

*Gulf*

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# AGRICULTURE<sup>TM</sup>

TRADE MAGAZINE

YOUR GATEWAY TO THE MIDDLE EAST AGRIBUSINESS

## SAUDI AGRICULTURE

SEPTEMBER 19-22, 2011, RIYADH

## IPM DUBAI

SEPTEMBER 26-28, 2011, DUBAI

## HORTIFAIR

NOVEMBER 1-4, 2011, AMSTERDAM



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## SUPPLYING GLOBAL FLOWER TRADE WITH QUALITY AUSTRALIAN GROWN FLOWERS

**E**stablished in 1991, WAFEX is Australia's leading exporter and importer of fresh and dried flowers and this year celebrates 20 years supplying the global flower trade with quality Australian grown flowers.

With offices and company owned packing facilities in Perth and Melbourne, WAFEX has developed a supplier base of over 200 flower growers across both east and west coasts of Australia's vast continent.

WAFEX Managing Director Craig Musson explained the benefits of Australia's size and wide range of climatic zones.

"...Australia's position as a supplier to the global flower market is built on filling niches and gaps in supply. We have growers strategically located in regions which aim to match supply shortages from our Asian and northern hemisphere trading partners...."

Musson continued, ".... Our high labour and freight costs to market requires a strong focus on supplying high demand crops in periods of peak demand...."

The Australian export flower industry has been predominantly built on the back of a product range featuring Australian native flower and foliage genera such as *Chamelaucium*, *Thryptomene*, *Banksia*, *Anigozanthus*, *Ceratopetalum* and *Boronia*.

In addition, Australia has always been a strong supplier of South African origin genera such as *Protea*, *Leucadendron*, *Leucospermum* and *Serruria*.

WAFEX's key fresh flower export markets include The Netherlands, Japan, USA, Canada, Switzerland, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Singapore and Malaysia.

Whilst exporting for 12 months of the year WAFEX's main export crop volumes are in the July-December window.

In addition to its strong fresh flower trade, WAFEX also has positioned itself as the leading exporter of dried flowers from down under.





**ESTABLISHED IN 1991, WAFEX IS AUSTRALIA'S LEADING EXPORTER AND IMPORTER OF FRESH AND DRIED FLOWERS AND THIS YEAR CELEBRATES 20 YEARS SUPPLYING THE GLOBAL FLOWER TRADE WITH QUALITY AUSTRALIAN GROWN FLOWERS.**

Craig Musson outlined the development of the Australian dried flower industry and how WAFEX has developed high value global markets through a range of strategic value add processes at its Perth packing and processing facility.

".... In the 1970s and 1980s Australian dried flower exports were predominantly wild harvested with little or no value add techniques applied to the

products. A serious clamp down by government environmental authorities has drastically reduced the volume of wild harvested product and at the same time we identified the need to provide a more consumer friendly finished product to our clients...", said Musson.

Musson said "...We now provide our dried flower clients with a very customized product

mix. This includes hot and cold dyed flowers, preserved product, small consumer pack sizes, bar coding and mixed boxes across its core dried products including Banksia, Stirlingia, Ixodia. We also market some very exotic nuts and cones which are highly desired by floral and interior designers across the world...."

The Australian domestic market also plays a very

## NEW Australian Waxflowers

Helix Australia is a wholly Australian owned and operated business specialising in the breeding, marketing and licensing of new and improved Waxflower varieties.

Since its inception in 2008 Helix Australia has put together an exciting range of new Waxflower varieties including:

**My Sweet Sixteen** (b),  
**Dancing Queen** (b),  
**Chantilly Lace** ,  
**Sarah's Delight** (b),  
**Moonlight Delight** (b),  
**Pearl Buttons** (b) and  
**Raspberry Ripple** (b).



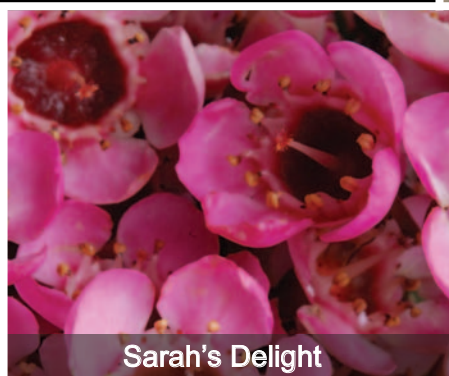
**Moonlight Delight**

**We are  
Waxflower specialists & leaders**

**We have  
New varieties available NOW  
and more to come**

**Ideal flowering plant for  
dry locations**

**Middle East agent/distributor  
enquiries welcome**

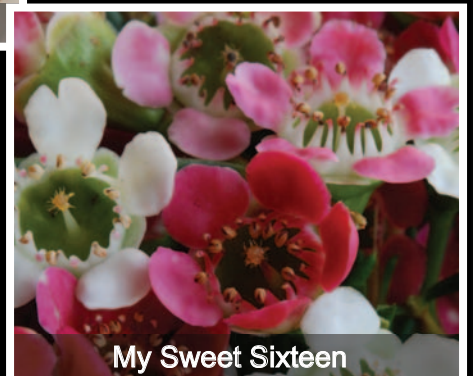


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**My Sweet Sixteen**



important role in WAFEX's overall business strategy. With a population of around 23 million people and an estimated cut flower farm gate value of AUD\$500 million, the Australian domestic cut flower market is very well developed with central markets in most capital cities and a thriving wholesale distribution system. In addition, distribution of cut flowers via supermarkets is an expanding market sector with two of Australia's major supermarket chains estimated to hold over 40% market share for retail cut flower sales.

"Supply to local flower market enables WAFEX to trade 12 months of the year whereas exports tends to be concentrated in a just a 6-8 month window", WAFEX Eastern State's director Adrian Parsons said.

Parsons explained, "... our supply to the local market is both a mix of our core native flower export crops in addition to a range of imported flower

**WAFEX'S KEY FRESH FLOWER EXPORT MARKETS INCLUDE THE NETHERLANDS, JAPAN, USA, CANADA, SWITZERLAND, TAIWAN, HONG KONG, SINGAPORE AND MALAYSIA. IN ADDITION TO ITS STRONG FRESH FLOWER TRADE, WAFEX ALSO HAS POSITIONED ITSELF AS THE LEADING EXPORTER OF DRIED FLOWERS FROM DOWN UNDER.**

crops from supplier networks in Kenya, Holland, Vietnam, South Africa, Taiwan and New Zealand.

In addition to its strong trading presence across local and export markets, WAFEX is now active at a growing level having acquired two flower farms in the past 3 years. One farm is located near Perth and features crops such as Waxflower, Banksia, Protea and Scholtzia plantings. The second farm located at Longford 3 hours south east of Melbourne includes Banksia, Serruria, Waxflower, Leucospermum, Leucadendron, Erica, Boronia and Flannel Flower.

Parsons said, "... Our move into cut flower production was based on securing our supply

base for the next 10 years. We had observed many growers exiting the industry or reducing their investment in new plantings. Our two farms will enable us to continue our growth plans and apply our internal logistics expertise for more farm direct sourcing with our customers locally and overseas..."

As outlined in the July/August edition of Gulf Agriculture, Wafex directors Craig Musson and Adrian Parsons have recently established a new company called Helix Australia which specializes in the breeding, release and marketing of new Waxflower varieties for both cut flower and landscape application.

