

**Bio-security is known to most Australians as a method to protect our borders, the “Border Protection” programme shown on television is a good example, but little is known of how we protect within the borders of Australia.**

**Education about Bio-security is essential, and key to the success of the program.**

We are an award winning, innovative production nursery, considered to be at the forefront of our industry, and have been a member of the Nursery and Garden Industry of Australia for in excess of 27 years.

The Nursery Industry has a number of accreditation programs leading up to Bio-security. The Bio-security accreditation program is currently at the top of the chain, and shows a clear distinction of how we need to comply. It is very comprehensive, with ongoing improvements, and creates a method for us to ‘future proof’ the industry.

We understand and fully support the nursery industry Bio-secure program. Our nursery has been a Bio-security accredited facility for four years, although we have been using Bio-security practises since 2001; long before the program was initiated.

The nursery industry has committed many hundreds of thousands of dollars into the development and implementation of the Bio-security program, and I have no doubts that they will only continue to build upon this.

**The short falls in the Bio-security program are as follows:**

Bio-security has become a well kept secret within our industry; all our members have access to the program, which fully explains what Bio-security is and means to our future, and possibly through lack of funding it fails to reach the people it has been developed for, in our case Government end users (Councils and Shires). Our research has shown that people that have the responsibility to purchase plant material have little or no idea of what Bio-security is, never mind what our industry expects us as a bio-secure facility to perform in order to comply, hence the “*well kept secret*”.

Until government Councils and Shires fully understand Bio-security and what our industries involvement is, including what we do as a bio-secure facility to meet the high standards required, they will never fully understand the benefits of Bio-security and will remain ignorant. Bio-security will remain another fancy word with no one having a true understanding of what it really means.

I believe we need a funded education program implemented at a national level, in the form of collective meetings along with literature and handouts to explain Bio-security and what our nursery industry involvement in Bio-security is, what we are doing, the benefits and why they should be purchasing from a Bio-security facility in the future. This would encourage further members of our industry to participant in the program and the outcome will then benefit all Australians.

Mr P Wratten  
CEO  
Dreamtime Nursery