

HORTICULTURE NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT INITIATIVE***PART OF HORTICULTURE for TOMORROW*****Introduction**

The Horticulture Natural Resource Management (NRM) Initiative is a new initiative targeted at emphasising horticulture's role as a responsible manager of resources and building on knowledge of the industry's responsibility to NRM within a catchment context. This Initiative falls under the umbrella of Horticulture for Tomorrow, and is supported by the Australian Government, through the National Landcare Program (NLP) - Sustainable Industries Initiative.

Commencing in early 2005 this project is being funded over two years, and has two main objectives:

- develop a national Horticulture NRM Strategy by the end of 2006
- pilot the development of industry, industry clusters or regional NRM plans that design, record and initiate complementary programs for on-farm change.

The development of the Horticulture NRM Strategy is a major step in ensuring the long-term sustainability of the industry. It will demonstrate how various elements of the industry's environmental initiatives fit together (eg environmental assurance, research, training and extension, and even policy development) and will give government and community audiences confidence in the management of the environment by industry.

As part of this project a number of regional pilot programs will be established to help horticulture industries link growers and farm management with catchment management initiatives. The aim is to establish close working relationships to ensure industry and catchment managers agree on:

- the environmental targets to be achieved for local catchments, and
- the programs that will be needed to assist growers if industries are to contribute to improving catchment health.

The focus of the regional NRM pilots will be to generate more targeted assistance for growers through programs like the Natural Heritage Trust (NHT) and to ensure that environmental targets being set for catchments are realistic from an industry perspective. Growers will have more confidence in their ability to do what is required in terms of environmental management and of receiving the backing they need from the community. Catchment managers and the community will have more confidence that the environment they want will be a reality – which may even involve some revision of existing environmental targets.

The regional pilots will begin with an initial analysis of local issues, environmental targets and programs for industry, to identify any immediate gaps and program opportunities. A more detailed assessment will also be made of industries contributions to the local environment, the management practices required for improved catchment health and programs needed to support adoption of different management practices.

Peter Day, a natural resources consultant, has been involved with developing this project (due to his past experience across several commodities) and will help coordinate its implementation.



Know-how for Horticulture™



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Linkage with Horticulture for Tomorrow

Horticulture for Tomorrow is an industry driven program that encompasses those environmental projects focusing on improving the horticulture industry’s awareness and environmental stewardship.

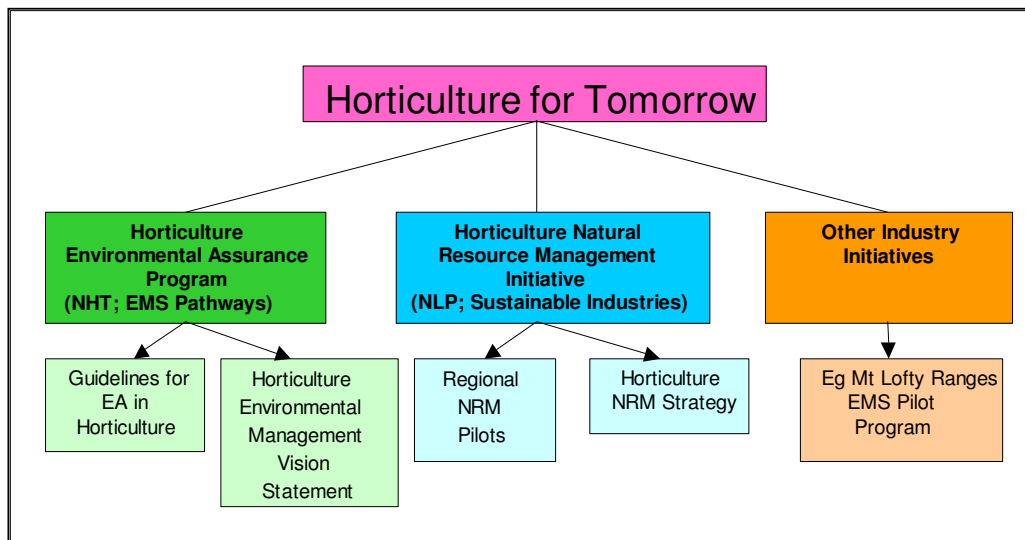


Figure 1: Projects within the Horticulture for Tomorrow program

Operating at the catchment and industry level, the Horticulture NRM Initiative will complement the Horticulture Environmental Assurance (EA) program, which focuses at the property level.

Driven by Australia’s horticultural industries and funded by the Natural Heritage Trust, through the Australian Government’s Pathways to EMS in Industry Program, the Horticulture EA program has been established to help growers link production targets to their care for the environment as an integral part of daily business management. Its main focus to date has been the development of grower guidelines for environmental assurance.

The Industry Leadership Group established in mid-2004 has provided direction for the Horticulture EA program, and will similarly lead the Horticulture NRM Initiative under the Horticulture for Tomorrow banner.

Contact Details

Any enquiries about the project or industry liaison please contact Alison Turnbull at HAL on (02) 8295-2300 or Alison.turnbull@horticulture.com.au

Any enquires about the Horticulture NRM Strategy or Regional Pilots please contact Peter Day on (08) 8278-9288 or prday@bigpond.com

Or visit the program website at www.horticulturefortomorrow.com.au.



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