Nursery stock for street tree species trials – Collaboration Case Study

Hamish Mitchell – Speciality Trees, Victoria
About Speciality Trees

Established 1977
3 Sites over 120 acres

3 Areas of production:
Containerised production since 1977
In-Ground production since 2019
Propagation since 2020

Our Services
- Suppling of quality trees for commercial, municipal & residential projects, both speculatively and contract grown
- Supply of bareroot fruit trees to large-scale orchards
- Supply of quality junior ornamental and native junior stock to wholesale nurseries for finishing
- Site & Selection Consultation
- Technical Horticultural Training
- Community Education

We are proud of our approach to environmental management

Winner
Commitment to
Environmental Stewardship 2023

TREENET SEQ Forum 15th Feb 2024 - Street Tree Species Trials
About Speciality Trees

- Science-based tree management
  - Pruning
  - Root management
  - Nutrition
  - Irrigation
  - Integrated Pest and Disease Management
  - Inoculation

- Trees grown to perform in the landscape
  - Quality trees
  - Ecology not sterile
  - Grown to AS2303:2018
  - Transparent and Accountable

- Applying & Sharing Innovation
  - Manual handling
  - Staff management & Training

- Aiming to make a difference
  - Approachable & accessible
    - Environment
    - Community
    - Industry

Setting the Standard
Case Study

A collaboration between Speciality Trees, Treenet and participating Councils aimed at improving tree performance, diversity and knowledge with openly trialed product.

Council Trialing Program
This collaborative program aims to close the growing & trialling cycle, giving the industry the necessary confidence to plant better.

**PROGRAM EXPECTATIONS**

With the dedicated growing skills & expertise of *Speciality Trees* we have a targeted approach to variety selections, seed source, propagation & seeding methods.

With the strategic input of *Council* we have relevant selection input & a channel to install & grow new, improved or provenance-specific material in urban environments under documented trial conditions.

With the research capabilities of *Treenet*, we have a way of recording & assessing trial material on survivability & performance in real conditions over time and making that available to industry.
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Speciality Trees, Treenet & participating council suggest and identify potential tree species suitable to trial. Discussed at November forum, this becomes the Species List.

To secure program commitment for that given year, councils pay a propagation fee covering the cost of sourcing seed & materials to undertake propagation.

Once program participation is secured, trial tree material is propagated and grown for supplied to council in 40cm/27lt containers ready for planting.

Status reports and updates are communicated along the way. Depending on the species, delivery of trees occurs anywhere from 18 to 36 months from initiation of trial.

Councils take delivery, plant trees, then record their locations and observations via the Treenet portal. This information and subsequent observations are publicly available.
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Order Specifications

- 10 trees is the minimum order per selected species
- 100 trees is the minimum quantity to be ordered for Council to participate
- 150 trees is the minimum quantity grown per species in the nursery

This means a Council must order a minimum of 10 trees across 10 species to participate.
Participation & Outcomes

Year 1 CTP2022
15 councils

Year of Program Launch
• 20 species offered
• 15 species propagated
• 7 species for delivery 2024
• 6 species for delivery 2025
• 2 species removed (seed unavailable)

Year 2 CTP2023
7 councils

Second year of program
• 13 Species offered
• 9 species in propagation
• 3 species for delivery 2025
• 5 species for delivery 2026
• 1 species for delivery 2027
Status Reporting

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Species identified in 2022 & 2023 now growing for supply to Council participants in 2024, 2025, 2026 & 2027.

Commitments in place for the 2023 Program and propagation underway.

Ongoing success of this Council Trialing Program requires innovation, discussion and planning on selection, propagation, planting and recording **year on year**. Success requires a combined focus where all parties work together.

A commitment to **collaborate** in this way will result in meaningful information and better outcomes for the wider horticultural industry.
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For more information on this program, trees or services, please contact us on 03 9554 2000.