

**Waxflower is Australia's major native flower crop and also it's largest export flower crop with key overseas markets in Japan, the United States, the Netherlands, Canada and South-East Asia.**

## Exciting developments waxflower breeding and

Up until the late 1990s Australia dominated southern hemisphere waxflower production in the June to December supply window. However, in recent years there has been increased waxflower production from countries such as Peru and South Africa. These countries are typically producing older varieties of waxflower with lower costs of production.

### Waxflower research project

For Australia to maintain and grow market share it needs to remain at the forefront of Waxflower breeding and new variety development. With this market driven objective in mind the Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation (R.I.R.D.C.) is pleased to announce an exciting new waxflower research project partnering with WAFEX and the Botanic

Garden and Parks Authority, based at Kings Park in Western Australia (B.G.P.A).

### Somatic fusion

Alison Saunders, senior research manager, Wildflower and Native Plants Program, R.I.R.D.C said development of new and exciting wildflower varieties is essential for Australia to maintain it's competitive edge in the global flower industry.

"This innovative project featuring the technique of somatic fusion within the Chamelaucium alliance will be led by Digby Growns at King's Park who will develop new technologies to fast track production of new varieties that may have never been thought possible before", said Saunders.

Saunders added, "R.I.R.D.C welcomes WAFEX's generous financial contribution to this project which

we hope will produce a stable of new varieties and at the same time develop technology which will be made available to breeders across the Australian wildflower industry and may be applicable to other commercial wildflower crops." Digby Growns, senior plant breeder at the B.G.P.A said the somatic fusion techniques being developed in this project will allow crossing of closely related genera such as Chamelaucium, Verticordia and Darwinia. Digby Growns explained, "Verticordia and Darwinia are typically not commercial cut flower genera but they possess some exciting attributes which we want to try and introduce into the Chamelaucium genus." He continued, "Some of these desirable attributes include red flowers, coloured bracts and extended flowering periods", he said

by Ron van der Ploeg

**Department of Agriculture and Food**

**PRODUCT PROFILE - CODE: WA 56**

This variety has provisional protection under the Plant Breeder's Rights Act 1994 (unauthorised commercial propagation or any sale, conditioning, export, import or offering of propagating material of this variety is an infringement under the Plant Breeder's Rights Act 1994)

Species: *Chamelaucium Hybrid*  
Common Name: "Lambflower"

- Perennial early flowering (June to late July)
- Height: 0.9 m
- Spread: medium 1.2 - 1.5 m across
- Yield: high\*
- Scent: mild
- Leaves are dark green - linear, acute
- Flowers white; pink to orange - buds approximately 11 mm across




**Summary:**  
This selection features a profuse display of creamy white flowers which after approximately two weeks develop a pink to orange colour at maturity. This change in colour allows the florist to be picked at a number of stages from white, pink and then pink to red which widens the marketing window\*. Flower centres or capsules are light green. The deep green foliage contrasts the inflorescence to present an attractive display.

\* at Midvale Research Station

**Department of Agriculture and Food**

**PRODUCT PROFILE - CODE: WA 74**

This variety has provisional protection under the Plant Breeder's Rights Act 1994 (unauthorised commercial propagation or any sale, conditioning, export, import or offering of propagating material of this variety is an infringement under the Plant Breeder's Rights Act 1994)

Species: *Chamelaucium Hybrid*  
Common Name: "Pearlflower"

- Perennial mid to late flowering (late August to September)
- Height: 0.9 m
- Spread: medium 1.2 - 1.8 m across
- Yield: high\*
- Scent: mild
- Leaves are dark green - linear, acute
- Flowers 15-20 mm across with white petals and a yellow-green flower cup




**Summary:**  
This selection features a profuse display of high yielding long vase life\*\* creamy-white flowers. The flower centres or capsules are light green. The deep green foliage contrasts the inflorescence to present an attractive display. The foliage remains green and tends not to yellow\*\*

\* at Midvale Research Station

**Department of Agriculture and Food**

**PRODUCT PROFILE - CODE: WA 87**

This variety has provisional protection under the Plant Breeder's Rights Act 1994 (unauthorised commercial propagation or any sale, conditioning, export, import or offering of propagating material of this variety is an infringement under the Plant Breeder's Rights Act 1994)

Species: *Chamelaucium Hybrid*  
Common Name: "Pearlflower"

- Perennial very late flowering (September to early October)
- Height: 0.9 m
- Spread: medium 1.2 - 1.8 m across
- Yield: high\*
- Scent: mild
- Leaves are dark green - linear, acute
- Flowers creamy white 15 mm across




**Summary:**  
This selection features a profuse display of high yielding long vase life\*\* creamy-white flowers. The flower centres or capsules are light green. The deep green foliage contrasts the inflorescence to present an attractive display. Flowers are late which extends the present Pearl flower flowering time by 2 to 3 weeks.

\* at Midvale Research Station

# in marketing

## Innovator

Craig Musson, WAFEX managing director said WAFEX is thrilled to invest in the somatic fusion project with R.I.R.D.C and King's Park. "The Australian waxflower industry was built on being the innovator of new varieties such as 'Purple Pride', 'CWA' and 'Snowflake' in the 1980s, the Megapetalum hybrids in the 1990s and Pearlflower My Sweet Sixteen and Dancing Queen varieties around 2000", said Musson. Musson added, "Sadly in recent years there has been very little in the way of new releases coinciding with a drop in export sales of this crucial Australian export flower crop. This investment offers the hope of developing completely new varieties to once again position Australia as the leader in Waxflower breeding and innovation." III



Alison Saunders,  
senior research manager,  
Wildflower and  
Native Plants Program.



Digby Growns,  
senior plant breeder  
at the B.G.P.A..

## W.A.A.A. announces marketing agreement

The Western Australian Agricultural Authority advertised for a Request for Proposal (R.F.P) with regards to the commercial development of waxflower cut flower varieties from their breeding program. On June 15 2011 it was announced that WAFEX was the successful applicant and WAFEX will be the exclusive licensee for the production and marketing of the initial three varieties designated for release: WX 56, WX 74 and WX 87.

As yet none of these three new varieties have been named, all of these varieties have provisional protection under the Plant Breeder's Rights Act 1994. The initial release will be restricted to Western Australian flower growers exclusively and WAFEX will coordinate the supply of propagation material and plants as well being the exclusive marketing agent for these varieties for distribution on both export and domestic cut flower markets.

Craig Musson, WAFEX managing director said WAFEX looked forward to speeding up quick commercial release of these exciting new varieties to Western Australian flower growers. "The white Pearlflower varieties WX 74 and WX 87 have been selected for their mid to late flowering season which will extend White Pearl waxflower supply beyond the current last variety, 'Ivory Pearl' ", said Musson. Musson continued, "WX 56 is an exciting two toned pink variety with an attractive green centre and in recent years there has been a noticeable shortage of export quality Pink waxflower varieties. The two toned colour attributes of WX 56 also allow for a longer harvest and marketing window." All three varieties released by W.A.A.A have been extensively tested for production, stem length and vase life. For further information contact Craig Musson, WAFEX Ph 08 9250 2431 or email [craig@wafex.com.au](mailto:craig@wafex.com.au)



# **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 A,  
Dancing Queen A,  
Chantilly Lace,  
Sarah's Delight A,  
Moonlight Delight A,  
Pearl Buttons A and  
Raspberry Ripple A.**



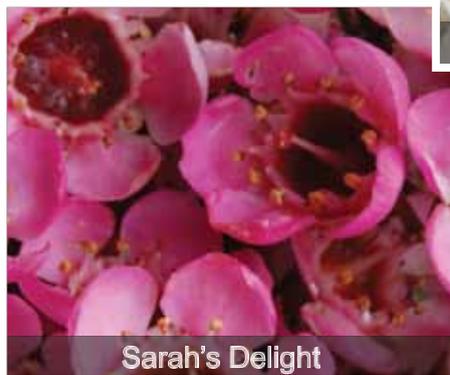
Moonlight Delight

**We are  
Waxflower specialists & leaders**

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

**Ideal flowering pot  
or garden plant**

**Agent/distributor  
enquiries welcome**



Sarah's Delight



**4 Grace Court, Sunshine  
Vic. Australia 3020  
Ph: 61 3 9312 2121  
Fax: 61 3 9312 0765**

**Web: [www.helixaustralia.com.au](http://www.helixaustralia.com.au)  
Email: [adrian@wafex.com.au](mailto:adrian@wafex.com.au)**



My Sweet Sixteen



**WAFEX**

*Australia's leading  
flower exporter*

WAFEX is Australia's first choice company for quality fresh & dried flowers. With a dedicated supplier base of over 200 flower growers, WAFEX supplies export markets in over 16 countries and growing.

**Melbourne**

T: 61 3 9312 2121 F: 61 3 9312 0765  
E: [adrian@wafex.com.au](mailto:adrian@wafex.com.au)

**Perth**

T: 61 8 9250 2431 F: 61 8 9250 2592  
E: [craig@wafex.com.au](mailto:craig@wafex.com.au)

[www.wafex.com.au](http://www.wafex.com.au)



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

## WAFEX going strong

**W**ith offices and packing facilities in Perth and Melbourne, WAFEX is staffed by a dedicated team of over 50 flower trade professionals and has developed a supplier base of over 200 flower growers across both east and west coasts of Australia. The WAFEX success story 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, WAFEX has always been a strong supplier of a range 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

### Dried flowers

In addition to its strong fresh flower trade, WAFEX also has positioned itself as Australia's leading exporter of dried flowers.

Craig Musson, WAFEX managing director outlined how WAFEX has developed high value global dried flower markets through a range of strategic value-add processes at its Perth packing and processing facility.

by Adrian Parsons



Helix Australia is positioned to become the world's leading marketer of new and improved hybrid Waxflower varieties.

Musson said, "We now provide our dried flower clients with a very customised product mix. This includes hot and cold dyed flowers, preserved and bleached flowers, small consumer pack sizes, bar coding and mixed boxes across its core dried crops including Banksia, Stirlingia and Ixodia."

### Domestic market

The Australian domestic market plays a very 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 \$500million, the Australian domestic cut flower market is very well developed with central markets in most capital cities and a thriving wholesale distribution system. WAFEX Eastern State's director Adrian Parsons said 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. 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 crops."

**Active at a growing level**  
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 three years. One farm is located near Perth and features plantings across 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 crops. "Our move into cut flower production was based on securing our supply base for the next 10 years", said Parsons.

### Helix Australia

In 2008 Craig Musson and Adrian Parsons established a new company called Helix Australia. Helix Australia is positioned to become the world's leading marketer of new and improved hybrid Waxflower varieties. Helix Australia offers a range of new and improved Waxflower varieties for application across both cut flower and nursery/landscape industries.

Now led by a senior management team comprising Daniel Stean, Paul Wilson and Tony Southall, WAFEX is building for the future across is trading, growing and innovative breeding enterprises. III



Craig Musson, WAFEX managing director.



WAFEX Eastern State's director Adrian Parsons