

Value statement – what are the benefits of belonging to WFA?

WildFlowers Australia Ltd is the national industry association representing the many members of the wildflower industry - growers, flower wholesalers, exporters and importers, buyers such as florists, research and extension specialists and allied industry members such as plant growers. WFA aims to unify the businesses that make up the industry, creating enhanced market presence, and encouraging all to provide products of consistent high quality to our markets.

WFA brings many direct benefits and opportunities to its members.

- WFA is the first point of contact for many enquiries about the Australian wildflower industry. These may involve specific business opportunities for individual industry members, information about specific goods or services, or information about important conferences or trade opportunities.
- Members are updated on these enquiries via a weekly update email and a monthly newsletter. The newsletter also provides detailed information about key industry news, such as updates on new pests or diseases.
- WFA maintains an extensive website posting a broad range of industry information. This includes technical information, details of upcoming conferences and workshops, and information about current and recently completed projects. New information is added regularly. This includes a comprehensive listing of available reports covering a broad range of wildflower research and development projects supported by the Rural Industry Research & Development Corporation. The website also hosts links to information sources of value to wildflower industry members.
- WFA directly supports several research and development projects specifically targeting the commercial wildflower industry. Currently these are:
 - canopy management to improve flower yields and quality
 - farm productivity and quality enhancement through soil nutrition management
 - strategic Australian market development via a campaign to educate the floral industry supply chain on Australian grown wildflowers and foliage, and development of a unique resource manual for florists.
- Based on the needs of its members, WFA prepares new project concepts and seeks funding. WFA also provides the industry linkages so important for any researcher working on a topic related to Australian wildflowers. This may involve growers hosting research trials, providing information about on farm or marketing practises, or allowing floristry or horticulture students to visit their farms.
- WFA actively contributes to industry R&D planning by working closely with the Rural Industry Research & Development Corporation, the main source of government grants for wildflower and native plant research. WFA members participate in the development of RIRDC 5 year R&D plan for the industry and the WFA Board regularly reviews the industry strategic directions outlined in it. Several WFA board members

belong to the RIRDC Industry Advisory Committee for the Wildflowers and Native Plants Program, which provides advice on which new projects should be funded and reviews progress in these projects.

- WFA is a member of New Rural Industries Australia, an alliance of new rural industries, working to develop and build the capacity of new, innovative, Australian rural industries through cooperation, coordination and education. This partnership with related industries will allow the wildflower industry to participate in new projects and to lobby more effectively.
- WFA works to create forums for meetings, conferences and discussion about the problems and issues facing the industry, either by arranging formal conferences and workshops, or by conducting member surveys.
- WFA coordinates industry study tours to specific markets and overseas flower promotion events. In this role it is able to source various government grants to significantly reduce the cost per industry participant. In addition, WFA is able to arrange business meetings and behind-the-scenes market visits, usually not open to individuals.
- WFA works closely with key contacts in important overseas markets for Australian grown wildflowers – these include Austrade officers and Japanese importers.
- Through its broad membership base, WFA is able to supply information on the Australian industry to overseas markets and marketers on request.
- WFA plays a proactive role in introducing Australian florists to the exciting array of wildflower products. It supported a project which successfully introduced wildflowers into the national floristry curriculum and sponsors an annual floristry competition. Individual WFA members regularly provide products to florists to trial or use in competitions.
- WFA provides information to the public on wildflowers available to buy, their season of availability and use in floristry.
- WFA coordinates applications for legal access to pesticides by growers through the minor use permit program overseen by the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority.
- WFA provides general information on wildflower production suitable for potential investors.
- WFA is managed by an active board. Board members are wildflower industry business owners. The work of the board is supported by 2 part time positions:
 - > a communications and extension manager to coordinate activities such as regional conferences, newsletters and weekly email updates, technical information and the website
 - > a secretariat to take care of membership information and accounts

Membership of WFA also provides access to an expanding range of opportunities only available to members. These include:

- A personal subscription to *Australian Flower Industry* magazine (published 4 times a year) and to the international flower industry magazine *FloraCulture International* (published monthly)
- Priority access to projects, at a reduced participation cost
- Discounted fees for conferences, workshops and other activities
- Weekly update emails providing the latest news and information received by WFA, including enquiries about specific business opportunities
- Priority access to the monthly newsletter
- Access to the Member's Only section of the WFA website
- Ability to network with other members of WFA via events and via the website
- Business details listed on the WFA website to allow others to explore business opportunities
- Opportunities to meet with overseas marketers and industry members when they visit Australia
- When an individual joins WFA as a full member, his/her local association receives a rebate from WFA
- Level 2 Corporate Members of WFA who are industry associations are covered under the WFA public liability insurance policy for the activities they run for their members.

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