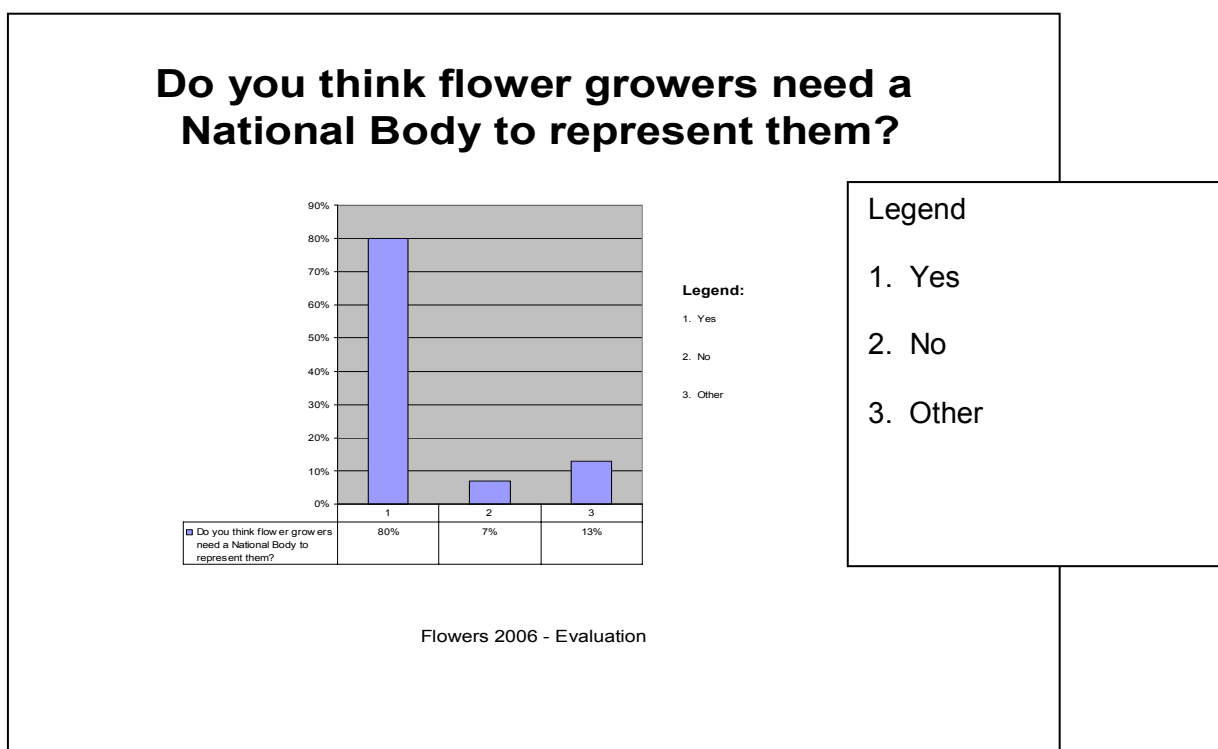
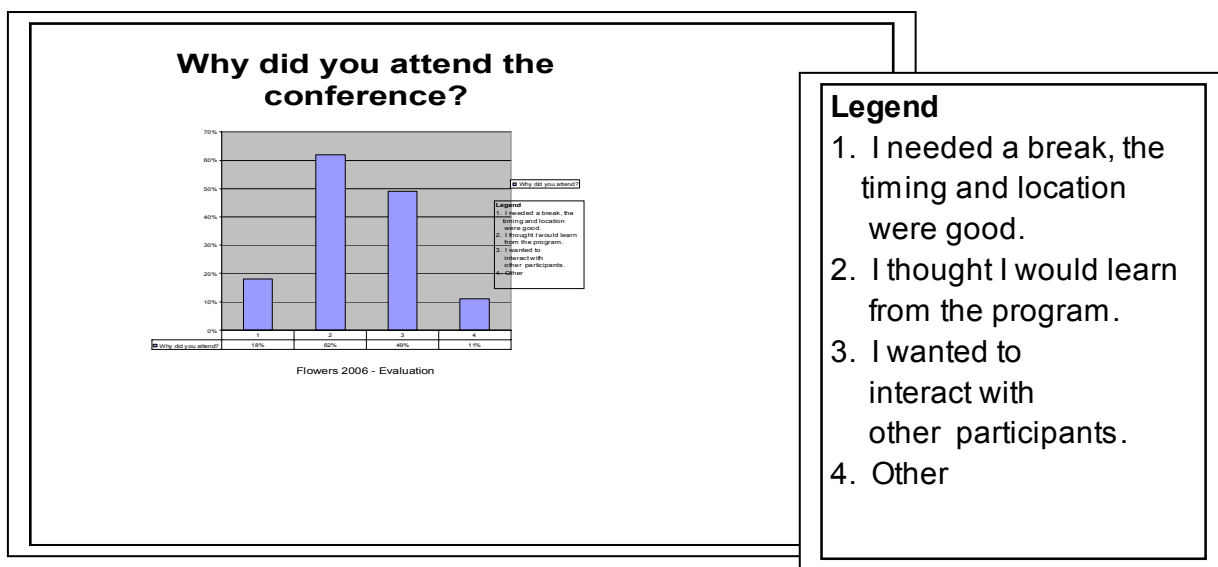
A number of outcomes from the conference were clearly identified; one of the most significant was that, the conference succeeded in bringing industry representatives from all over the country together. In doing so, it strengthened the flower industry by providing tools for improving businesses through the speaker program and trade exhibition as well as opportunities to share experiences, and establish contacts with a variety of individuals.

Three quite specific outcomes were declared in the Conference's closing Plenary Session. The first was that the industry needs to address the issues of quality assurance.

Growers need to be able to demonstrate that products are grown in a safe, proper and environmentally sustainable environment, and provide assurances for continuous supply. The second being that, industry needs to actively promote the sale of fresh Australian grown flowers and finally industry needs to achieve a satisfactory solution to the longstanding issue of industry sustainability.

The traditional cut flower industry currently has no single peak industry body to provide leadership and to co-ordinate promotion, marketing, funded research and development and lobby training, water etc. The creation of such a peak body to represent the diverse sections of this huge industry is considered by many to be vitally important.

### Conference Evaluation – Examples of questions asked at completion of conference

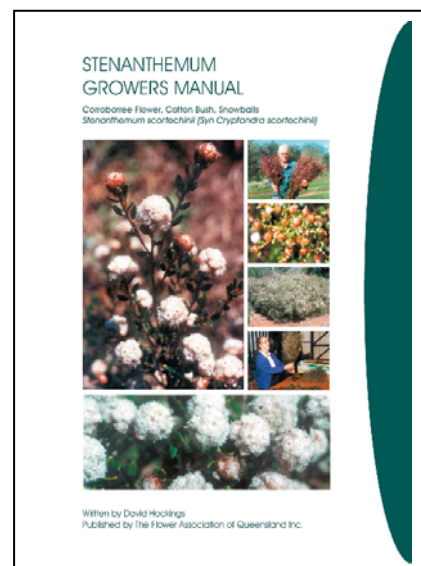




**Milestone Outcome (2) Prepare at least 3 grower publications over the course of the project and promote to industry**

**Examples of grower publications prepared over the course of the project include:**

- *Australian Flower Industry* magazine (12)
- FAQI E-Bulletin (36) (Refer Appendix 2)
- Stenanthemum Growers Manual
- Workplace & Health & Safety for the Australian Cut Flower Industry Manual
- FAQI South East Queensland –
- Irrigation Futures Update (Refer Appendix 3)
- FAQI Rural Water Use Efficiency (3) Update (Refer Appendix 4)
- Flowers 2006 – The Australian Flower Conference manual
- 7<sup>th</sup> Australian Native Flower Conference manual



## Summary:

In 2001, a HAL-funded project provided an Industry Development Officer (IDO) to work with the Flower Association of Queensland Inc. (FAQI) to build the capacity of the Queensland floriculture (cut flower and foliage) industry. The project was extended for a further three years (2004-2007) to further expand on the initiatives of 2001-2004.

In the three years to 2007, FAQI consolidated its position as the state peak industry body for the cut flower industry as well as taking on a national communication role in the absence of other state organisations. FAQI continued to undertake activities of representation, communication, industry development, provide marketing & promotional opportunities as well as education & training, research & development and industrial relations. The project also had a national focus with the coordination of a very successful Flowers 2006 - The Australian Flower Conference in Aug. 2006 and a meeting in Sydney in Nov 2006 between key state industry stakeholders to discuss the formation of a National Body for the Traditional Cut Flower Sector (HAL FLO6001) and subsequent formation of a Steering Committee with FAQI the nominated Secretariat, demonstrates the industry's confidence in FAQI as an industry peak body.

The success of the *Australian Flower Industry* magazine produced by FAQI (HAL Project FLO5002), also demonstrates the industry's acceptance of this publication as an effective national communication tool.

This report outlines the project outcomes, analyses processes undertaken and, where possible, suggests improvements or recommendations for future activities.

## Introduction:

The Flower Association of Queensland Inc. (FAQI) is a not-for-profit peak industry organisation which services commercial flower growing enterprises throughout the state. The Queensland cut flower and foliage sector is part of the important Lifestyle Horticulture industry (\$1.4 billion GVP) and represents an estimated \$132 million GVP per annum to the Queensland economy. The cut flower industry is also the largest exporter of products within the Lifestyle Horticulture industry with approximately \$13 million in international exports and a further \$19 million of products sold interstate. FAQI provides critical services including industry development activities, research

facilitation, provision of training as well as industry communication and extension activities (at a state and national level).

In 2004, a HAL-funded project (FLO4004) provided an Industry Development Officer (IDO) to work with the Flower Association of Queensland Inc. (FAQI) to build the capacity of the Queensland floriculture (cut flower and foliage) industry.

The project was extended for another 3 years to September 2007 and continued to provide coordination and direction for the cut flower industry in Queensland. By expanding the communication, education, training and industry consultation strategies, growers within the industry and their service providers were provided with opportunities to improve their capacity for business success. FAQI aims to build on the successes of the collaborative arrangement with HAL & DPI&F proposing a continuation of the arrangement in order to achieve further industry development, research and extension objectives.

## Method and Activities:

**Activities undertaken to improve information dissemination:** The response from industry to communication strategies in general has been very encouraging. Not only have we received many verbal and written compliments from industry, we also receive them from our peers in other industries. We have provided some examples that demonstrate the quality of the communiqués produced by the IDU. These include:

### 1. **Database**

The first step in improving industry communication was to review the existing data base and identify growers and allied traders within the industry to enable effective communication with those businesses. Searches were conducted to identify new contacts using existing information resources and existing contact details were confirmed or deleted as appropriate. The maintenance of the database became an ongoing activity and a methodical and more detailed review conducted annually. Each entry has been characterised (e.g. by growing sector, region, post code) to enable more targeted communication.

### 2. **Website – [www.flowersqueensland.asn.au](http://www.flowersqueensland.asn.au)**

This communication tool is highly effective in providing information to industry, the public, stakeholders and external inquirers. A search of other Australian industry Association's websites revealed that information is out of date and not always relevant. The website, [www.flowersqueensland.asn.au](http://www.flowersqueensland.asn.au), was professionally updated in 2007 and is now regularly maintained to provide an ongoing source of current information to the floriculture industry.



Flower Association of Queensland Inc.

The peak representative body  
for the Queensland cut flower  
and foliage industry

### 3. **Website – [iGROW.com.au](http://iGROW.com.au)**

FAQI has gone on line with a web based bulletin board for storing information. This bulletin board was used extensively during the wild flower industry discussion prior to the meeting in March 2007. Categories include:

- General
- Wildflower Australia
- New technologies
- Water conservation
- Farming equipment and suppliers

#### 4. **E-Bulletin**

The monthly E-Bulletin invites members to stay informed on upcoming events, industry news, services, new publications, discounted holiday packages and professional development opportunities together with updated information from the FAQI Executive Committee. When a significant industry event (e.g. a seminar or show) has taken place, the activity's outcomes and highlights including photos are generally included in the FAQI E-Bulletin. Refer Appendix 2.

#### 5. **Association Publications**

FAQI's regular publications changed over the course of the project to provide optimum quality communication and information dissemination. The team regularly met with clients (e.g. growers at group meetings) to assess the success of the information dissemination program. A survey was also sent to members requesting information on how they would like to receive communiqués from their association.

- *South East Queensland – Irrigation Futures "Update"* (Refer Appendix 3)
- *Rural Water Use Efficiency (3) "Update"* (Refer Appendix 4)
- *Fact Sheet – Water Recycling & Disinfestation*

#### 6. **Australian Flower Industry magazine**

The magazine was originally devised as an additional FAQI member benefit with the potential to attract new members to FAQI. The readers market now includes growers, wholesalers, auction houses, retailers, florists and their suppliers. The aim of the magazine is to provide a platform for knowledge sharing by the Australian Flower Industry, however, with the number of requests from overseas to contribute, advertise and subscribe to the publication, we believe, that in time it will become one of the magazines of choice by the international floriculture industry. In the last 12 months the AFI magazine has led to job creation and the appointment of a dedicated Editor, Advertising Coordinator and Graphic Designer. Since the release of the June 2007 issue there have been 10 requests for a preview copy of the magazine and 22 new subscriptions.

*"Congratulations to FAQI on the AFI magazine.*

*I thoroughly enjoyed reading your new magazine - there was a lot of valuable information and I will now be taking out a subscription. Gloria Jones, All About Flowers, (Florist in ACT) June 2007.*



Mechanisms were implemented to inform industry and clients of events occurring and important issues arising; that required action (especially the major players who are active in addressing issues of concern and/or act as communication conduits to other parties, such as grower groups). All businesses joining FAQI as members were given an opportunity to indicate if they wished to receive specific types of communication and their responses were included in the database.

For example, we recently invited an international Rose specialist from the Netherlands to conduct a Rose Seminar in Kooralbyn, Queensland. Using the data base and targeting growers of that particular type of flower (e.g. roses) proved to be a successful strategy as growers travelled from Tasmania, Victoria, NSW and far North Queensland to attend the one day seminar.



## **7. Consultation**

In situations where consultation or joint action was required, all interested parties were given an opportunity for involvement in discussions and decisions. Progress reports after submissions were also provided. For example Proposed formation of a National Body for the Traditional Cut Flower Sector.

## **8. Grower Group Meetings**

These activities represent the most personal and useful communication method available to the Industry Development Unit. Grower group meetings are usually conducted on-farm and are organised by FAQI and in some cases by the member grower groups. When the IDO attends, in almost all cases, a presentation is given to provide updates to growers on important activities being conducted by FAQI and information on developments affecting their businesses. The drought in SE Qld has had a severe impact on grower groups retaining membership; however, in 2007 another Native Flower group has been formed in the Gympie region which highlights the advantages of growers networking and discussing issues of common interest. Increased industry unity: Queensland grower groups now actively communicate and working together under the banner of FAQI.

- Wax and Native Flower Association of Queensland
- Corroboree Group
- Cairns Regional Flowers and Foliage
- Gympie Group

## **9. Farm Visits**

Our research indicates that growers appreciate the opportunity to network and visit other farms in the area and that they would like to see more farm visits for the purpose of exchanging information.





## 10. Promotion and Advertising - Media Coverage

- Mothers Day Advertising on Brisbane River City Cats (May 2005)



- Represented the industry at the Careers Expo 2006/2007 Brisbane Exhibition Centre

1 x Industry publication produced



**Welcome**  
The Flower State of Queensland is proud to be the host of Flowers 2006 – The Australian Flower Conference Profit Through Innovation.

The Conference is designed for growers, florists and allied trades with an interest in traditional flower power. There will be a strong focus on providing attendees with information that has immediate practical and commercial applications for their business.

**Conference Objectives**  
The main objectives of Flowers 2006 are to:

- update growers on advances in research and technology, with the opportunity to get immediate answers to questions;
- strengthen the flower industry through personal contacts and communication with others in the industry chain;
- provide tools for improving businesses through the speaker program and trade exhibition.

**Conference Venue**  
Holiday Inn Surfers Paradise  
22 View Ave, Surfers Paradise 4217, Queensland  
Phone: +61 7 5529 1300 Fax: +61 7 5529 2663

**Accommodation** (hot and in registration)  
Holiday Inn Surfers Paradise  
Parking – Limited parking available at Holiday Inn. Daily parking also available – complimentary to Holiday Inn.  
www.holidayinn.com.au

**Registration Fees**  
Full Registration 1st delegate – \$495.00  
2nd Delegate (same company) \$390.00  
Full registration includes individual sessions, lunches, morning tea, afternoon tea, national Monday night cocktail and Tuesday night Gala Dinner.  
All prices are quoted in Australian Dollars (inclusive of GST).

**Keynote Speakers**  
Professor Michael Field  
Professor Michael Field is a Past President of the Royal Horticultural Society of Australia and a past President of the Australian Flower Association. He is the author of the book 'The Flower State of Queensland' and is currently working on a book about the future of the flower industry in Australia.

Valerie Richards  
Valerie Richards is the Chief Executive of the Flower and Florist Association of Australia. She has been involved in the flower industry for over 20 years and has a wealth of experience in the industry.

Visit the website for speaker profiles.

**Sponsors**  
The organising committee is proud to acknowledge the support of our sponsors.

**Naming Sponsor** Major Sponsors Supporting Sponsors

**Further Information**  
Conference Organisers:  
Flower Association of Queensland Inc. in conjunction with QLD DPI&F & NSW DPI

**Key Issues**

- Flower industry trends
- Marketing, promotion & consumer trends
- Managing your business
- Expanding new activities & production systems
- Value & innovation
- Technology
- Plant quality – pre and post harvest

**Social Program**  
Monday Evening  
– Welcome Reception (Contact: 6:00pm-8:00pm)  
Tuesday Evening  
– Pre-dinner drinks and Gala Dinner 7:00pm  
The Confid story, hear celebrity speaker John Anderson from New Zealand explain how he turned his passion into a business. John's story is inspirational, humorous, entertaining and educational.  
Dinner guests will also be entertained with a floral demonstration by award winning florist, Courtney Flower.

**Trade Exhibition**  
The Conference Organising committee will also be coordinating a Trade Exhibition to run alongside the Conference. The Trade Exhibition will be held on Level 4 at the Holiday Inn. A high degree of exposure for Conference delegates to the exhibition will be ensured.  
Hours: Monday 8:00am – 5:00pm  
Tuesday 8:00am – 7:00pm  
Wednesday 8:00am – 5:00pm

**Field Day – "Floral Extravaganza"**  
\$55.00 (incl. breakfast, transport, buffet lunch)  
Delegates will spend the morning by coach and travel to Smart, Queensland's largest and most highly awarded winery.  
After a delicious morning tea, the next stop is in Bundall Forest at Victoria Point and then on to the Chapel at Cleveland. Delegates will enjoy a buffet lunch followed by the main event – the cut flower field of Flowers 2006, in conjunction with Florist Queensland, will hold the "Floral Extravaganza" showcasing more than 400 cut flower species and colour varieties.

For regular updates on the Conference program and activities, including prices and guest speakers, please visit the Conference website:  
[www.flowersaustralia.asn.au](http://www.flowersaustralia.asn.au)

**Flowers 2006**  
The Australian Flower Conference

**Higham Express florist**

**"Profit Through Innovation"**

**29th – 31st August 2006 Holiday Inn Surfers Paradise**

- Flowers 2006 – The Australian Flower Conference – Front and Back Cover of Program

**NEWS RURAL-QLD COUNTRY LIFE 25.5.06**

**Native flowers cut through to profits**

By BRAD COOPER

SOCIAL commentators call it downshifting – the phenomenon where busy professionals swap high-stress, long days and tight deadlines for some breathing space and the chance to drop a gear in life's fast lane for rewards that are more about personal fulfilment than big bucks.

Until recently, that was Paul Lee (pictured), racing around Brisbane from dawn to dusk as a concreter amid the peak of the city's housing development explosion, feeling his body creak with the strain and fearing he'd become a stranger to his children.

"The way I was going, I reckon I would have been in a wheelchair by the time I was 40, and I rarely had time to spend with the family – something had to change," he says.

So, 18 months ago Mr Lee swapped the trowel for the pruning shears and took up flower growing on 10 hectares of ground leased from an uncle at Mt Hallen, between Esk and Gatton.

It was the earning potential of native flowers, robust and drought tolerant, relative to costs that tempted Mr Lee to make the transition and start-up Mt Hallen Proteas, where he specialises in growing popular native plants such as NSW Christmas bush, kangaroo paw, wax flower and, of course, the South African-originating proteas.

While the days are just as long with the harvesting of about 7000 stems each week by hand, life on the farm means the 30-year-old dad is never far away from the house to provide support to his partner Louise in raising their three children aged three, two and eight months.

With the life-work balance achieved, and the cultivation swinging into full production for the first time this year, Mr Lee is now focused on driving the operation toward reaching his

**AT A GLANCE**

- Paul Lee swapped a concrete trowel for the pruning shears and took up flower growing.
- He grows Christmas bush, kangaroo paw, wax flower and proteas on 10ha at Mt Hallen.
- The inaugural annual Native Flower Seminar starts in Toowoomba tomorrow.

concrete business goals. Currently a third of the way through a seven-year plan, Mr Lee has designs on planting a further 1900 trees in the next two years, with each tree pulling \$50/year within five years.

The only snag in the plan has been an untimely illness to his uncle, forcing the sale of the Mt Hallen property. But such is Mr Lee's confidence in the industry's future that he says he'll be staying in the flower growing business, and has already started to investigate suitable properties around Bundaberg.

Intense interest in the Mt Hallen property is expected this Saturday, but it is unlikely there'll be a buyer among the visiting crowd. The touring party will be part of the inaugural annual Native Flower Seminar, starting in Toowoomba tomorrow (May 26-27).

The two-day seminar is aimed at offering growers and other industry professionals tips to maximise the profitability, productivity and sustainability of the Australian native flower industry, which according to organisers is currently feeling the pressure from diminishing returns in export markets and increasing production and transport costs.

● The Native Flower Seminar is at DPI&F, Tor St, Toowoomba, on May 26-27. Contact: Denyse Corner, 0408 060 746 or visit [www.flowersqueensland.asn.au](http://www.flowersqueensland.asn.au)

**[Business blooms]**

Paul Lee is growing NSW Christmas bush, kangaroo paw, wax flower and proteas on his Mt Hallen farm in the Brisbane Valley. The inaugural annual Native Flower Seminar starts in Toowoomba tomorrow.

- Media Coverage – Queensland Country Life 25.05.06 - Native Flower Seminar, Toowoomba



FAQI advertising banner – used for advertising and publicity in each issue of *Practical Hydroponics and Greenhouses* magazine (Bi monthly magazine)

#### **11. Conferences & Workshops**

- 7<sup>th</sup> Australian Wildflower Conference 2005
- Flowers 2006 – The Australian Flower Conference
- Native Flower Seminar 2005/2006/2007
- Rose Seminar 2005/2006
- Improved interstate communication resulting in collaboration on common issues, such as communication, the formation of a National Industry Body, R&D projects and E&T activities.

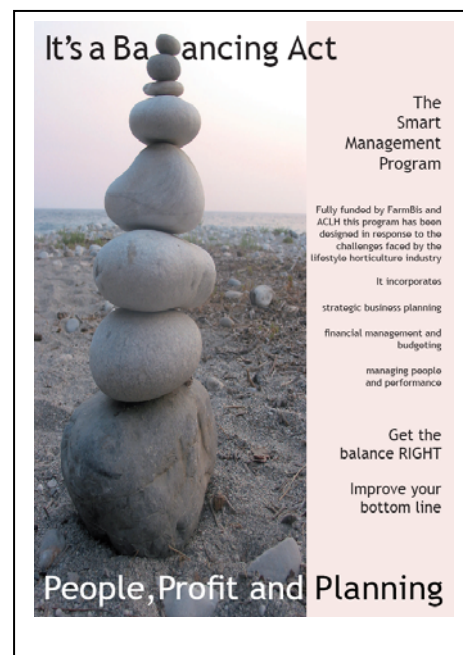
#### **12. Significant Industry Planning Events**

- *Flowers 2006 – The Australian Flower Conference*
- *7<sup>th</sup> Australian Wildflower Conference*
- National Body for Traditional Flower Sector – November 2006
- Wildflowers Australia Ltd – Melbourne, March 2007
- RIRDC Planning Day – Melbourne, March 2007

#### **13. Industry Training Events**

- *Native Flower Seminar*
  - *Toowoomba 2006*
  - *Nambour 2007*
- *Rose Seminar*
  - *Karalee 2006*
  - *Kooralbyn 2007 (Supported by FarmBis)*
- *Workplace Health & Safety Course – 2005 (Supported by FarmBis)*
  - *Nambour*
  - *Toowoomba*
  - *Mareeba*
- *Smart Management Training Program – Australian Institute of Management(AIM) 2007 (Supported by FarmBis)*

- *Brisbane*
- *Toowoomba*
- *Mareeba*
- *Townsville*
- *Gold Coast*
- *Sunshine Coast*



## Industry Feedback:

- Public statements have been made by organisers at industry and grower group meetings praising the quality of the FAQI publications and the national magazine, *Australian Flower Industry*. ie NSW Wildflower Conference, 2005/06/07 and Wildflowers Australia meeting March 07.
- Many individual comments from FAQI members when we meet face-to-face include that they appreciate the regularity of our contact and the increasingly streamlined approach to information dissemination; the division of information into different communiqués (e.g. individual e-mails versus less urgent monthly *E-Bulletin* information) enables the growers to easily prioritise their information perusal during busy periods such as harvest.
- "I really enjoyed the conference. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to attend. I think you all ran a great event – extremely efficient for a first and I hope that your efforts to get the industry to pull together will succeed." Best Wishes, Veronica Richardson UK.
- Flowers 2006 – "The speaker quality was excellent and the organisation brilliant! Appreciate your efforts – all the best for the future." Malcolm Durham
- "Can't see another State apart from Queensland with the capacity to get close to the standard you guys set – I wish to compliment you on a Conference well prepared and organised and as a result well attended by delegates and exhibitors."

## Evaluation:

By project's close in 2007, the value of the outputs far surpassed funds injected and included:

- Increased FAQI self-sustainability: Total income increased by approx. 600% since the project commenced in 2004
- FAQI have increased staffing levels from 2 in 2004 to 6 in 2007. This increase demonstrates the success of the organisation in achieving its objectives
- The *Australian Flower Industry* magazine is building a steady subscription base and has now become financially viable (income has increased by 130%), particularly with the rebranding issue released in June 2007. The magazine continues to raise the profile of FAQI as an industry leader



- Many comments about Flowers 2006 – The Australian Flower Conference for the professional organisation of the conference and the benefits to industry provided by the program
- June 2004 - the data base had 1212 entries with all entries having been reviewed and updated. June 2007 – the reviewed data base is 2,500. The result of the improved database has allowed us to provide to our clients:
  - more targeted communication;
  - more effective provision of desired information;
  - effective redirection of external inquires to the correct businesses/stakeholders; and
  - reduced information overload by providing needs-specific information.

The face-to-face contact opportunities undertaken have provided the IDU with the most valuable industry feedback. In these situations more than any other, comments are provided by growers to enable the IDU to obtain an accurate assessment of client satisfaction levels. Also, growers are provided with more personal and informative updates on industry development and, since the information imparted is tailored to suit each groups needs, is highly relevant to their needs.

From our experience, having both an active communiqué program and attending these group meetings has, on the whole, kept client satisfaction high.

The effective reach of the communication networks created by the IDU has proven to be international. The IDU receives 5 enquires per month from people from countries such as the United States and England, who have read information disseminated from the IDU.

## **Implications:**

Key learning points:

- An analysis of the key extension principles adopted by FAQI demonstrates the importance of developing personal relationships and engaging with farmers on their terms and addressing their identified key industry issues.
- A key function of the IDO role has been to link actual and potential stakeholders, owners of resources and other relevant individuals and groups across the cut flower industry to relevant sources of information and technology.

## **Recommendations:**

The overall project objective is to increase the profitability, competitiveness and sustainability of this primary industry sector through the provision of:

- Extension and training packages and services
- New production technologies, processes and information
- Assessments of social, economic, regulatory and market factors
- Increasing the capacity of the industry to undertake and fund R&D providing the best possible return on investment (i.e. accelerated growth).

It will achieve this outcome by strategically investing in and managing activities that will develop and make available to industry appropriate, effective and efficient technologies, processes and information.

Specifically this project will include the following activities over the next three year period:

- facilitating collaboration between the Queensland cut flower and foliage industry with key stakeholders (government and non-government organisations in Queensland and interstate)
- Supporting FAQI to achieve financial and operational sustainability
- Facilitating the formation and establishment of a national traditional peak industry body (Flowers Australia)
- Providing high-level input into the formation of a national wildflower industry body (Wildflowers Australia)
- Continuing the highly successful Australian Flower Industry magazine
  - Developing an implementing a Farm Management System for Queensland primary producers
  - Facilitating, supporting and undertaking key R&D activities (e.g. water use efficiency)
  - Encouraging growth in innovation assets (knowledge, skills, technologies)
  - Increasing water use efficiency
  - Developing and implementing quality specification and management practices which are accepted as both objective and accurate.
  - Building stakeholder commitment to the 2007-2012 Industry R&D Plan. R&D investment returns to the flower industry demonstrable benefits to the environment and to the industry as a result of rigorous project selection and program management.
  - Increase in extent of "joint venture" type or co-investment funding of projects and "in kind" contributions by working closely with the DPI&F (H&FS) Team Leader under the DPI&F/FAQI Joint R&D Management Committee
  - Increased participation and response to FAQI communications as evidenced by practice change

#### **Summary of Priority Goals:**

- Industry strategic planning
  - Undertake a review of the current progress against existing FAQI strategic planning documentation and develop activity priorities accordingly
  - Facilitate the assessment of the FAQI R&D strategy with Joint R&D Committee
- Extension and training packages and services
  - New technology made application ready, best production practice revised or information set disseminated to at least 50% of industry for each of the following areas:
    - Production efficiency
    - Natural resource use efficiency
    - Pest & disease management
    - Quality management and improvement in the flower farm business
- Assessment of social, economic, regulatory and market factors
  - Industry significant assessment produced in each of the following areas:
    - Supply and demand information
    - Industry performance benchmarking
    - Social or community impact
- An R&D portfolio providing the best possible return on investment
  - Quality: At least two significant research and development projects established and funded over the three year life of the project.

- Industry events and activities
  - At least 1 training activity undertaken each year of the agreement and four industry events coordinated during that time (e.g 3 x field days, 1 x state/national conference).
- Industry communications and publications
  - At least four issues per annum of Australian Flower Industry magazine published
  - At least 10 other member communications per annum (e.g. email bulletins, IDO reports)
  - Two specific issue publications produced during the three year project (e.g. grower guide, production/ irrigation manual etc..)
- Improve the sustainability of the organisation
  - Develop at least two commercial partnerships between FAQI and industry product/service providers to enhance the financial self-sustainability of FAQI in the longer term

## **Acknowledgements:**

- Horticulture Australia Ltd (HAL)
- Flower Association of Queensland Inc. (FAQI)
- Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries (DPI&F), Queensland
- Rural Industries Research & Development (RIRDC)
- FarmBis Queensland
- Dept. Natural Resource & Water, Queensland (NR&W)
- NSW Department of Primary Industries
- Department of Agriculture WA
- Centre for Native Floriculture, University of Queensland, Gatton
- Australian Centre for Lifestyle Horticulture
- Queensland Farmers Federation

## **Appendices:**

1. DPI&F Client Service Award
2. FAQI E-Bulletin – May 2007
3. South East Queensland – Irrigation Futures Update
4. Rural Water Use Efficiency (3) Update

Finalist

Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries

# Client Service Awards 2007

Outstanding contribution  
to the primary industries sector and the  
Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries

## Finalist

26 April 2007

Certificate awarded to

**Denyse Corner**

**South East Regional Development Team**



**The Hon. Tim Mulherin MP**  
Minister for Primary Industries and Fisheries







Flower Association of Queensland Inc.  
[www.flowersqueensland.asn.au](http://www.flowersqueensland.asn.au)

#### Quotable Quotes

*"Not everything that is faced can be changed, but nothing can be changed until it is faced."*  
 - James A. Baldwin

## E-Bulletin - May 2007

Welcome to the May edition of the FAQI E-Bulletin. Stay informed on upcoming events, industry news, services, new publications, and professional development opportunities. If you would like to comment on something you have received, send an email to: [denyse.corner@dpi.qld.gov.au](mailto:denyse.corner@dpi.qld.gov.au)

### FAQI News

#### Native & Wildflower Seminar – Stayin' Alive Nambour 27/28 April

The two day Native Flower Seminar was recently held in Nambour. Program highlights included presentations on: Soil & leaf test analysis; Soil health; Establishing young plants; IPM; Irrigation Planning & Design; Irrigation monitoring & fertigation and Cooperative Marketing.

The Field Day at the beautiful property of Gary & Cris Swift at Maleny was extremely popular as FAQI's Water-IDO, Sam Plant, discussed the objectives of his in-ground water efficiency trials.



Attendees were very interested in the equipment, location and layout of the trials and spent a long time discussing pest, plant soil and nutrition issues, as well as observing plant deficiencies and other physical plant characteristics. During-morning tea, Dave Hunt from DPI&F gave a short overview on pH & EC - explaining how pH & EC effect soil, water and plant growth.

The group then moved down the road to Lodi & Yucca Pameijer's beautiful Maleny property for a sumptuous lunch followed by a farm tour and discussions in harvesting, packaging and post harvest methods.



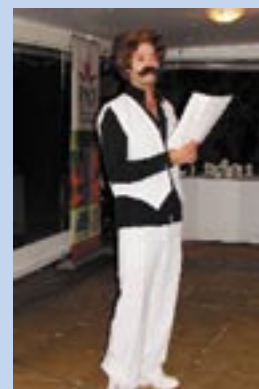
Farm Tour

Plant-trivia  
 champions



#### Highlights

- FAQI News
- SEQ Irrigation Futures
- RWUE(3)
- AFI magazine
- Awards/Scholarships
- Conferences / Seminars
- Drought Assistance
- Education & Training
- Industry Issues
- Affiliated Travel Club
- Contact Us



*In keeping with the Stayin' Alive theme at the Native Flower Seminar, dinner guests enjoyed the entertainment presented by "Barry Gibb"*

## Funding Projects

We are currently waiting on the outcome of a joint initiative with Queensland Farmers Federation to support FAQI's initial development of Farm Management Systems (FMS).

FAQI has also been in negotiations with DPI&F - Property Management Systems initiative for the appointment of a dedicated officer to assist Flowers and Turf in the development of their Farm Management Systems.

## Research Projects with DPI&F

FAQI has signed an agreement with DPI&F to jointly work on Research & Development projects for the cut flower & foliage industry.

## Water Efficiency Management Plan (WEMP)

Many growers have received WEMPs from their local city councils to complete by the 30th June. As each level of water restrictions are applied, growers are required to fill in another WEMP. If you would like assistance in understanding how to fill in a WEMP, or have additional questions contact FAQI. A WEMP workshop will be held at Redlands Research Station, 25-40 Delancey Street, Cleveland on 19th June 07; from 2.30pm - 4.30pm. This workshop is being organised in collaboration with Redland Water & Waste, SEQ Water, FAQI and other grower associations. There is no cost for this event.

For further information and to register for this event, please contact Sam Plant. Email: [sam@flowersqueensland.asn.au](mailto:sam@flowersqueensland.asn.au)

## Business Water Efficiency Program (BWEMP)

Funding Eligibility - What the program commencement date means for business subsidy and rebate applications.

The Business Water Efficiency Program (BWEP) funding arrangements came into force upon the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding between 21 South East Queensland State Government and SEQWater on 18th August 2006. This date has significance for business with respect to water saving initiatives and potential eligibility for BWEP funding. Any investment in water saving infrastructure implemented post 18th August, may be entitled to a 50% rebate. This may include tanks, upgrading of irrigation systems, disinfection/recycling systems and more. For information please contact your local council or refer [www.seqwater.com.au](http://www.seqwater.com.au)

## Nuffield Scholarship (Closes on 30 June)

Fourteen outstanding primary producers from across Australia have the opportunity to explore overseas farming practices as 2007 recipients of Australia's most prestigious agricultural award the Nuffield Scholarship, valued at \$25,000 each. Applications close on 30 June. For application forms call 02 6964 6600, [enquiries@nuffield.com.au](mailto:enquiries@nuffield.com.au) or at [www.nuffield.com.au](http://www.nuffield.com.au)

One of FAQI's planned initiatives for 2007 is the development of industry Fact Sheets

FS No.1 covers:

### HYDROPONICS IN THE GREENHOUSE

- Water recycling & disinfection
- Types of disinfection systems

(Non Chemical)

- Slow sand filtration
- UV Ultra violet light
- Heat treatment
- Micro filtration

(Chemical)

- Ozone
- Chlorine dioxide
- Chlorine
- Bromine
- Iodine

*Email FAQI for a copy.*

## South East Queensland—Irrigation Futures (SEQ-IF)

Sam Plant, Industry Development Officer - Water, now has 7 water use efficiency trials at various sites in SEQ and is already collecting valuable data that will assist him in his water efficiency research projects. He is currently installing water meters on farm to establish irrigation benchmarking and assisting growers in understanding how their precious water is being used. Growers wishing to participate in this program should contact Sam with their expressions of interest. Personal farm details about water usage remains confidential between FAQI and the grower.

### Industry Stock-take....help us help you!

You may have already received a Survey document in the mail. Your participation in this survey is vital in establishing current industry water usage. The data collected will establish a sound base so that water efficiency changes can be measured throughout the roll-out of the SEQ-IF program. Please complete the surveys and get them back to Sam at your earliest opportunity. If you haven't received one in mail - give Sam a call.

## Funding for Water Projects

### Summary of schemes by level of government

Program/Scheme	Funded by	Who can apply?
<b>Local and regional (SE)</b>		
Business Water Efficiency Program	Department of Local Government Planning Sport & Recreation	Businesses in South East Queensland
<b>Queensland</b>		
ecoBiz	Sustainable Industries Division, Queensland Environmental Protection Agency	Businesses
Home Garden Water-Wise Rebate Scheme	Department of Natural Resources & Water	Queensland residential households
Local Government Bodies Capital Works Subsidy Scheme	Refer to Water & Sewerage Program below	
Urban Drought Water Program	Department of Local Government Planning Sport & Recreation	Councils
Water & Sewerage Program	Department of Local Government Planning Sport & Recreation	Councils
<b>National</b>		
Community Water Grants	Australian Government (Water Fund)	Community organizations Councils

FAQI is now producing a quarterly **SEQ-IF Update** showcasing Sam's trials and extension work in the field. Water use efficiency trials and equipment will also be evaluated and reported in the Update. Join up as a member of FAQI and receive a copy in the mail.



Sam continues to search for and evaluate funding opportunities. Please contact him if you would like to discuss funding options and eligibility requirements.

Contact Sam on:  
Phone: (07) 3824 9579  
Mobile: 0448 172 392  
Email:  
sam@flowersqueensland.asn.au





## Rural Water Use Efficiency 3 (RWUE3)

Although the drought in Queensland continues to impact on cut flower growers, Duncan is finding growers in regional Qld keen to support the RWUE3 program. He has traveled to Warwick, Gympie, Bundaberg, Townsville and far north Qld in the short time he has been with FAQI interviewing and discussing with growers their many water and flower production issues. A new Native Flower grower group has been established and water efficiency trials are in the ground.

Duncan coordinated a very successful grower group meeting and farm tour in May and is already making plans for the next field day. He is currently preparing for the installation of enviroscans in far north Queensland.

Contact Duncan on Ph: 073824 9579 Mob: 0448 172 397

Email: [duncan@flowersqueensland.asn.au](mailto:duncan@flowersqueensland.asn.au)

*Growers have presented Duncan with their wish list. Planning for the Native Flower Seminar 2008 is already underway.*



FAQI is now producing a quarterly **RWUE(3) Update** showcasing Duncan's trials and extension work in the field. Join up as a member and receive a copy in the mail.

## Australian Flower Industry magazine



The end of May was the closing date for content for the new magazine to be released this week. Don't miss it! It is a bumper issue featuring a new 8 page florist section. Highlights in this issue include WildFlowers Australia Ltd; Grower profiles, MIFGS and of course the not to be missed featured variety - Anthuriums - as shown on the front cover.

The florist section is packed with new and interesting information. If you would like a complimentary copy of the June edition of the AFI magazine contact FAQI or maybe you have been thinking about taking out an annual subscription or even contributing an article?

Contact the Editor. [amanda@flowersqueensland.asn.au](mailto:amanda@flowersqueensland.asn.au).

Advertising rates can be found on the FAQI website or call the Advertising Coordinator on 07 5494 4935 or email: [lodi@flowersqueensland.asn.au](mailto:lodi@flowersqueensland.asn.au)



## Awards & Scholarships

### Pathways to Rural Leadership Course (Applications Now Open)

The Pathways to Rural Leadership Course will be held in Canberra, 6-9 August 2007. Applications are encouraged from up-and-coming leaders who have the potential to play stronger leadership roles in their industry. Course participants will put their leadership knowledge and skills into practice in an interactive environment.

Applications close 5.00pm (AEST), Wednesday 20 June 2007.

Further information and application forms are available through the Young Australian Rural Network (YARN) website at [www.yarn.gov.au](http://www.yarn.gov.au)

### Exciting Opportunities and Information for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry Industries

Are you aged 18 to 35 and currently working in an agricultural, fisheries, forestry or related industry? Are you passionate about your rural industry? Are you committed to the successful future of your industry? If the answer is yes, we encourage you to apply.



## **Outback Youth Infront, Their Voice – Australia's Future**

(Report Now Available)

This Report presents the views and suggestions of more than 300 young people on the important issues facing them in rural, regional and remote Australia, together with their ideas and recommendations on how these issues can be addressed.

The three main challenges participants believe need attention are education, employment and community.

The information contained in the Report was compiled through a comprehensive process including a national on-line survey; five regional workshops (Mildura, Moree, Alice Springs, Longreach, Perth) and a final national workshop in Canberra.

Further information about this Report and copies can be found at [www.yarn.gov.au](http://www.yarn.gov.au)

### **2007 Work Safe Awards**

The awards provide a great opportunity to recognise businesses, individuals, associations, partnerships and other organisations that have shown a commitment to excellence in workplace health and safety.

Entries must be received by 5.00pm, Tuesday, 31 July 2007.

Entry is open to individuals, associations, partnerships, companies and other organisations operating within Queensland.

Categories:

- Best workplace health and safety management system
- Best solution to an identified health and safety issue
- Best workplace health and safety practices in small business
- Best individual contribution to workplace health and safety (new)
- Best solution to an identified electrical safety issue (new)

[www.deir.qld.gov.au/workplace/training/events/worksafeawards/index.htm](http://www.deir.qld.gov.au/workplace/training/events/worksafeawards/index.htm)

### **Australian Hydroponics & Greenhouse Association National Conference 2007**

Don't forget to book for the conference

24-27th June

[info@cdesign.com.au](mailto:info@cdesign.com.au)



Grand Chancellor Hotel  
Launceston, Tasmania



### **Coast Guard Netting Services**

An Australian company of over 15 years standing and experience in Nursery, Horticultural and Shade structures, based in Ballina, wish to advise that a SE Qld representative has been appointed and is based in Morayfield. For further information please contact

**Jack Herkett**  
**P.O. Box 493**  
**Morayfield Qld 4506**

**Ph: 07 5497 9381**

**Fax: 07 5497 9381**

**Mob: 0427 385 031**

**Email:**

**[jhurkett@bigpond.net.au](mailto:jhurkett@bigpond.net.au)**

### **Australian Apprenticeships**

**New Australian Government Incentive available for Mid-Career Apprentices**

**From 1st July 2007, Australian Apprentices undertaking a trade apprenticeship, aged 30 or over at the commencement of their Australian Apprenticeship, may be eligible to attract an additional financial incentive.**  
**Contact 13 63 48**

## Conferences & Seminars

### Rose Seminar Update - 24th May 2007

The hugely successful Rose Seminar was held on the 24th May at Kooralbyn Roses. We were able to assist Qld growers with a subsidy from FarmBis making the overall cost very attractive. As well as our local growers, attendees traveled from Tasmania, Victoria, NSW & far north Qld to hear internationally renowned rose and orchid specialist Wim van der End from the Netherlands. The program included discussions on:

- Plant maintenance
- Nutrition/Fertigation
- Climate
- Irrigation
- Evaluating treatment programs
- Correct pH controls for optimum growth
- Greater understanding of plant air & water relationships

Feedback shows that these type of events yield valuable information. Growers always leave Wim's seminars with a bag full of practical advice enabling them to implement changes that will bring financial benefits to their business.

#### Testimonial:

*"We thought the day was a great success and certainly benefited from Wim's knowledge as it is highly regarded in the industry. He is definitely worth the money. Speaking with and listening to very experienced growers asking questions throughout the day was also a great learning activity. We would also like to thank you for your help & support, leading up to and including the day".*

FAQI has produced a DVD of the entire workshop to assist growers in remembering/retaining the valuable information that was presented. If you missed the seminar, or would like a copy of it to refresh your memories, contact FAQI for a 3 Disc DVD of the event. Cost: \$30.00 for those that attended and \$230.00 for those that were unable to attend.

### Floriculture & Ornamentals IPM Seminar 2007 - 13th June

Organic Crop Protectants will be holding a seminar on the 13th June at DPI&F Redlands, 12.30 - 2.30pm. The seminar will feature a new powerful tool for IPM compatible insect pest control & resistance management.

The program includes:

- OCP overview
- AzaMax - Tough Pests, Soft Solution!
- Marrying Pesticides & IPM
- Open Forum

RSVP to [james@ocp.cpm.au](mailto:james@ocp.cpm.au)

## Drought Assistance

### Producers and small businesses urged to apply for first year Exceptional Circumstance Interest Subsidy drought support

Eligibly primary producers and small business owners in Exceptional Circumstance drought declared regions of Queensland, are urged to apply to QRAA before 15th June 2007 to be eligible to receive two years Exceptional Circumstance Interest Subsidy support. For further information contact QRAA on 1800 623 946 or visit [www.qraa.qld.gov.au](http://www.qraa.qld.gov.au).



## Education & Training

### Best Practice In Irrigation

Irrigation Australia Ltd (IAL) is delivering a series of accredited irrigation workshops over the winter months as part of a larger program run by the Australian Centre for Lifestyle Horticulture. The workshops are aimed at people with some experience in working with pressurised irrigation systems in public open spaces such as parks, botanical gardens, nurseries, sportsgrounds, bowling greens and golf courses. Training delivery will be conducted by experienced irrigation industry members, in partnership with North Brisbane Institute of TAFE

Venue: DPI&F Redlands Research Station, Delancey Street, Cleveland

Dates: 19/20 June - Irrigation systems & soil/plant/water relationships; 17/18 July - Irrigation operations and maintenance; 21/22 August - Irrigation and the environment; 11 Sep. - Evidence Day.

Total Cost: All workshops - \$770pp inc GST; Single workshop cost \$330pp inc GST.

Phone: David 0413 334 679 email: [secy.seq@irrigation.org.au](mailto:secy.seq@irrigation.org.au)

#### Nutri Tech Solutions - Certificate in Sustainability 24-27th July

Guidelines for high-production, sustainable agriculture

Venue: 7 Harvest Rd, Yandina Qld

Cost: \$572.00 (incl. GST)

Course Outline

- Mineral Management
- Microbe management
- Plant Management
- Pest Management
- Human Health Management

For more information contact Kirstie at Nutri-Tech Solutions 07 5472 9900

#### Healthy Soils Symposium - 3-5th July

A healthy soils symposium is being held from 3-5 July this year on the Sunshine Coast. The symposium will discuss the question "Can Australian soils sustain our agricultural systems?" and will feature guest speakers discussing many aspects of soil health. The conference registration is \$550; however farmers and students are eligible to pay the discounted price of \$330. For information contact 1800 177 636, fax 1800 831 663, email: [esther@estherprice.com.au](mailto:esther@estherprice.com.au) or click [www.healthysoils.gov.au](http://www.healthysoils.gov.au)

### Centre for Native Floriculture - Gatton - Short Courses

#### 4 day Introduction to Plant Tissue Culture Short Course 9-12 July 2007

This hands-on course is intended for those in the industry who are:

Wanting to establish a Tissue Culture laboratory within their nursery operations; Laboratory managers; and Laboratory technicians. The emphasis will be on the production of Australian Native Plants in culture including ferns, orchids, foliage plants, and flowering plants for pot and cut flower culture.

Cost: \$660 (GST incl)

#### 2 day Advanced Plant Tissue Culture Short Course 12-13 July 2007

This two-day course focuses on the application of Plant Tissue Culture for plant improvement, including plant breeding, selection and manipulation.

Topics covered include: mutation breeding; invitro selection; hybridisation; anther culture and haploid production.

Cost: \$352 (GST incl)

Further information: Contact Ms Ray Russell  
NRAVS Faculty Training Consultant  
Phone: 07 5460 1063 Mobile: 0407 671547  
Email: [nravs.training@uq.edu.au](mailto:nravs.training@uq.edu.au)

#### 3 day Plant Propagation Short Course 17-19 July 2007

This practical course will provide those working in the flower or nursery industry with a sound knowledge and practical competence in the techniques of: plant propagation seed cutting, and grafting.

The emphasis will be on the propagation of Australian Native Ornamental Plants from seed, stem cuttings and grafting.

Cost: \$594 (GST incl)

## Industry Issues

### Australian Grown' logo launched

The new 'Australian Grown' logo was launched by Federal Agriculture Minister Peter McGauran to allow customers to quickly identify packaged food that has been grown on Australian farms. QFF and member organisations Growcom and APFA have long campaigned for better labeling of locally grown produce. The 'Australian Grown' logo can now be applied to products where all the ingredients were grown in Australia and virtually all the cost of production is incurred in Australia. Australian exporters will also be able to use the logo in overseas markets, capitalising on our reputation for producing healthy, high quality products. The Government has committed up to \$1.7 million to promote the logo. The campaign will be administered by Australian Made Campaign Limited. Further information about the campaign can be found at [www.australiangrown.com](http://www.australiangrown.com)

### Export Guides - Now Available

Austrade has developed three practical guides to help you plan and prepare for your venture into the world of exporting. These handy guides cover important exporting considerations and offer you valuable information to assist in helping you develop your export strategy.

- Guide to Business and Export Finance
- Guide to Developing an Export Strategy
- Guide to Pricing for Export

[www.austrade.gov.au](http://www.austrade.gov.au)

### WildFlowers Australia Ltd - Update

A letter dated the 12th April has been received from Tim Bailey, Chair of WildFlowers Australia re Formation of WildFlowers Australia Ltd.

"We would like to advise the Traditional Cutflower Industry that on the 19th March 2007, members of the Australian WildFlower Industry elected to form a peak national body; namely WildFlowers Australia Ltd.

The peak body will work with existing state bodies and industry groups to provide support, funds and benefits to members. The organisation will also lead the industry on national issues, access Government advice and support and aim to raise the profile of the Australian Wildflower industry.

Wildflowers Australia looks forward to working with the Traditional Cutflower industry in the near future

#### Annual Membership Fee structure:

**Level One:** Available to all Supply Chain Enterprises with less than 4 full time employees \$330 (incl. GST) annually

**Level Two:** Available to all Supply Chain Enterprises with 4-6 full time employees or State or Regional Industry Associations \$1,100 (incl. GST) annually

**Level Three:** Available to all Supply Chain Enterprises with 7 or more full time employees \$2,200 (incl. GST) annually

**If you have any questions regarding  
WildFlowers Australia Ltd,  
please contact Alice Cameron  
Interim Secretariat on 07 3369 4222  
email: [alice@ridgepartners.com.au](mailto:alice@ridgepartners.com.au)**

### WildFlowers Australia Ltd

#### Special Start-up Discount

**Available to all  
Grower  
Members  
(regardless of size)  
for 2007/08**

**\$330 (incl. GST)  
annually**



## Affiliated Members Travel Club (AMTC)

### SPECIAL OFFERS

AMTC is focused on delivering fantastic travel

specials directly to you.

We have some great offers this month so check out what is available.

Contact us now for further details

\* Availability Limited \* Prices in AUD \*

\* Special conditions apply \*

Tel: 07 5575 8037 Fax: 07 5575 8065 email: dmillington@amtc.net.au

### Western Australia

Margaret River Wine Experience (2 Day Tour)

\* Return transfers from Perth

\* 1 Night accommodation at Margaret's Forest Apartments

\* Expert guide & commentary

\* 1x Breakfast, 2 x Lunches & 1x Dinner

PLUS\* Receive a FREE half Day Perth & Fremantle City Explorer Tour

Travel between 1 Jun-24 Dec 07& book by 30 June 07

Special AMTC Price from

ONLY \$445\* per person twin share

~~~~~

### Vietnam

Ho Chi Minh City

\* Return airfares on Vietnam Airlines ex Melbourne

\* 4 nights accommodation including breakfast

\* Return private transfers

Travel between 16 Jul - 20 Sep 07 & book and pay by 29 June 07

Special AMTC Price from

ONLY \$1,221\* per person twin share

~~~~~

### Sydney

Billy Elliot

\* 1 Night accommodation at the Vibe Hotel

\* Billy Elliot 'A' Reserve Ticket

Travel Dates: 14 - 28 Dec 07 &

2 Jan - 31 Mar 08

& book by 30 June 07

Special AMTC Price from

ONLY \$236\* per person twin share

~~~~~

### FAQI Contacts

**Denyse Corner**

**Industry Development Officer**

**Ph: 07 3824 9516**

**Fax: 07 3286 3094**

**Mobile: 0408 060 746**

**Email: denyse.corner@dpi.qld.gov.au**

**Wendy Lawton**

**Administration Officer**

**Ph: 07 3824 9537**

**Fax: 07 3286 3094**

**Email: faqi@flowersqueensland.asn.au**

**Sam Plant**

**Water - Industry Development Officer (SEQ-IF)**

**Ph: 07 3824 9579**

**Fax: 07 3286 3094**

**Mobile: 0448 172 392**

**Email: sam@flowersqueensland.asn.au**

**Duncan McGregor**

**Water - Industry Development Officer (RWUE3)**

**Ph: 07 3824 9579**

**Fax: 07 3286 3094**

**Mobile: 0448 172 397**

**Email: duncan@flowersqueensland.asn.au**

**Amanda Macauliffe**

**Editor:**

**Australian Flower Industry magazine**

**Ph: 07 3824 9537**

**Fax: 07 3286 3094**

**Email: amanda@flowersqueensland.asn.au**

**Lodi Pameijer**

**Advertising Coordinator:**

**Australian Flower Industry magazine**

**Ph: 07 5494 4935**

**Fax: 07 3286 3094**

**Mobile: 0415 436 948**

**Email: lodi@flowersqueensland.asn.au**



## SEQ-IF Quarterly Update 1 April 2007

### Sam's progress towards a water efficient South East Queensland cut flower and foliage industry

- A team approach to sustainable flower production
- Careful management of water and nutrients
- Minimising wastage of water
- Monitoring progress on-farm

Sam has spent the last 2 months travelling around SEQ meeting growers and investigating commercial flower growers' current irrigation methods and strategies, and researching current available technology to improve on-farm water use efficiency.

Sam has noted that the flower industry as a whole is quite efficient already, with drip irrigation widely used. His investigations have

revealed a variety of irrigation scheduling techniques using basic timer systems,



climatic values (e.g. Solar Radiation, E<sub>pan</sub> or ET<sup>0</sup>) or soil moisture levels to turn irrigation on and off. The theory behind water use efficiency is to irrigate as per the plants water requirements. For example, on less demanding days such as cloudy or cooler days, the plant will use less water, and subsequently will need less irrigated water than on a hot sunny day. By using soil moisture sensors that are connected to the irrigation controller, we can evaluate the effectiveness compared with traditional timer based irrigation systems. The sensors should therefore vary the amount of water applied depending on climatic conditions and crop physiological conditions. These small changes should result in a financial saving to the grower in terms of time, water and nutrients use. Sam will over the next few months be trialing at least 3 different systems that use this technology, and measuring total water used (using water meters), crop yield and quality, and comparing the results with a control, which will be irrigation according to a timer.

#### Water Meters

Sam is also in the process of asking growers to be involved in a water metering exercise, so that he can collect the information of how much water is used by the cut flower industry. This data will be confidential between FAQI and each grower. The information from all growers participating will be totaled to give us an idea of total water used by the industry. Growers will also find the data useful in their management. If Sam has not yet contacted



you about the water metering exercise and you would like to be involved, please contact him and express your interest.



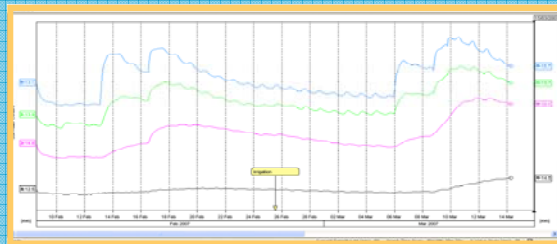
#### SAM PLANT

PH: 07 3824 9579

MOB: 0448 172 392

sam@flowersqueensland.asn.au

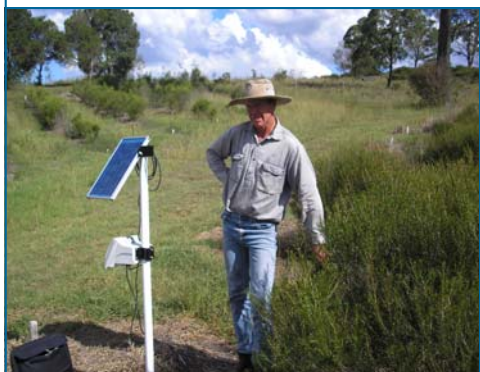
See the trials demonstrated at the  
Native & Wildflower Seminar in  
Nambour on the  
27/28th April 2007.



### Flower Trials

**Objective:** To determine optimum irrigation method for best yield and quality of cut flower and foliage (Protea, Christmas Bush and Geraldton Wax).

Sam has also started 3 irrigation trials on three different crops in three different locations in South East Queensland. At each of the locations, he has installed three Enviroscan Probes on three consecutive rows, and over the next few seasons will be applying different irrigation strategies to



each of the treatments. The probes have sensors at 10cm, 20cm, 30cm

and 50cm on the Geraldton Waxflower and the Protea trials, and at 10cm, 20cm, 30cm, 50cm and 70cm in the Christmas Bush. At each of the different treatments a water meter will measure the total amount of water applied to each row, and with that information we will know how much water each plant received with each irrigation. The enviroscan data will show how far down the profile the soil moisture reaches, and help determine full and refill points of the soil.

### Flower Trials

**Objective:** Timing irrigation strategy to physiological growth stages to maximise water use efficiency with the demands of the plant.

To further this irrigation trial, plant sensors will be used to monitor plant performance, physiological changes, plant water status and assist in fine tuning irrigation scheduling. With climatic data, (from the weather station, and downloaded from Meteorological Sites) soil moisture profile data, plant growth data, and water meter data, combined with subjective and objective analysis of crop yield, stem length and quality, these trials should go a long way in showing growers the relationship of irrigation on crop performance, and when it is most important to provide additional water.



Trial results will be collected and entered into a data base. At the conclusion of all trials, reports will be prepared for dissemination to industry. The aim of producing best quality flowers with efficient use of resources should see the cut flower and foliage industry secure their reputation as valuable water users.

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Improving irrigation management  
for a profitable and sustainable future



Flower Association of Queensland Inc.  
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## RWUE(3) Quarterly Update 1

### Duncan's progress towards a water efficient Queensland cut flower and foliage industry

#### INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the first of my Updates to growers and industry. The content of these newsletters is expected to contain a summary of my work activities and some information on solutions to problems or issues that have been raised by growers. I would like to thank all of the growers I have visited over the past few months as I have traveled around regional Queensland for the excellent country hospitality I have received. This is often referred to as the "Honeymoon Period" where everybody is pleased to see you and discuss their issues. My plan is to take these issues you have raised and work towards finding solutions.

#### SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES

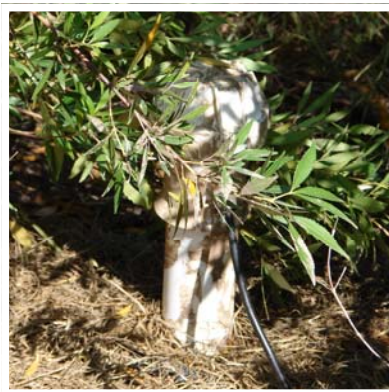
The majority of my time has been spent on making contact with growers who were on the Flower Association of Queensland Inc (FAQI) database and establishing the issues associated with irrigation. In the past few weeks this has progressed to action in the field with the commencement of installation of soil moisture measuring equipment. Some time has also been allocated to working with Sam Plant (SEQ – IF), researching information on key flower crops, attending training courses/conferences/meetings, and networking.



#### Irrigation Trials have commenced

I have been able to gain access to some DPI &F Enviroscan equipment and this will be used on farms throughout Regional Queensland on a range of crops over a range of soil types. The aim is to look at water use over the crop cycle and identify areas where irrigation efficiency can be improved.

DUNCAN MCGREGOR  
PH: 07 3824 9579  
MOB: 0448 172 397  
[duncan@flowersqueensland.asn.au](mailto:duncan@flowersqueensland.asn.au)



*Soil moisture probe to evaluate  
rooting depth of soil.*



### Key irrigation issues identified during travels to regional Queensland

- Drought – This is at the top of the list for most growers.
- Irrigation scheduling – Almost 100% of the industry is using drip irrigation. Irrigation scheduling is largely through grower experience. A number of growers have asked if they are “doing it right”. There is a wide variation of emitter outputs, location and spacing of emitters.
- Mulch – Is it necessary, what type of mulch should be used and how much?
- Dead Plants – A number of new plantings have encountered the issue of dead plants.
- Fertigation – Is irrigation water going below the root zone and leaching valuable nutrients where they can't be used by the plants?
- Collection and use of recycled water for hydroponics.
- Communication between growers – There was a general comment from most of the growers that they would like to see more farm visits and exchange of information between growers.



### Irrigation Trials have commenced

One of these Enviroscans has been set up on Richard and Lee Allmark's property at Gympie. The initial phase of the trial will look at rooting depth of Christmas bush – unfortunately the drought is having a significant impact on availability of irrigation water supply at this farm. At all trial sites crop growth will be measured and calibrated to Tensiometer readings for soil moisture.



Trial results will be collected and entered into a data base. At the conclusion of all trials, reports will be prepared for dissemination to industry. The aim of producing best quality flowers with efficient use of resources should see the Queensland cut flower and foliage industry secure their reputation as valuable water users.