

You could say Botanica is steeped in culture

Botanica Nurseries, Silverdale, NSW

Botanica Nurseries of Silverdale, NSW, have taken the principle of supplying only the highest quality to the finest degree.

While they supply everything from grasses to ground covers right up to large trees for the landscaping industry, this wholesale nursery prefers to have control of plants at the earliest stage to ensure quality starts at the beginning.

That's why many of their new lines are produced from tissue culture as Anthony Gerhard (pictured above) from Botanica explains. "We now import tissue culture from all over the world. The culture comes in flasks set in agar, once the cultures are received they are deflasked, washed and plugged into trays and then placed into a micro-environment and off they go. A large number of deflasking is done in-house."

"Using tissue culture is probably the most cost effective way to do it. There are tissue culture labs in Australia that do the deflasking and plug them, put them into a growing medium and then they sell them. But we're cutting out that process by doing it ourselves."

Like the cultures, demand keeps growing

Botanica Nurseries was established in 1994 and is set on 24 acres. Another 20 acres have been purchased to meet the growing demands of the horticultural and landscaping industry and the recent acquisition of Abulk Wholesale Nursery to meet the demand for native grasses.

Anthony expands: "We often have to deliver to meet certain dates that are critical for the opening of new buildings and housing estates – there are deadlines every day.

"We supply a lot of the major building companies around Sydney, the South Coast and the North Coast. The demand for more matured plants and established trees to give an instant effect is one of the reasons for the latest expansions.

"We need a fair bit of space for growing them. Some of them can be up to four or five years old, anything up to 100L and 400L size container trees.

"The native grasses cells grown from the culture go straight into the landscape sector. They're designed for mass plantings – and wetlands as well. There's a wetland in just about every development these days."



No more trials, we'll stick with Scotts

Botanica uses Osmocote Exact and Osmocote Plus Low P for phosphorus-sensitive natives. The required Osmocote product is dibbled in at potting. The potting mix already contains Osmoform Premix (ideal starter fertiliser), Micromax (trace element package), Magrimax (slow release Magnesium) and Hydraflo 2 (Scotts soil wetting agent). It also contains Gypsum, Iron Sulphate and Dolomite.

Anthony sticks with Osmocote, having given up on blending cocktails after his disappointment at the trial and error process.

"We have used Scotts products for the last twelve years and they've just proven themselves over and over. I will trial anything that comes in the door but we haven't quite found anything that stacks up to Scotts products.

"The service and technical support from Robert Megier from Scotts and from Davidsons, our Scotts distributor, is excellent."

Scott has released a new suite of professional landscaping products called the Scotts Landscaper PRO Range.

The range consists of four Lawn Builder™ products - Regular (8kg bucket & 20kg bag); New Lawns & Repairs (8kg bucket) and PatchMaster* (15L bag). Along with Osmocote All Garden Fertiliser (10kg bucket) and Hydraflo 2 Soil Wetting Agent (8kg bucket).