



# **MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE AND FOOD**

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## **MEDIA STATEMENT**

Attention: News Editor/Chief of Staff

3/11/06

### **WA NURSERY WINS NATIONAL WEEDS HONOUR**

A Western Australian garden nursery has been named Australia's *Most Weed-Wise Nursery* in new Awards announced by the Council of Australasian Weed Societies (CAWS).

Agriculture and Food Minister Kim Chance presented the inaugural National Award today to the Zanthorrea Nursery in Maida Vale.

Mr Chance said Zanthorrea stood out among nurseries in Australia for its proactive approach to the problem of environmental weeds that presented major threats to native plants, wildlife and environments.

"This nursery does not sell plants that have the potential to become serious environmental weeds threatening our native plants, wildlife and environments," Mr Chance said.

Zanthorrea was nominated for the new National Award by the Weeds Society of Western Australia, a professional association that brings together researchers, agribusiness consultants, farmers and others working with weeds.

Mr Chance said garden escapes were a major environmental problem for Australia.

"It comes down to a combination of good public education and legislation to discourage the use of plants that pose an environmental risk if they escape from gardens. Our communities also depend on garden nurseries showing responsibility about the plants they promote and sell," Mr Chance said.

"The proprietors of Zanthorrea, Alec and Jackie Hooper, are well known for their positive attitude towards the environment, showing a great commitment on the issue of invasive alien plants," the Minister said.

"They have an admirable proactive approach to educating their customers, and building community knowledge about the kind of garden plants that could become environmental weeds," Mr Chance said.

"They are forward thinkers - refusing to sell many high-risk invasive garden plant species such as lantana (*Lantana camara*) and arum lily (*Zantedeschia aethiopica*) for some years, well before they were banned under State legislation," he said.

"They also don't offer a range of other popular plants such as Morning Glory vines and highly fashionable, but invasive exotic grasses that could escape from gardens to become invasive environmental weeds."

The CAWS National Award won by Zanthorrea is open to nurseries throughout Australia and New Zealand.

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