

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Monday 25 November 2024

Winners announced at 2024 NGINA Industry Awards

The Nursery and Garden Industry NSW and ACT (NGINA) proudly celebrated excellence within the sector, unveiling the winners of its prestigious 2024 Industry Awards during a sold-out gala at Rydges Norwest last Friday. Hosted by Costa Georgiadis, beloved *ABC Gardening Australia* presenter, the evening was a vibrant celebration of the industry's best.

The awards recognised outstanding individuals and organisations within the nursery and garden industry, covering a broad spectrum of categories, from wholesale/production nurseries and retail garden centres to allied suppliers, employers, trade day exhibitors, and apprentices. The ceremony also highlighted emerging leaders who are shaping the future of the industry across NSW and the ACT.

NGINA CEO Anita Campbell commended the calibre of this year's entrants, noting, "The quality of the entries we received this year was exceptional, setting a new standard for excellence in our sector. Every finalist showcased remarkable skill and dedication, making the selection process particularly difficult."

This Year's Winners Include:

- **Small Wholesale/Production Nursery of the Year:**
Swane's Garden Care, led by Ruby and Robert Swane, impressed judges with their efficient, well-organised operations and commitment to innovation. They continually refine their processes, experimenting with growing media and pest control to enhance their offerings of indoor plants, while staying engaged in industry events and trends.
- **Large Wholesale/Production Nursery of the Year:**
Cameron's Nursery received this accolade for the second consecutive year, demonstrating a steadfast commitment to sustainability and quality. With multiple accreditations, including the Ethical Nursery Production Specification certification, they are industry leaders in environmental responsibility and active contributors to horticulture's future.
- **Small Retail Nursery of the Year:**
Four Seasons Plant Bug stood out with its exceptional layout, diverse product range, and enticing displays. Judges praised its welcoming atmosphere, well-presented stock, cross-merchandising, and a delightful café that keeps customers returning.
- **Large Retail Nursery of the Year:**
Four Seasons Nursery & Garden Centre in Belrose was recognised for its professionalism, excellent customer service, and diverse inventory. Its thoughtful layout and online presence enhance the customer experience, solidifying its reputation for excellence.

- **Allied Supplier of the Year:**
EvergreenConnect has simplified sourcing and inventory management for nurseries, landscapers, and designers, making a significant impact on the greenlife industry. Their service continues to enhance business operations across the sector.
- **Next Genner of the Year:**
Tahlia Rolfe from Alpine Nurseries has cultivated an inspiring career over nearly a decade. Her leadership skills, passion for horticulture, and ability to motivate her team have made her an integral part of her workplace and a rising industry star.
- **Apprentice of the Year:**
Katherine Bonfiglio of Andreasen's Green was recognised for her exceptional work ethic, willingness to learn, and technical expertise. Her proactive attitude and contributions to her team make her a standout apprentice.
- **Most Improved Horticulture Student:**
Presented to Kane Gillett of Oasis Nursery, whose passion for plants and dedication to his craft has set him apart. Kane is versatile and has a proactive approach, he has the ability to adapt to change and solve problems with initiative.
- **Employer of the Year:**
Yarralumla Nursery was commended for its inclusive work culture, career development opportunities, and innovative initiatives like the Healthy Lifestyle Allowance. It fosters a supportive and diverse environment where employees thrive.
- **Trade Day Stand of the Year:**
This category recognises the creativity and effort standholders invest in making Trade Day visually appealing and engaging for buyers. Vanderley Nursery was awarded the Northern Rivers Trade Day Stand of the Year, while CutAbove Tools earned the title for Port Macquarie. Garden City Plastics has raised the bar at Sydney Trade Days and was named the overall NGINA Trade Day Stand of the Year for their consistently innovative and customer-friendly presentations, which have set a new high standard for the event.
- **People's Choice Award:**
More than 3,000 customers cast their votes in the People's Choice Award, with Lumpy's Nursery & Landscape Yard taking the top spot in a tightly contested race. This highlights the deep and enduring relationships nurseries cultivate with their communities, reflecting the trust and loyalty they inspire through their dedication to local gardeners.

Special Recognition Awards:

- **NGINA Ambassador Award:**
Brent Tallis was honoured for his passionate advocacy and leadership in promoting the nursery and garden industry, serving as an inspiration and driving force within the community.
- **Heart of the Community Award:**
Justin Longhurst was recognised for his unwavering commitment to building connections and fostering support within his local community, embodying the heart of the industry.

- **Digital Impact Award:**

Tim's Garden Centre excelled in digital engagement, using innovative online platforms to connect with customers and amplify their reach, setting a benchmark for digital excellence in the industry.

- **NGINA also awarded:**

- Life Member: Mike Mehigan
- 25 Year Member: Berry Park
- 25 Year Member: Eden at Byron
- 25 Year Member: Bayside Garden Centre
- 40 Year Member: Elegant Outdoors
- 50 Year Member: Alpine Nurseries

About NGINA

As the peak representative body for the nursery and garden industry, NGINA is dedicated to promoting a united, sustainable sector. Its efforts highlight the industry's critical role in supporting the economy, environmental sustainability, and the health of people and communities.

Congratulations to all the winners and finalists who continue to shape the future of the nursery and garden industry!

Contact: Nursery & Garden Industry NSW & ACT
Name: Anita Campbell, CEO
Telephone: 0478 505 869
Email: anita.campbell@ngina.com.au
Website: www.ngina.com.au

