

## E-newsletter 1: Nursery Hygiene



### ***Why is Nursery Hygiene Important?***

Nursery hygiene relates to the way in which a nursery is managed to minimise the infestation of weeds, pests and diseases. It directly affects profitability, especially as consumer awareness and expectations increase for the supply of healthy and well presented plants.

*Nursery hygiene will be a major focus area in the Nursery Accreditation Scheme.*

### ***Current Nursery Hygiene Practices***

Nursery hygiene practices greatly vary amongst the nurseries visited in Singapore and Malaysia.

### **Poor Nursery Hygiene Practices**



*The concrete flooring in this nursery is poorly drained, infested with algae, mosses, and weeds, which creates a breeding ground for pests and diseases. Nursery surfaces should be cleaned and disinfected regularly.*

<sup>1</sup> Mason John (2004). *Nursery Management. Second Edition*. Landlinks Press.

\* Nursery Photos (2011). *Photos of Singapore and Malaysia Nurseries during the study visit*.



*Plant stock held for long periods with little chance of sale tend to harbour weeds, vermin and pathogens as well as waste productive nursery space.*



*Hose outlets left lying on the ground can act collect and transmit soil and water borne pathogens*



*Tree limb scarification affects plant health through restricting plant nutrient / water circulation, and creating an entry point for plant pests / diseases*



*Corroded piping harbours soil / plant pathogens*

<sup>1</sup> Mason John (2004). *Nursery Management. Second Edition.* Landlinks Press.

\* Nursery Photos (2011). *Photos of Singapore and Malaysia Nurseries during the study visit.*

**Good Nursery Hygiene Practices**

*Pots are cleaned and stacked to avoid excessive build up of debris that hosts pests, diseases and weeds.*



*Potting medium components are stored on well drained concrete surfaces to avoid direct contact with soil borne pathogens and pests*



*Plant holding and growing on areas are weed free, debris free, and well drained*



*Regular cleaning of irrigation bays to remove algae and water borne pathogens*



<sup>1</sup> Mason John (2004). *Nursery Management. Second Edition.* Landlinks Press.

\* Nursery Photos (2011). *Photos of Singapore and Malaysia Nurseries during the study visit.*

*Regular tidying of work and storage areas to assist in vermin control and reduce the spread of pests / diseases*



### ***Tips to Improve Nursery Hygiene<sup>1</sup>***

- Ensure all surfaces are well drained
- Promote good air circulation around plants
- Use hard surfaces to reduce weed infestation
- Keep nursery clean
- Store potting mixes under cover in concrete or plastic lined flooring; not in direct contact with surface soil
- Pasteurise potting mixes
- Disinfect tools, surfaces, and propagation/potting areas regularly
- Ensure irrigation water is free of pathogens
- Inspect and remove plant debris regularly
- Use pest-free and disease-free propagation material
- Hang hoses on hooks
- Keep nursery weed free
- Remove weeds from areas adjoining the nursery
- Quarantine incoming plant stock and materials prior to checking for pests and diseases
- Quarantine any possibly diseased plants
- Maintain a regular pest and disease control program
- Limit the unnecessary movement of people and machines around the nursery

<sup>1</sup> Mason John (2004). *Nursery Management. Second Edition*. Landlinks Press.

\* Nursery Photos (2011). *Photos of Singapore and Malaysia Nurseries during the study visit*.