

## New Plants From New Zealand®

### Malcolm Woolmore

Lyndale Nurseries Auckland Ltd, PO Box 81-022, Whenuapai, Auckland, New Zealand

### INTRODUCTION

Lyndale specialises in the propagation of a wide range of ornamental plants with strong associations to the breeding, sourcing, and protection of new cultivars.

With a population of just 4 million, New Zealand businesses have evolved to look at the world market as the natural area to expand into, as the domestic market is small. Lyndale is no different and, with a production that hovers around the 3 million units mark, needed to explore other market possibilities if the business was to continue to grow.

The business of exporting live plants between countries is by no means easy, and it is getting bureaucratically more difficult seemingly daily. Lyndale's approach to this problem has been to develop the intellectual property of plant cultivars and offer new selections through an international network of agents. Each international market block has the right (predominantly) to self-propagate, distribute, and commercialise within their own defined market boundaries; hence Lyndale's involvement in shipping live plants is minimal.

The crops reviewed in this paper are some of the selections we find most exciting and have been bred or selected in New Zealand.

### NEW CROPS

***Coprosma propinqua* 'Autumn Haze'**. This colourful new prostrate coprosma from the Chatham Islands was selected by Tom Johnson at Totara Grove. 'Autumn Haze' has small glossy cream and green variegated foliage delightfully coloured with soft peach to apricot tones. The plant forms a dense groundcover, making it an ideal choice for low maintenance gardening at the front of the border or as a specimen in a low pot on the deck or patio. 'Autumn Haze' is happy in fertile, well-drained soils in full sun to part shade. Lightly trim to maintain shape. Hardy. 0.2 × 1.5 m.

***Corokia ×virgata* 'Geenty's Ghost'**. 'Geenty's Ghost' is a delightful silver/grey foliage selection of *Corokia* bred by New Zealand plantsman Mike Geenty. This new selection forms an attractive medium-sized ornamental shrub ideally suited for use as a small hedge or for topiary work in today's smaller gardens. 'Geenty's Ghost's' small, silver-decorative foliage is complemented in autumn with colourful yellow-orange berries. Happy in fertile, well-drained soils in full sun to part shade and tolerant of extremely dry and salt winds, it is a popular choice for coastal shelter planting. Trim to maintain a good bushy shape. Hardy. 1.2 × 1 m.

***Griselinia littoralis* 'Whenuapai'**. This exciting new selection made by Tom Johnson at Totara Grove has small glossy leaves and forms a tight narrow column, making it an ideal choice for modern architectural plantings. The narrow glossy foliage has a distinctive pointed leaf tip, which makes for a tidy appearance. 'Whenuapai' is ideally suited for hedging, topiary work, and coastal plantings. Happy in fertile, well-drained soils in full sun to part shade. Lightly trim to maintain shape. Hardy. 8 × 4 m.

***Libertia ixiodes* 'Goldfinger'**. Looking for fantastic golden yellow cascading foliage in the garden? This is the plant for you. The elegant weeping foliage of this exciting new selection has a prominent golden-yellow central stripe. Profusions of pure white star-like flowers are produced in clusters just clear of the foliage from mid spring, followed by attractive large yellow berries in autumn. This delightful little plant really packs a punch and is ideal to provide year round interest in the perennial border or as a colourful low maintenance pot or container on the deck or patio. Hardy.  $0.6 \times 0.6$  m.

***Libertia ixiodes* 'Taupo Blaze'**. 'Taupo Blaze' is a superior selection of 'Taupo Sunset' produced exclusively from tissue culture. In autumn/winter the spiky sword-like foliage of 'Taupo Blaze' changes from green through yellow/orange to strong orange to intense burnt red. 'Taupo Blaze' has much more pronounced scarlet foliage colour than the original selection. To complement the colourful foliage, pure white star-like flowers are produced in spring in clusters just clear of the foliage, followed by attractive orange/red berries in autumn. This colourful little plant is ideal to provide year-round interest in the perennial border or as a colourful low maintenance pot or container plant on the deck or patio. Hardy.  $0.6 \times 0.6$  m.

***Metrosideros collina* 'Tahitian Sunset'**. A colourful dwarf-growing sport of *M. collina* 'Tahiti' has elegant cream-variegated foliage; the new growth is soft like deer velvet and highlighted in winter by bold pink-red flush on the new growth. To complement the foliage, brilliant scarlet bottle-bush-like blooms are produced intermittently throughout the year from clusters of dusty white buds; these colourful blooms are most welcome in the winter months. Quite distinct from the more familiar *M. excelsa* by its compact size and well-rounded, shrubby form. Hardy in coastal locations and as frost tolerant as other New Zealand pohutukawa. Great landscaping versatility, excellent in containers. Attractive in all seasons. Protect from heavy frosts.  $1 \times 1$  m.

***Phormium tenax* 'Twisted Sister'**. 'Twisted Sister' is a sport of *P. tenax*. The foliage and plant form of this selection is a whole new break for the genus. This funky little plant has extremely stiff olive-green, twisted and spiralling foliage, as if heated like hot molten metal and then let cool. The foliage has an attractive grey-silver underside and bright orange leaf margins and mid rib to complete the picture. All this makes 'Twisted Sister' the perfect architectural foliage plant for modern terrace and patio plantings. Hardy.  $0.4 \times 0.4$  m.

***Pittosporum tenuifolium* 'Elfin'**. Looking for a compact, no-trim topiary? 'Elfin' could be just the plant for you! 'Elfin' is an exciting new dwarf *Pittosporum* selection from Clareville Nursery, New Zealand, selected from a batch of *P. tenuifolium* seedlings in 2001 for its amazing tight habit. The mid-green foliage of this selection is much tighter than 'Gold Ball' with the individual internodes being not more than 5 mm apart. To complement the dwarf habit, the plant is quick growing making it the ideal nurseryman's crop. 'Elfin' is the ideal choice where space is limited, perfect for specimen pots or containers in the modern courtyard, or ideal to define the edge of the formal border. Easy in any well-drained soil in full sun to light shade. A fantastic new low-maintenance selection. Hardy to  $-7^{\circ}\text{C}$ .  $0.5 \times 0.5$  m.

***Trachystemon orientalis* 'Gold Medal'**. A colourful sport of *T. orientalis*, the foliage is its main attraction, with large, bright golden yellow leaves that make this

plant a world first. 'Gold Medal' is sure to illuminate any shady border. It is an ideal specimen plant for the shade garden or perfect for a shady container on the deck or patio. Prefers moist woodland soils in light shade. Hardy. 0.5 × 0.5 m.

Thank you for the opportunity to present this paper and congratulations on achieving this milestone for IPPS in South African and for us all.

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## An Insight into an Accredited Potting Mix Supplier in Australia<sup>®</sup>

**Shaun Windrim**

Debco Pty. Ltd., 12 Mckirdys Road, Tyabb, Victoria 3913, Australia

### INTRODUCTION

Debco (<[www.debco.com.au](http://www.debco.com.au)>) is a leading potting mix supplier on the east coast of Australia, with manufacturing sites in both New South Wales and Victoria. The company started out selling cow and poultry manures in 1972, but soon evolved over those earlier years to manufacture potting mix primarily from graded, composted *Pinus radiata* pinebark. Other, lesser components included in the matrix depending upon the plant type are coir/coconut fibre and clean quartz sand. This gave potting manufacturing a sophisticated edge as it transformed itself from an art and product made in situ to a science by introducing physical and chemical requirements according to an Australian Standard for potting mixes AS 3743–1996.

### COMPOSTING PROCESS

Raw bark of all shapes and sizes is supplied under contract from several Victorian mills and is then hammer milled and screened into three grades: namely, fine grade (0–3 mm), medium grade (3–5 mm), and a coarse grade (5–8 mm). The raw bark is treated with composting fertilizer (nitrogen, lime, and iron) and trace elements to improve the chelating benefit when taken up by the plants. After this process, the graded nutrient-enriched bark is put into windrows on a concrete pad for composting with a water injection and aerating machine. The composting process can take up to 45 days depending on the season and the grade of the bark. After 3 days, the windrow reaches a temperature of 65 °C, which is the pasteurization process of the bark. This constant temperature eliminates weed seeds and harmful pathogens such as pythium, phytophthora, and rhizoctonia. Over this 45-day period, the aerating machine creates a flue effect, rotating the bark from the bottom to the top and expelling the hot air in the process. During this period, the composting bark temperature, pH, electrical conductivity, nitrogen levels, and nitrogen drawdown index are monitored to establish the maturation stage of the process of the bark for release prior to being blended into a potting mix. A finished composted bark grade normally has a pH of 5 and a nitrogen drawdown index of 0.45–0.5.

Fine-grade coir is brought in from South East Asia in dehydrated compressed bricks. This product receives a quarantine clearance by the Australian Quarantine Inspection Service (AQIS) before receiving an in-house assessment for elevated chloride levels and salt conductivity. A chunky coir chip is also available that allows for a higher air-filled porosity (AFP) than the finer grade. The coir is rehydrated and expanded, providing an instant component to be added to the bark grade as a matrix component.