

# Up Jackson way it's waste not, want not

Jacksons Nursery, Ballina NSW

## **A nursery owner who can halve growing times and double turnover is someone to be reckoned with.**

Phil Jackson is not a man who likes wastage. If he can minimise double handling, he will. If he can reduce his water usage to save his dams, he will. If he can find a better way to complete a task, he'll put his mind to it. And when you hear that Jacksons Nursery of Ballina, NSW, has been able to halve growing times and double turnover with stocks staying healthy and green for sale time, you'd form the opinion that Phil Jackson knows what he is doing.

While Jacksons Nursery is 'swimming in the rain' (Phil's words), his water issues relate to the summer months when the dams he draws from can dry up. "We were finding that the moisture was draining from the plants very quickly even when watering twice a day. Now with the use of a wetting agent – Scotts Hydraflo 2 - we've cut down watering to once a day and moisture is holding in the plants.

"That's saved us a huge amount of dam water, and labour time for that matter."

As we said, Phil doesn't like wastage. So it was natural for Phil to turn his mind to efficient use of labour by cutting down double handling. Jackson employs the use of a lot of machinery to reduce manual handling, by using pallets, a forklift and a truck that the staff drive around the shade houses to reduce heavy and multiple handling.

"We are considered a small nursery in terms of the size of the area in the shade houses," said Phil, "but we can fit a lot of plants in. There's a road in the shade houses to allow a truck to get around the aisles. That's cut down our manual handling."

### **Cane and able**

Jacksons Nursery's business is split between sugar cane (400 acres of cane) and nursery plants (Palms, Liriopes, Cycads, Mondo Grass, Pony Tails among others in two shade houses). With the oversupply of sugar cane, particularly coming out of Brazil, the dynamics of Phil's business is changing as the profitability of the cane business comes down – though Phil stresses it is still profitable, even with the high cost of fertilisers and diesel fuel, as a lot of machinery is used to maintain and harvest the cane.



Another area that Phil has devoted his 'no wastage approach' to is in controlling weeds. "Catching them before seeding is a challenge", said Phil. Scotts solution is Rout as it does the job, controlling more than 42 weed species, preventing seed germination and subsequent weed growth.

The Phil Jackson 'no wastage-no nonsense' approach to his business is delivering rewards. By getting the most out of the available water and shade area space. By conserving as much water as he can. By packing his plants in tight. By minimizing double handling. By producing low maintenance plants. And by using quality products when he can see the value.

For Jacksons Nursery, John Daly, Scotts Regional Sales Manager QLD/NT, recommended a full package amendment, adjusting their potting mix physically and nutritionally. As John says "if the mix isn't right, no amount of fertiliser will make it happy." Placing Osmoform Premix in the potting mix gave the mix an upfront kick and the addition of Hydraflo reduced watering requirements and leaching.

"With John's recommendations, we are now using Osmocote Standard 8-9 and 12-14 month during the autumn and winter and Osmocote Lo-Start in Spring/Summer," said Phil.

"We are not here to do more work for no additional profit. I preach no waste, no extra handling, a more efficient way to run the business by saving time and money. Having said that, we grow what we love to grow and sell the plants as they go."

At the start we said that Phil Jackson is not a man who likes wastage. But he does love his plants and his business. It shows.