



Industry  
STEWARDSHIP

# Industry Stewardship

## The weeds of tomorrow are sold as the garden bargains of today

Every year, Australian home gardeners unknowingly introduce plants into their backyards that become multi-million-dollar biosecurity threats. Escaped ornamentals make up more than 70 per cent of Australia's environmental weeds. Once they escape backyards, these garden 'bargains' end up costing much more.

Nurseries across the country continue to sell ornamental species, like gazania, English ivy, and mock orange, declared high-risk invasive in several states and linked to biodiversity loss and habitat decline.

Our current system relies on self-regulation, where Australians can legally buy plants banned in neighbouring states. At the same time, the cost of control measures and lost productivity in agriculture exceeds \$5 billion annually.

### Plant science: A first line defense

When invasive weeds spread, land managers need fast, effective tools:

- **Herbicides like glyphosate** quickly contain outbreaks
- **Resistance strategies** preserve their long-term use
- **Pre-emergent herbicides** suppress weed germination in native revegetation areas without disturbing soil
- **AI-driven tech** enables early detection and precision spraying
- **Stewardship programs** provide important application advice for all users

Without access to effective herbicides, eradication from Australia's native ecosystems will become nearly impossible.

### Help stop the spread

Gardening is booming, but so are the risks. Since COVID, online seed sales have surged. Alarmingly, **75 per cent of seeds bought online from overseas contain viruses and pathogens not previously detected in Australia.**

Good gardening habits to help stop the spread:

- Buy seeds from reputable, local suppliers.
- Avoid known invasive species.
- Use only registered, safe pest control products.

### Your backyard choices matter. Make them count.

## Gazania jumping the fence

### From beloved garden ornamental to crop scourge

In the Victorian Mallee, the spread of gazania, a hardy "ornamental" from South Africa is now spreading rapidly through bushland and farmland. Sold for as little as \$5.50 at nurseries, gazania is listed as "highly invasive by the Victorian Government. New research by La Trobe University shows a trend of 'jumping the fence' has also been observed in recent years, infesting grain crop production fields in low-rainfall regions of South Australia rendering farmland unproductive in competition with the drought hardy and vigorous weed.

It is not only crops in danger, but precious remnant grasslands ranging from coastal sand dunes, stream banks, wastelands, open grasslands, along roadsides and on cultivated and irrigated sites in Southern Australia and parts of Western Australia. The Invasive Species Council is calling for a national ban of the plant and many others imported into Australia.



Escaped gazania growing wild in WA