

# COMPLETED PROJECT

## Validating Water Disinfestation Systems in Nursery Production

### Project code: NY21002

Funded by your Nursery R&D Levy through Hort Innovation

Delivered by NSW Department of Primary Industries, with Queensland DAF and Greenlife Industry Australia

Project duration: 2023–2024

#### What works (and what doesn't): water disinfestation for nurseries

Water is a lifeline in nursery production – but it can also carry harmful pathogens. This project put disinfestation methods under the microscope to help growers make smart, safe decisions about water treatment. The result? Clear guidance on what works, how to use it, and how to stay Nursery Industry Accreditation Scheme Australia (NIASA)-compliant.

#### Why this matters

Many nurseries rely on recycled or surface water, which can carry fungal and bacterial pathogens. Yet until now, there was little independent, in-nursery testing of common disinfestation methods. This project gives growers the clarity and confidence to invest in proven, cost-effective solutions – protecting plant health and business productivity.

#### What was the issue?

Water disinfestation is critical for production nurseries — but there's been confusion about which methods actually work. With no consistent guidelines and limited real-world data, growers lacked the information they needed to make evidence-based decisions.

#### What did the project do?

- Reviewed and assessed the full range of water treatment methods used in nurseries
- Conducted trials in working nurseries to test real-world performance
- Used findings to update industry best practice guidelines and NIASA standards



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### Key findings

- Several commonly used methods are effective when applied correctly
- Contact time, chemical dosing and water quality monitoring are all critical factors
- Updated guidelines are now available through GIA's Best Practice Framework

### What next?

Greenlife Industry Australia has incorporated the findings into updated best practice guidelines for water management, helping nurseries meet NIASA standards and reduce biosecurity risks. No further work is currently planned — but these findings are a strong foundation for future innovation.

### Learn more

👉 Read the NY21002 final report: [www.horticulture.com.au/growers/help-your-business-grow/research-reports-publications-fact-sheets-and-more/ny21002](http://www.horticulture.com.au/growers/help-your-business-grow/research-reports-publications-fact-sheets-and-more/ny21002)