

are staff with scientific and technical expertise, as well as relevant trainer-training. This combination of skills assists the targeted delivery of complicated scientific information and technology in a manner acceptable to adult learners from a range of educational backgrounds. In some special cases, language, literacy, and numeracy assistance is also provided for course participants prior to, or in tandem with, the industry training course.

An important element of IHD training courses is the use by participants of new information and technology to solve problems or improve practices in their own work situation as part of the actual course. In many cases this leads to instant adoption by some industry personnel who can then call in a more informed and constructive manner for changes to be made to allied activities in their industry sector.

Courses that can and are being delivered to industry groups include: Postharvest Handling; Plant Protection (Integrated Pest Management); Farm Chemical Users Course; Writing a Whole Farm Plan; Quality Assurance for Horticultural Producers; and Short Courses such as: Asian Vegetables; Insect Identification; Plant Disease Diagnostics; Introduction to Quality Assurance; and Biotechnology for School Teachers.

SESSION 2: PROPAGATION FOR REVEGETATION

Supplying Plants for Revegetation: A Buyer's Expectations

Roger Lord

Environmental Officer, Melbourne Water Waterways and Drainage Group, 14 Leoni Avenue, Heathmont, VIC 3135

Revegetation or the use of indigenous local provenance plants for rehabilitation or restoration of plant communities is the accepted practice in Melbourne Water Waterways and Drainage Group and is used as part of waterway management. Revegetation programs within Melbourne Water are included in:

- The Stream Frontage Management Program which is an incentive scheme to encourage rural land owners to fence and revegetate waterway reserves in their property;
- Revegetation associated with capital works, e.g. waterway stabilisation using rock;
- Drainage Schemes which are funded by developers of subdivisions and provide a means of 'greening' a new development along installed drainage infrastructure, ie. open drains and modified watercourses;
- Significant sites which involve community/"friends" groups.

Revegetation demands a plant supplier who has a degree of knowledge in botany, ecology, and genetics and has a willingness to incorporate these disciplines into horticulture.

Main Expectations. The main expectations the buyer has of the supplier is their ability to: provide indigenous plants of local provenance; provide quality stock; manage time schedules (flexibility); be flexible in product size, i.e. tubestock versus plugs or speedlings; and be cost competitive.

Local Provenance. Ideally the supplier should supply indigenous plants of local provenance. Purchasing plants from a supplier who can provide indigenous plants of local provenance is a relatively simple process given the plethora of indigenous nurseries within the Melbourne Region. It is obviously more comfortable and desirable dealing with suppliers who illustrate their commitment to preserving local gene pools, i.e. by providing information on the source of plants; accept variability in stock due to genetic variation; and show a willingness to further experiment with the sexual propagation of indigenous species.

Quality of Stock. Plants should be obviously healthy and show vigour/juvenility in both shoot and root systems, as well as some genetic variability or level of non-uniformity. Obviously a potting mix which is weed and disease free is critical. Soilless media is preferred and media produced by products such as composted tree prunings or rice hulls is desirable but not a critical expectation. This may change in the future.

Ability to Manage Time Schedules. A knowledge of the different maturing times for indigenous plants is important to ensure they are ready for a forecasted planting date. This is critical when plant supply is to be coordinated with a planting contract for revegetation. Ideal planting times vary across Melbourne and some species will establish only in warmer periods, e.g. aquatic plants. The supplier's knowledge of an area in relation to plant establishment is very useful to the buyer. Ability/facilities to hold stock over is also desirable if planting conditions have become suboptimal due to construction delays or inclement weather.

Flexibility in Product Size OR Tubestock Versus Plugs. Tubestock is probably the accepted standard for plants for revegetation but plugs or speedlings are particularly practical for grasses and sedges and may be appropriate for some woody species. The advantages of plugs are cost, short maturity times, ease of transport, and ease of planting. Plug production should become a standard practice by indigenous nursery growers.

Cost. Tubestock prices are generally around the \$0.75 mark although can vary from \$0.60 to \$1.20 depending on the plant form, the numbers ordered and means of production, i.e. seed versus cutting. Plugs range in price from \$0.20 to \$0.30.

Future Expectations. The future expectations of buyers might include a register of quality assured indigenous nurseries which meet an industry standard. This may include a labelling/information system which provides the buyer with details in regards to the seed/cutting source of plants and registers a site as a future seed/cutting source.