

## MEDIA RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Fruit cocktails all round to celebrate plant biosecurity award**

Sandra and Peter Young's approach to biosecurity at Queensland's leading tropical and subtropical fruit production nursery has seen them win the plant category of the Biosecurity Farmer of the Year Award.

The Youngs started producing avocado stock over thirty years ago, but today the Birdwood Nursery range of plants reads more like a fruit salad recipe. They also provide home gardeners and hobby farmers with Gourmet Lovers and Fruit Lovers collections.

Birdwood helped pioneer a nursery industry accreditation scheme and in 2006 became one of the first nurseries to achieve EcoHort certification.

Birdwood grow all of their tree stock under the Avocado Nursery Voluntary Accreditation Scheme (ANVAS) guidelines. To prevent pests and diseases, all plants are grown in containers on benches in a steam-pasteurised growing mix and watered with disinfected (chlorinated) water. Samples of plant root and soil are regularly tested for diseases.

Sound record keeping at critical points in the plant production allows plants to be traced from entry to the nursery all the way to despatch.

Mr Young said: "Farm biosecurity has always been at the forefront of the production processes across Birdwood Nursery operations to supply good quality, healthy fruit trees to clients."

Earlier this year, Birdwood was proud to become the first fruit tree nursery in Australia to be accredited for BioSecure HACCP, designed by industry for Australian production nurseries. Winning the award for biosecurity has given the Youngs another badge of honour within the industry.

Mr Young views his business as providing a service to the fruit industry. He is very much aware that the livelihood of growers depends on the quality of the stock that he provides.

"A sound on-farm biosecurity program becomes part of your brand and helps to maintain market access and open new opportunities in the future," said Mr Young.

Winners of all categories in the Australian Farmer of the Year Awards were announced at a ceremony in Sydney on 7 September 2011.

Judges for the award were impressed by the way in which biosecurity is at the very forefront of production processes in the business. The Youngs' clear passion for their business and the pride they take in being industry advocates for biosecurity was clearly evident.

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For more information on Farm Biosecurity visit [www.farmbiosecurity.com.au](http://www.farmbiosecurity.com.au)



The Biosecurity Farmer of the Year Award is backed by Plant Health Australia and Animal Health Australia – the organisations established to coordinate the growing government-industry partnership in plant and animal biosecurity. It forms part of the Australian Farmer of the Year Awards co-hosted by Kondinin Group and ABC Rural. As in past years, separate winners were selected in the categories of plant biosecurity and animal biosecurity.

More information on other finalists is available from [www.farmbiosecurity.com.au](http://www.farmbiosecurity.com.au)

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**For more information, or to arrange an interview, contact Sharon Abrahams, PHA, on (02) 6215 7711. Photos of Sandra and Peter Young with their award are available.**

## Further Information

### The Farm Biosecurity Initiative

Farm Biosecurity, a joint program managed by Animal Health Australia (AHA) and Plant Health Australia (PHA), is a national education and engagement campaign which provides producers with information and tools to reduce the risk of diseases, pests and weeds. Producers are encouraged to check their properties regularly and if they see anything unusual to call the **Exotic Plant Pest Hotline** on **1800 084 881** or the **Emergency Animal Disease Watch Hotline** on **1800 675 888**. For further information visit [www.farmbiosecurity.com.au](http://www.farmbiosecurity.com.au).

### Animal Health Australia

AHA is an innovative partnership involving the Australian Government, state and territory governments, major livestock industries and other stakeholders. We work with our members and stakeholders to strengthen Australia's national animal health system and maximise confidence in the safety and quality of Australia's livestock products in domestic and overseas markets. For further information, visit [www.animalhealthaustralia.com.au](http://www.animalhealthaustralia.com.au) or call (02) 6232 5522.

### Plant Health Australia

Plant Health Australia is the national coordinator of the government-industry partnership for plant biosecurity in Australia. As a not-for-profit company, we service the needs of Members and independently advocate on behalf of the national plant biosecurity system. Our efforts enhance Australia's plant health status, assist trade, safeguard the livelihood of producers and support the sustainability and profitability of our plant industries and the communities that rely upon them. For further information, visit [www.phau.com.au](http://www.phau.com.au) or call (02) 6215 7700.

### Hotlines

The Exotic Plant Pest Hotline (1800 084 881) and the Emergency Animal Disease Watch Hotline (1800 675 888) are free-call telephone services provided for people to report unusual plant and animal pests and diseases. The hotlines allow callers to directly report suspect detections to an area where action can be taken by knowledgeable staff.



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