



TALGA NEWSLETTER

THE AUSTRALIAN LAVENDER GROWERS' ASSOCIATION

A MESSAGE FROM THE TALGA COMMITTEE

Thank you all for attending our **Seminar Field Day** in Mount Evelyn/Wandin Victoria, on 6-7 **April**, and for contributing your enthusiasm for lavender and sharing ideas and information with others both experienced and new!

Thanks to Annemarie Manders of Warratina Lavender for hosting a morning on her farm and also our major sponsor for the event **Larkman Nurseries**.



We hope you find the connections made with others at this event will assist you in your further research or lavender business management and TALGA Committee board members were really thrilled to meet you all. We welcome any feedback you have of your experience. If we can improve our service to you in the future please let us know your thoughts.

TALGA Committee will now put focus on creating another inspiring event at the **TALGA Conference 2025 to be held in Maldon, VIC** hosted by **Henle Gardens next year**. Details of dates, costings, and speakers will be released in the later half of this year.

JOIN THE TALGA COMMITTEE!

We are currently accepting **Expressions of Interest to join the TALGA Committee**. Your insights and experience are invaluable to our association's commitment to excellence in growing lavender in Australia. As a Committee member, you will have the opportunity to collaborate on meaningful projects and help shape the future of our association. Send an email to Moira (secretary@talga.com.au) for more information.

MAY 2024
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Click [here to follow](#) the TALGA Facebook page.



Send E-news contributions to news@talga.com.au by the 10th of each month and share your farm updates!

Thank you! Karen,
TALGA Editor

TALGA SEMINAR & FIELD DAY 2024

On **Saturday 6th April TALGA** welcomed members and new participants to **York on Lilydale** for a day seminar and site visit to **Larkman Nurseries**.

The day was **opened by TALGA President Louise Bickerton** who gave us an overview on what the board has been working on and an introduction of Board Members and their roles.

After a **Morning Tea** full of catch ups and cuppas we knuckled down to listen to **Tim Manders, Agronomist with Browns Fertiliser**. Tim talked us through in great detail soil testing and what to look for and understand when we receive our soil test results.

The information provided enabled us to understand our soil test results, the components of our soil and what may be required for great soil and plant health. Tim also covered extreme weather conditions, microbial activity and broad and general advice on weed control.

After **Lunch** the **Grower Panel discussion** focused on **Post Harvest Plant Care**. The Question and Answer session panel utilised the growing experience of Fiona Glover, Annemarie Manders, Louise Bickerton and a little input from Matt Oxenford. Always a lively and interesting part of the seminar with lots of great questions and experienced answers.

MAJOR SPONSOR FOR THIS EVENT



After lunch we made our way to **Larkman Nurseries** at Wandin North. We were warmly welcomed by Clive, Di and Simon to their growing facilities.



We were treated to an entertaining tour by Clive with some insight into the workings of the nursery and how we end up with our lavender plants.

Generously the Larkmans provided happy hour drinks which we enjoyed while participating in a question and answer session and a quick overview of product from Seasol.

Many of us took the opportunity to collect plant orders after which was greatly appreciated. The day was rounded off with a casual dinner and catch up at York on Lilydale.

On **Sunday 7th** we were invited by **Annemarie & Peter to Warratina** for a most enjoyable Farm Visit.

[Photos:
top left: Simon and Clive Larkman
top right: lavender at Larkman Nursery
Bottom left – AnneMarie at Warratina Lavender Farm]

We were lucky enough to have Annemarie give us a guided tour of her equipment, plants & site and hear of her long growing history which she shared generously.

The hospitality didn't end there as Annemarie generously provided us all with a complimentary Devonshire Tea before we all started our journeys home!

As usual the generosity of time & information gathering by TALGA to organize such wonderful opportunities of information, networking, new friendships and great fun is very much valued.

I personally would like to Thank Louise and the Board for their hard work in enabling these opportunities. We look forward to the conference in 2025!

Kellie Oxenford
Leven K Farm

[Photos: top right – Di Larkman and Moira]



{Photos: bottom left – Moira, TALGA Secretary & Chewie; top right – Louise Bickerton, TALGA President}



[Photos: AnneMarie, Warratina Farm, and Fiona Glover, TALGA Librarian; Lavender at Warratina, VIC]

WE WOULD LIKE TO HEAR FROM YOU!

- Do you have **photos** from the Seminar Field Day in Victoria you'd like to share?
- Do any **feedback** or **suggestions** on TALGA future events?
- Do you have a nice **lavender recipe** to share?
- Have you **read** anything of interest lately? Send us your review and recommendations!
- Do you have any surplus items to **sell**, and to advertise in upcoming newsletter?
- What's been happening on your farm? Would you like to share your **farm updates**?
- Would you like to **connect** with lavender farmers in your state?

We would love to hear from our TALGA members!

Get in touch via email and we'll share your stories, updates and profiles!

Email Karen: news@talga.com.au

To be included in the monthly newsletter, kindly get in touch by the 10th of each month. We look forward to hearing from you!



MEMBER BENEFIT: UPCOMING WEBINAR ON LAVENDER DISTILLATION BY NZLGA

When: Thursday 23 May 2024

Time: 6.30pm Australian (AEST), 8.30pm (NZ time)

Presenter: Dan Zinsli (Mountain Road Estate)



Dan, a mechanical engineer by trade is a small batch distiller, who raves about the many benefits of distilling with his 40-litre Copper Alembic Still. Dan and his wife Kylie are from beautiful South Taranaki, North Island of New Zealand, where they aim to create a highly productive three acres. Their main focus at the moment is their lavender, white sage and truffle crops. Dan and Kylie launched Mountain Road Estate in 2021 and will be launching the NZ White Sage Company sometime soon.

This father of three is a busy man with a huge motivation to do everything extremely well. Dan is excited to share what he has learnt over the years **distilling lavender and other amazing plants**. Kylie his wife describes his distillation approach or technique as a hybrid, taking the beautiful intention and love of the past and infusing it with the more efficient tools of the present.

How to join:

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87583405183?pwd=0120EqvpoX0xbysSWBUGN2dvW7p8I.1>

Meeting ID: 875 8340 5183

Passcode: 512097

NZLGA CONFERENCE 2024 – CHRISTCHURCH (NEW ZEALAND)

When: Friday 30th August to Sunday 1st September 2024

Location: Distinction Hotel, 14 Cathedral Square, Christchurch New Zealand



The upcoming **NZLGA Conference** will take place in Christchurch NZ at the end of August 2024. The Conference will be a fabulous event in the beautiful city of Christchurch and a great opportunity to connect with our NZ friends and peers.

The farm and garden visits will also be fabulous with all three very different properties, lots to see and learn from them!

We would encourage all of you who distill lavender essential oil to enter the Oil Competition, the judges are very experienced and give terrific feedback and analysis of your oil. Entries close in July.

See attached documents for more details, and contact Fiona or Moria (secretary@talga.com.au) for more information.

MEMBER FARM UPDATES

Ataraxis Farms (NSW) | Tina and Chris Irish

Hi, we are Chris and Tina Irish of Ataraxis Farms. Chris has had over 30 years of experience within the construction industry and Tina has served the local community for over 25 years working within local government. As our children began their own journeys into adulthood, we realized we had the perfect opportunity to get back to a simpler form of life, and made the bold move to get onto the land. Our trade and business experience has provided us with unique skill sets and insight into future possibilities. Ataraxis Farms is part of this amazing journey and we look forward to developing our offerings over the coming years.

Since the beginning of Ataraxis Farms in 2021 we have experienced the delight of our new property and have felt firsthand how our connection to land has enabled us to reset, renew and rejuvenate. As new farmers, we have spent these recent years improving our 120 acres of pasture, mitigating landslips and vegetation erosion caused by the catastrophic 2022 natural disaster in the Northern Rivers of NSW, and planting many trees to support the sustainability of the land and our small grass fed cattle herd.

In 2023 we recognised our farm provided a unique opportunity for us to share with others the essence of Ataraxis Farms. We wanted to diversify our farm offerings to support community wellbeing. We needed something simplistic in its production and also a product unique to our local area in the Northern Rivers of NSW.

Following a significant amount of research and discussion with other growers, we could not go past the qualities of Lavender. Since making this decision, we have spent many months adjusting paddocks, improving the soils from a microbe level in preparation for planting. As of April 2024, we have over 3,000 lavender plants.



Ataraxis Farms



This first stage of our journey is to discover the best varieties for our region and ensure their long term viability.

We have planted four varieties being Riverina Alan, Grosso, Egerton Blue and Asa Blue over a 1 hectare area.

Throughout 2024 we will be working on product development, progressing our brand and marketing and hope for a successful first harvest in November before we progress with further plantings in 2025.

This has been an exciting first step for us and we hope you enjoy being a part of this journey.

Follow us on Instagram #ataraxisfarms or contact us at info@ataraxisfarms.com.au or M: 0431 087 733.

Wine Country Lavender (NSW) | Karen McRae

At Wine Country Lavender we have been working on our plant trimming over the past few weeks and still have a few more to finish off before the temperature takes a dip in the coming days!

We still have some plants that are flowering due to the warm temperatures we've had throughout Autumn... in fact we are still waiting for those Autumn colours we usually have around our farm and town already!

Weed management is ongoing... the areas we have steam weeded recently are still under control. We are now mowing more regularly in between the lavender rows, to keep all weeds and grass short, but we still have to hand-weed around the plants.

This is still taking a fair bit of time, and we are hoping it slows down as the plants grow and cover more ground and have a bigger footprint. For now, weeds are still growing at a very fast pace, sometimes growing bigger than the actual lavender plant in a matter of weeks or days... real monster weeds!

We will be re-planting a section of our angustifolia plots, but before that, we plan to keep improving our soil.

In a particular section of our fields we had big chunky clay areas that do not drain well at all. This has needed a lot of soil regeneration work and we'll keep working on bringing this soil to a suitable condition before planting later in the year or the next!

After a few months of no rain, and the dam drying almost completely up, we've had a few storms over few weeks (not as much as the southern/coastal areas of NSW). We did have some non-stop rain for a couple of weeks... this saturated the ground quickly, and the dam has filled up nicely up again... it's times like this we wish we had 2 or 3... or 10 dams on the property and not just one!

Kangaroos keep hopping around (and sometimes over) our lavender, and we seem to have a couple of mobs, adding up to around 80+ kangaroos.

We are excited to be working on our website and lavender products, however, sometimes we feel we need an extra few hours in the day to be able to get everything done on the 'to do' list.

As I'm sure many of you will appreciate, it takes hours of research and reading, and administration work, to complete all the work around the product creation, labelling, website, and so forth (phew!!). So work will not stop throughout the cooler months, but we are happy to have our current products at some local shops and online!



FROM THE ARCHIVES – TALGA CONFERENCE 2004

Improvement of Lavender by Manipulation of Chromosome Number

Dr. Nigel Urwin, Research on Lavender at Charles Sturt University
The Australian Lavender Growers' Association Ninth International Conference
Halls Gap, Victoria
10, 11 and 12 September 2004

I will describe progress in breeding novel lavenders primarily for commercial production of lavender (*Lavandula angustifolia*) and lavandin oils (*Lavandula x intermedia*). The project has been jointly funded by the Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation (RIRDC) and Larkman Nurseries. In addition, the work of Dr. Heather Cavanagh's group here at Charles Sturt University will be presented in the form of two posters the summary abstracts of which are below.

The overall aim of the project is to produce larger more vigorous lavenders with higher oil yields using plant tissue cultural techniques to manipulate chromosome number. The project has three major objectives and progress towards each will be discussed and are summarised as follows:

Generation of *L. angustifolia* cultivars with multiple sets of chromosomes termed 'polyploids'.

The chromosome number in *L. angustifolia* is estimated to be 50 and we have used 'colchicine', an inhibitor of cell division, to generate plants with 100 chromosomes per cell. The chromosome numbers in several species of lavender have been determined by two methods, these being 'counting chromosomes in root tip cells' and by 'flow cytometry of isolated nuclei', which measures relative DNA content of cells. A consequence of increasing the chromosome number in plants termed 'polyploidy' is that 'polyploids' tend to be larger more vigorous plants with larger flowers and fruits. It is hoped the polyploid *L. angustifolia* cultivars will produce higher oils yields with improved quality over currently used cultivars. Three approaches have been used with regards to treatment of plants with the chromosome doubling agent 'colchicine', to generate a variety of polyploids from which to select high yielding cultivars for adoption by farmers.

Our first approach was germination of seed in the presence of colchicine followed by observation of surviving plants for polyploid (larger) sports. This approach has so far produced two polyploid cultivars named 'Riverina Heather' and 'Riverina Jessie'. Both have bigger flowers, broader leaves and peduncles and have been produced seed from which further cultivars are being



selected. The second approach was to treat cuttings of *L. angustifolia* cultivars Bee and Swampy (known to produce high quality oils) by submersion in colchicine solutions followed by vegetative propagation of surviving cuttings. Again surviving plants are being observed for polyploid sports. Our third approach is use of plant tissue culture techniques to propagate shoots and treat them with colchicine. Surviving shoots have been rooted in culture have been acclimatised to glasshouse conditions. Some plants have flowered and we are assessing polyploid induction frequency in seed collected this year.

Generation of fertile polyploid L x intermedia cultivars.

Currently grown L x intermedia cultivars are all hybrids between two species these being *L. angustifolia* and *L. latifolia*. As a result of their hybrid status, they are invariably sterile and must be propagated vegetatively. Whilst they have an essential oil yield approximately 5 times that of *L. angustifolia* lines it is of lower quality being intermediate in composition between the parents. Using tissue culture techniques again we have produced shoot cultures of 'Grosso' and 'Seal' and have treated these with colchicine to induce chromosomes doubling. A consequence of doubling chromosome number in such infertile hybrids, in others species, is that they often become fertile and again more vigorous with larger flowers and fruits. This is essentially how Triticale was produced being a fertile hybrid between wheat and rye. Plants surviving colchicine treatment have rooted, been transferred to the glasshouse conditions, and have flowers. Seed has been isolated from two 'Seal' plants. The resulting seedlings are much larger than the polyploid *L. angustifolia* seedlings suggesting the these are indeed polyploid and as a consequence are likely to be fertile. This will need to be confirmed this year. If fertile these will represent a new species of lavender which is likely to produce higher oil yields than current L x intermedia cultivars. Oil quality should be similar to parent varieties 'Seal' and 'Grosso'. Furthermore, it is likely that these plants can be propagated by seed and should breed true. These plants can then be used for further crosses and selection to produce plants with oils closer to *L. angustifolia* but with increased yield and vigour (eg. crosses of the polyploid L x intermedia with *L. angustifolia* cultivars).

Generation of doubled haploid cultivars of *L. angustifolia* which breed true.

L. angustifolia is both a cross-pollinating and self-pollinating species and because of substantial crosspollination plants grown from seed are morphologically and genetically variable. The species does not breed true and is therefore propagated vegetatively (usually via cuttings). The cost of production of plants from commercial plantings is relatively high for this method rather than propagation by seed. The aim of this objective is to generate cultivars of *L. angustifolia* which breed true from seed. In recent years tissue culture techniques have been used in major crop species including barley, wheat and canola to produce true breeding lines in one generation. This is done by culturing immature pollen grains of whole anthers and generating haploid plants, which are plants containing only one set of chromosomes, rather than the usual two. These plants do not flower in their haploid form but when treated with colchicine to double their chromosome number they can recover with two identical sets of chromosomes and flower as usual. Their progeny are genetically identical since the two sets of chromosomes are exactly the same and the plants are known as 'doubled or double haploids'. Doubled haploids breed true and are useful in crop breeding programs because of this feature. They are also useful as varieties in their own right since they breed true and varieties can be grown from seed. Techniques producing haploid plants are being developed and whilst no haploid or doubled haploids line have been generated yet our progress will be outlined.

The potential of the plants generated by this project, in terms of increased oil yield an adoption by farmers, will be discussed.

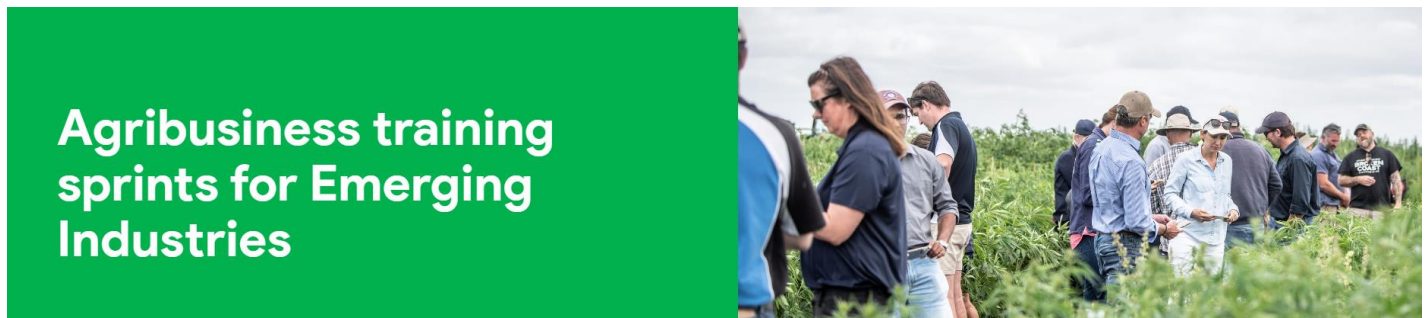
AUSTRALIA POST – DANGEROUS AND PROHIBITED GOODS AND PACKAGING GUIDE

Australia Post regularly reviews products and services to ensure a safe, reliable and efficient delivery service is maintained. From 22 May 2024, Australia Post's Dangerous and Prohibited Goods and Packaging Guide will be replaced by a new **PROHIBITED AND RESTRICTED ITEM LIST AND PACKAGING GUIDE (GUIDE)**.

"The Guide introduces minor changes to expand some of the categories of items that may be accepted by Australia Post. We worked with a variety of stakeholders to simplify and clarify what can and cannot be carried through our network and what conditions of carriage and packaging requirements should apply to Restricted Items.

Customers are required to understand the Guide, including the conditions of carriage for Restricted Items and any other applicable guidelines or obligations when sending with Australia Post."

FREE AGRIBUSINESS TRAINING SESSIONS FOR EMERGING INDUSTRIES



Free agribusiness training sessions for Emerging Industry producers are available. These sessions will be delivered by expert agribusiness trainers throughout 2024.

Training sessions are designed to enable you to choose the agribusiness skill development that is useful for you and your business. Expert agribusiness trainers have developed flexible delivery modes allowing you to fit these sessions around your needs, your time and the seasonal demands of your business.

Sign up to build your skills in answering questions such as:

1. How can I easily understand the financial performance of my business?
2. What is my value proposition and why is it important to have one?
3. Do I need a business plan? How do I develop and use one?
4. How can I better identify and communicate with buyers or customers?
5. Is exporting important for my crop or product? Or am I better to focus on local sales?
6. What do I need to do about risk, resilience and recovery planning?
7. How do I take the guesswork out of my supply and distribution chains?
8. What do I need to know about governance, associations, co-operatives and the like?
9. How can I tailor my learning?

Click [here](#) for more information.

UPCOMING EVENTS OF INTEREST

MINDBODYSPIRIT FESTIVAL

The Melbourne MindBodySpirit Festival is not merely an event; it's a celebration of wellness, unity, and personal transformation. Picture yourself surrounded by like-minded individuals, making meaningful connections and maximising your brand's visibility and revenue potential.

Event Date: 7-10 June 2024

Event Venue: Melbourne Convention & Exhibition Centre

You're not just securing a stand; you're embracing an unparalleled opportunity to:

1. **Expand Your Reach:** Connect with **over 23,800 attendees** eager to explore holistic health, mindfulness practices, and spiritual awakening.
2. **Enhance Your Brand Visibility:** Shine the spotlight on your brand with our extensive marketing campaign delivering **over 3.5 million impressions**. Engage face-to-face with industry leaders, thought influencers, and wellness enthusiasts.
3. **Inspire and Educate:** Share your knowledge, insights, and passion for holistic living while inspiring others to embark on their wellness journey.

Don't miss this opportunity to leave a lasting impact on the vibrant wellness landscape!

Click here to read more about exhibitor information:

<https://www.mbsfestival.com.au/exhibiting-info/>



EVENTS AT YOUR FARM OR IN YOUR STATE?

Do you have any events taking place at your farm that you'd like to share with other farmers? Any events of interest taking place in your state? Let us know!

Send an email to news@talga.com.au and tag TALGA on Facebook!