



SOILLESS AUSTRALIA



ECOMIX HIGH PRECISION COCO GROW BAGS

**CUSTOMISED GROW BAGS FOR
INDIVIDUAL REQUIREMENTS**

Phone: +61 402 648 607, 03 9437 9497

email: prodoz@bigpond.com

www.ecomix.com.au



E.E. Muir & Sons
AUSTRALIAN OWNED - SINCE 1927

Proud Distributors of:

Campbells
FERTILISERS AUSTRALASIA
FERTILISERS & TRACE ELEMENTS

Valagro
Where science serves nature
MICRONUTRIENTS & BIOSTIMULANTS

Cultilene
GROWING MEDIA - PLUGS, BLOCKS, SLABS

BENFRIED
FOR THE OPTIMAL GROWTH
GREENHOUSE ACCESSORIES-TOMATO HOOKS, CLIPS

ORORA
PACKAGING PRODUCTS

www.eem.com.au

VISCON
www.viscon.com.au

Material & product handling solutions to increase production & labour efficiency & improve OH&S.

Viscon Products & Services

24 hr service available from our certified electrical & mechanical staff for all your servicing needs.

Palletisers	Weighers
Case Packers	Strapping Machines
Stackers & De-Stackers	Coding & Identification
Industrial Wash Lines	Sorting Systems
Storage Systems	Loading & Unloading Systems
Conveyors	

39 Sunblest Cres MT DRUITT NSW 2770
Ph 02 9625 8333 info@viscon.com.au

Contents

Future Farming Greenworks Conference Report ...	3
Crazy Head Banquet Competition	10
Your Conference Feedback	12
PCA Board of Directors 2015 - 17	14
Why become a PCA member?	16
PCA membership subscription form	17
Awards for Excellence 2015	18
Best New Product 2015 - Metazet Pollinator	20
Best Exhibit 2015 - Lefroy Valley	21
ICESC 2015 Report	22
W V V A Growers' Meeting - VIC	24
PCA Growers' Meeting - Virginia SA	25
Bluelab Meters	27
Ecomix Cocopeat	28
Classifieds	30
Soilless Australia Advertising Rates	30
Calendar	31
CONTACT US: PCA Board Of Directors	32



Front Cover:

PCA Greenworks conference farm visits included a tour by Sharna Smith, Greenhouse Supervisor at Tomato Brothers in Eumundi Queensland.

Conference photo credits:

Mike Lamond GF&V, **Raquel Neofit** and **Steffen Kraushaar**, Sundrop Farms.

DISCLAIMER

Soilless Australia is published by Protected Cropping Australia Ltd. All editorial matter and opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the author. The PCA does not accept or assume liability or responsibility for any loss or damage resulting from the correctness of such information. The publishing of advertisements does not imply the endorsement of those products or services. All ads must comply with the Trade Practices Act and state regulations. Any correspondence concerning the newsletter should be sent direct to the editor.

Future Farming

PCA AIS Greenworks Conference



By RAQUEL NEOFIT

In July this year the PCA hosted two conferences at once; The PCA AIS Greenworks Conference and the International Convention and Exhibition for Soilless Culture (ICESC 2015) 'Hydroponics and Aquaponics on the Gold Coast'. It was a record breaking event, and Jupiters Casino was the perfect venue.

By running the two conferences concurrently PCA offered local and Australian growers the opportunity to network with international researchers, helping to close the gap that often exists between the 'knowledge makers' (academics) and the 'knowledge users' (commercial growers). This was a concept that PCA had not tried in the past, but it was a great success for everyone involved.

PCA's former record of 366 delegates in 2013 at the Pullman, Melbourne, was exceeded by nearly 20% when this year's PCA Greenworks conference registered 431 individuals.

Add the 56 ICESC delegates, and the 40 people at a private hydro resellers workshop, the grand total of people hosted by PCA at Jupiters came in at 471!! Nearly a 30% increase on 2013!

Delegates gathered from over all over the world including The Netherlands, Germany, China, Cyprus, Israel, India, Ireland, Malaysia, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, UK, USA and Vietnam.

Attendee's jumped at the chance to mingle with some of the best minds in our business, to discuss and share knowledge, experience and practicalities on hydroponics and greenhouse farming practices.

The level of enthusiasm and good will from all attendees was evident before, during and after the event. Several testimonies are listed on page 14.



(L-R) **Andrew Potter** (P'Petual), **Joseph Cartisano** & **Michael Simonetta** (Perfection Fresh) & **Sam Dunlop** (Driscoll's Australia).

"PCA Conferences are always Big business and big fun!"

Trade Exhibition

The trade exhibition was a constant hive of activity and provided sponsors with an unrivaled opportunity to build their brands and customer relationships, increase sales, and enhance their corporate reputation.

The sheer size offered by Jupiter's conference centre enabled the biggest PCA trade show to date with 71 booths.

It was an unprecedented occasion for growers to meet suppliers face to face, gather information, interact, get quotes and make purchases for the coming year. And of course, set you on the right path for your own, future farming endeavors.

The buzz and personable relationships between PCA delegates and exhibitors was well noted by some of our international guests. They said we are quite distinct from our European counterparts in the genuine intimacy between our allied trade and growers.



Turnkey Construction including...

- Climate Control
- Growing Systems
- Water Management
- Pumps and Irrigation
- Propagation Media
- Fogging and Cooling
- Labour and Automation
- Fertigation and Filtration



GREENHOUSE? GREENWORKS!

1300 763 141
www.aisgreenworks.com

WATER,
CARBON
& ENERGY
EFFICIENCY

APEX GREENHOUSES

The New Name in Greenhouses.

APEXGREENHOUSES.COM.AU

Trade Exhibition *continued*

We believe this is what made the PCA Greenworks conference so successful. Our sponsors and delegates have the opportunity to develop a relationship that can last for decades following an authentic PCA conference environment.

Speaker Talks

The 2015 speaker program offered the latest hydroponic and greenhouse research from around the world.

The quality of the talks was excellent with a good mix of technical how-to presentations and rigorous science.

Plenary sessions kicked off Monday morning, with the Key Note speaker **Julian Cribb** having everyone rethinking how they see food.

HIA and the Voice of Horticulture explained their efforts to serve industry.

After lunch, delegates selected their choice of several concurrent sessions.

Industry champions like **Rick Donnan, Geoff Connellan, Mike Nichols, Graeme Smith, Len Tesoriero, Sophie Parks, Sohun Gandhi, Jürgen Kleinwachter, Hogan Gleeson, Jeremey Badgery-Parker, Wilson Lennard, Herman Eijkelboom, Jonathan Eccles and Nicky Mann** impressed us once again with the breadth of their knowledge.

First time speakers at a PCA Conference came from companies such as Sundrop Farms, Suntrix, Ludvig Svensson, Hypersafe, Gavita, Royal Brinkman, Hermadix, Cultiene, Yara, Qponics, Wardell Hydroponics and Costa Berries.

SUSTAINABLE
FOOD
PRODUCTION

Crop Specific, How-to Workshops

Aquaponic dedicated workshops were introduced successfully in 2013, while this year, a Berry program was introduced.

In all there were five crop specific workshop streams on the Tuesday covering F&V vine crops, leafy greens, aquaponics, cut flowers and berries.

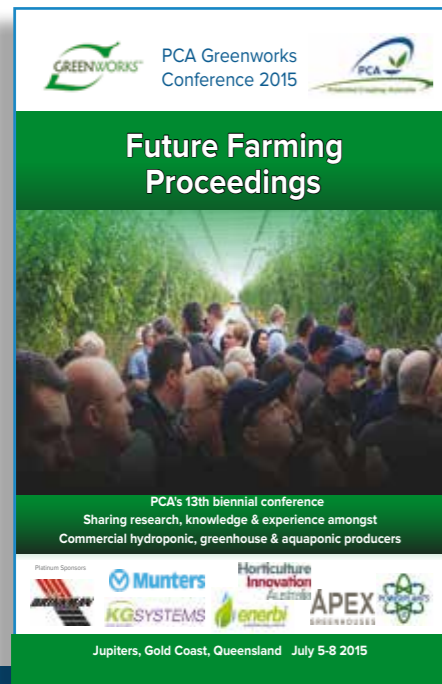
Delegates could cross between the different crop categories and in some instances this meant standing room only.

The talks on how and why-to-grow hydroponic and greenhouse berries were particularly popular, as these 'super fruits' see very high consumer demand.

Many outdoor berry growers want the protection of a greenhouse cover to extend their picking season.



Julian Long of Nora Valley Development Trust grows perino snacking tomatoes.



Missed the conference?
Buy the book

Detailed how-to speaker talks &
Exhibitor information
\$30 + postage

Phone Saskia **0414 333 996**

Or visit www.protectedcroppingaustralia.com



The trade display was a hive of activity sharing information & ideas.



Guest speaker **Eric van Os** (R) on the farm tours.



Scott Featherston of Greenworks introducing **Julian Long** of Nora Valley.



Delegates gathered together for the Key Note and opening talks, then split into smaller groups picking their favourite subjects out of the full speaker program. The proceedings book fills in the gaps for what they may miss or in lieu of taking notes.



ReduWizard, we help you choose!

ReduSystems is a line of smart coatings that help you optimize your greenhouse climate. Every situation and geographic location is different which makes that the ideal ReduSystems product can vary greatly. To facilitate your choice, we have brought together our experience and knowledge in an online tool; ReduWizard.

Try ReduWizard at www.redusystems.com.au



Let us inform you at the PCA Conference 2015, 5-8 July, Jupiters, Gold Coast

ReduSystems is a group of removable coatings that gives the grower more control over their greenhouse climate. ReduSystems coatings are easy to apply, highly wear-resistant and can be removed at any time. No matter where in the world a crop is grown, ReduSystems offers crop specific value with proven products and specialized solutions.

ReduSystems
A Mardenkro Brand

Greenworks Conference Report

John Phinney, Managing Director of Sundrop Farms Australia was also met with great enthusiasm. Everyone was keen to hear about commercial scale solar thermal horticulture in Port Augusta, SA.

The Great Debate

Tuesday afternoon's Great Debate wrapped up the two conferences with a panel of six guest speakers from each symposia. Chaired by **Tycho Vermuelen** from the Dutch research institute, WUR, it was a lively Q&A session about the practicality of low, medium and/or high technology in Australia.

Proceedings For Sale

Greenworks delegates received a detailed copy of the proceedings including all the talks and exhibitors, in their satchel bags at the event.

If you missed the conference and want the reference book it is very good value at \$30 + post, from PCA.

'Love My Salad' Banquet

We were pleased to have Rijk Zwaan and Love My Salad as the banquet sponsor again this year. The main stage was home to chef **Glen Barratt** who cooked up a storm and showed everyone in the room just how easy it is to spruce up our great Aussie produce and plate up a delicious meal from your harvest crops.

Crazy Head Competition

Each Banquet table had a fishnet-clad, polystyrene head to be decorated with fresh produce, flowers and industry-specific accessories.

It was a competition to construct a crazy head, with a caption or slogan inspired from things learnt at the conference.

It was lots of fun, very creative and really engaged people across their tables.

(See page 12)

Awards for Excellence

Recognising and celebrating industry achievement and excellence, the PCA acknowledge leaders in the community. For all the winners, see page 18 - 19.



Freshzest grow glasshouse chives in irrigated sand beds.

Farm Tours

There was a choice of two farm tours on Wednesday to either the north or south of the Gold Coast.

Gaining access to a commercial hydroponic greenhouse property is very restricted in Australia, so the conference farm tours are always well-liked and priceless value.

The South Tour visited PCA Chairman **Robert Hayes'** glasshouse herbs and microgreens; Freshzest.

Situated in Caniaba, just outside Lismore in Northern NSW Freshzest boasts a 10,300 m2 integrated glasshouse and packing facility built by Faber (now called Apex Greenhouses). Their sand bed system uses ozone to treat the recirculating nutrient solution.

Nearby Wardell Hydroponics invited delegates in to see their NFT lettuce and IPM program.

Farm manager **Janus Erasmus** and **Graham Grant** had both been speakers and it was very satisfying to see their operation, after the theory the day before.



The Great Debate panel speakers (L - R) **Graeme Smith, Mike Nichols, Robert Hayes, Geoff Connellan, Carl van Loon** & PCA Greenworks Conference Chair, **Nicky Mann**.



Commercial producers of biological control agents for Integrated Pest Management (IPM) programs.

KEY PESTS



APHIDS



DIAMONDBACK MOTH



FUNGUS GNAT / THRIPS



RED SCALE



THRIPS



TWO SPOTTED MITE



WHITEFLY

BIOCONTROL SOLUTION



APHELINUS



APHIDIUS 'C'



APHIDIUS 'E'



DIADEGMA



DALOTIA



HYPOASPIS 'A'



HYPOASPIS 'M'



APHYTIS



CUCUMERIS



ORIUS



CALIFORNICUS



OCCIDENTALIS



PERSIMILIS



ENCARSIA



ERETMOCERUS



NESIDIOCORIS

Greenworks Conference Report

Wardell Hydroponic Lettuce, owned by **Graham and Fiona Grant**, have implemented a program pursuing efficiencies and diversification with their current assets and systems to improve plant health and quality via their nutritional programs and IPM implementation.

The House With No Steps was a good place for lunch and also to inspect their established tomato greenhouse.

The North Tour went to two high-tech greenhouses who grow Costa's Perino snacking tomatoes, at Yandina and Eumundi behind Noosa.

Nora Valley has 2 Ha under cover, in both an existing and a brand new greenhouse proudly built and showcased by AIS Greenworks.

Hanging gutters with fogging, pipe rail heaters, HAF fans under the plants and screens designed for energy saving, are all managed by Priva control equipment.

Tomato Brothers is a similar AIS Greenworks system, but with a few tweaks showing that the individual hands-on grower managers all do things slightly differently.

Conclusion

Even during the 13th biennial PCA conference at Jupiters, we were inundated with requests for bookings for the next one. The good will is tremendous, thank you.

Since 1990 we have continued to move around the country to showcase the latest integrated horticulture technology.

For all those who suggested a cruise ship, Darwin or Kazakhstan in 2017 - watch this space!



Clinton Buck & Sharna Smith, Greenhouse Supervisors at Tomato Brothers, Eumundi, Qld.



PCA Conferences give rare & privileged access to high-tech hydroponic & greenhouse farms.



Conference delegates were very interested in the irrigated sand beds of coriander, at Freshzest.



Air circulation with HAF fans under raised hanging gutters keeps the perfect atmosphere throughout the greenhouse.