

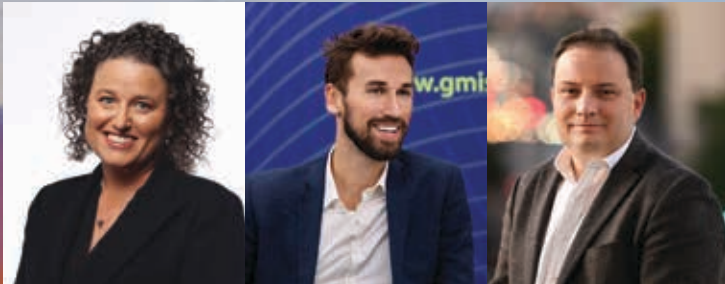
SOILLESS

A U S T R A L I A

Protected Cropping Australia Industry Trade Magazine



PCA 2023 conference preview



Medicinal cannabis booms in Thailand

NITTY GRITTY: NEW SOFTWARE FOR GROWERS

www.protectedcropping.net.au

SINCE 1990

contents

FRONT COVER

The vibrant city of Brisbane is the setting for PCA's conference in 2023 with keynote speakers Dr Kirstin Ferguson AM, Prof. Paul Gauthier and Henry Gordon-Smith. Photo Adobe Stock Photos



ISSN 2209-3567

DISCLAIMER

Soiless Australia is published by Protected Cropping Australia Ltd
ABN 40 153 372 635

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 magazine should be sent direct to the editor: editor@protectedcropping.net.au

MEDICINAL CANNABIS

Emily Rigby explores cannabis opportunities in Thailand..... 16

GROWER PROFILE

On the farm with grower Quan Nguyen of EzyGro, Virginia, South Australia..... 18

CONFERENCE PREVIEW

Introduction 20
Program 22
Waste and sustainability focus session introduced 24
Grower workshop: Plant Empowerment 27
Meet the sponsors..... 30

RESEARCH FOCUS

What's new in tomatoes and strawberries 36

REGULAR FEATURES

Welcome 5
Board members 5
From the PCA Chair 6
Across my desk with Sam Turner 8
News 10
Events & Calendar 14
Nitty Gritty with Tony Bundock: new grower software 39
Ion Staunton on summer pests 41
Pests & diseases updates 42
Membership subscriptions 42
Movers & shakers 44
Last word with Zak Iqbal 46
Advertisers' index 46

Healthy Crops, Excellent Results

» Targeted and Controlled Disinfection with **Huwa-San TR-50**



Advanced water hygiene



Biofilm removal



Oxygen rich water

» Maximal Natural Resistance with **Sili-Fert P**, our Liquid Silicone Fertiliser



100% bio-available silicon



Enriched with micro-nutrients: B, Cu, Zn, Mn & Mo



For foliar application and irrigation



DISINFECT



PERFORM

Our hygiene experts are available to provide guidance. Contact our Horticulture Team today for more information & tailor-made advice based on your specific needs: export@roamtechnology.com



Horticulture

www.roamtechnology.com

Huwa-San TR-50 (PER88277) is a registered product. Before use, read the label and product information. Huwa-San TR-50 is certified for use in organic farming in accordance with EU 834/2007 and EU 889/2008.




Exploring cannabis opportunities in Thailand

A conference on medicinal cannabis in Thailand has flagged changes occurring in that country. PCA Director, Emily Rigby, was keynote speaker. Here she reports on this emerging Thai industry and the conference.

Cannabis has been grown in Thailand for thousands of years. The plant, known locally as ‘ganja’, has a long and complicated history in Thailand. Believed to have originated on the Tibetan Plateau in Central Asia around 28 billion years ago, cannabis has been used traditionally for medicinal purposes, in religious ceremonies and recreationally. However, in the early 20th century, the plant came under heavy scrutiny as part of a wider international campaign against drugs, with punishments ranging from fines to imprisonment and even execution.

In recent years attitudes towards cannabis in Thailand have shifted dramatically. In 2018 the Thai government recognised the medical benefits of the plant and started to allow its use for medical purposes, the first country in Southeast Asia to do so.

More recently, the government removed cannabis from the list of prohibited drugs, allowing companies to grow, extract and sell cannabis products in the country (noting extracts must have <0.2 per cent THC). The government has also been working to promote the use of cannabis as a cash crop for farmers in rural areas. Many smallholders have begun growing cannabis and the government has launched programs to help them develop their cultivation skills and access markets for their products. This has led to a boom in the cannabis industry in Thailand, with many local and foreign companies setting up shop.

NouFrontiers

To assist in developing this emerging industry, the second NouFrontiers Cannabis Conference took place at the Radisson Blu



‘Global Cannabis Queens’ shared their knowledge and expertise at NouFrontiers 2023 (left to right): Micheline Depp, Filipa Nunes, Emily Rigby, Jocelyn Prefontaine and Kate Holste.



Medicinal cannabis is widely sold in small shops like these throughout Bangkok.

Plaza in Bangkok from April 6-7. It aimed to assist the emerging Thai cannabis industry by educating and connecting it to the global cannabis community. Around 200 delegates attended.

The conference hosted experts, growers, investors, suppliers, businesses and other key industry stakeholders to learn and explore emerging cannabis opportunities in Thailand and surrounding countries. Key speakers included Sonny Moerenhout and Kjell Sneeuw from Cultivators, Mexx Holweg from Wageningen University Research and Casey Rivero from Fluence. Other Australian speakers included Tim Oates, CEO of Delta Tetra and Carl van Loon from Powerplants.

Presentations from leading experts around the world covered an extensive range of topics including commercial cannabis cultivation strategies, genetics, facility design, post-harvest, quality, traceability and market access. The conference was also sponsored by several leading industry players including Priva and Cultivators.

The event provided a platform for local businesses to engage with the worldwide cannabis community, bridging expertise and content from Europe, North America, the UK, Australia and more. Presenters and delegates shared expertise, networks, ideas and experience, as pioneers striving to meet global quality and transparency standards.

Thailand has the potential to become a major player in the international cannabis market, especially given its long history of cannabis cultivation. To compete in the global market, government regulations will need to catch up with industry advances and the industry will need to invest in protected cropping and associated technologies to supply consistent quality cannabis to meet market needs.

Current picture in Thailand

Cannabis tourism is already strong with hundreds of dispensaries. Expect one on almost every corner in Bangkok and throughout all tourist hotspots, with exorbitant prices clearly targeting tourists.

But the Thai cannabis industry is in its infancy. The industry will need to learn fast and invest wisely in protected cropping and associated