

Horticultural marketer named Tasmania's top business

28 June 2011 – Bringing new plant breeds such as the Callistemon "Great Balls of Fire" and the Acacia "Fettuccini" into Australian and world markets has led to business success for horticultural agency Plants Management Australia.

The business based at Dodges Ferry, east of Hobart, was named tonight as the 2011 Telstra Tasmanian Business of the Year after also winning both the Business Owner Micro-Business Award and the AMP Innovation Award.

Other winners of the Telstra Tasmanian Business Awards include fuel distributor Tas Petroleum, the martial arts school Tasmanian Wing Chun Academy Ulverstone and vegetable producer M & J Baker Farms Pty Ltd.

Noel Hunt, Telstra Area General Manager Southern Tasmania said all winners had built up businesses that were important contributors to local communities and an inspiration to others in the State's small and medium sector.

Mr Hunt said: "PMA is a micro-business that is punching well above its weight locally and nationally and is gaining a foothold internationally through its agents in New Zealand, Japan, Canada, the UK and South Africa."

Plants Management Australia (PMA), established in 1992, represents independent plant breeders by managing the licensing and marketing of new varieties of perennials, ornamental trees and shrubs, and Australian natives to propagation nurseries and grower networks throughout the horticultural industry.

"The Awards judges said PMA stood out for its commitment to clients and its expert services that include securing plant intellectual property, importing tissue culture, co-ordinating overseas trials and outstanding marketing, promotion and branding services.

"PMA's innovation and creativity in presenting 'the story' of each plant are evident in its graphic and web design services and use of technology such as QR coding," Mr Hunt said.

PMA director Chris Sargent said the company takes plants "from concept to consumer" and works to maximise the royalty stream for the plant breeder. It has a portfolio of about 150 plants in the market and 100 in commercial trials – varieties include the Hebe "Heebie Jeebies", the Tibouchina "Groovy Baby" and the Dianthus "Sugar Plum."

Peter Nicholas, AMP's Director of Customer Value, said: "AMP would like to congratulate Plants Management Australia for winning the AMP Innovation Award.

"At AMP we believe that business success is about owning tomorrow, and this businesses have done just that, innovating today for an even more successful tomorrow," he said.

The winners of the 2011 Telstra Tasmanian Business Awards are:

Telstra Tasmanian Business of the Year

Plants Management Australia Pty Ltd

Dodges Ferry

Business Owner Micro-Business Award

Plants Management Australia Pty Ltd

Dodges Ferry

MYOB Small Business Award

Tas Petroleum

Invermay

Launched as an independent fuel wholesaler 2005, Tas Petroleum has grown to be a state-wide distributor of lubricants and a carrier of fuel for major petrol companies.

AMP Innovation Award

Plants Management Australia Pty Ltd

Dodges Ferry

Yellow Pages Social Responsibility Award

Tasmanian Wing Chun Academy Ulverstone

West Ulverstone

Established in 1998, the martial arts business offers 53 classes a week, stressing to clients and during school visits that self-defence can be part of the solution to anti-social behavior.

Telstra Regional Business Award

M & J Baker Farms Pty Ltd

Kindred

The family-owned produce business began 47 years ago and supplies vegetables to national food giant Woolworths and other retailers in four states.

The BlackBerry® People's Choice Award

Kidz Bizzzz Indoor Play Centre and Café

Kingston

Established in 2006 as an indoor play centre for children up to 12 years of age, the business also promotes healthy food options to parents in its café.

The BlackBerry People's Choice Award – which was decided by a public vote – and the Tasmanian Regional Business Award were new accolades in 2011.

Adele Beachley, Research In Motion (BlackBerry) Managing Director for Australia & NZ, congratulated Kidz Bizzzz for its achievement in winning the BlackBerry People's Choice Award. "At BlackBerry, we are a closely knit team that thrives on innovation and collaboration and we've been inspired by the level of service, values and strength of business that Kidz Bizzzz has demonstrated."

The winners of the Tasmanian Business Awards will be judged against category winners from other states and territories in the lead up to the national Telstra Business Awards to be announced in Melbourne on 26 August.

Winners of the 2011 Awards receive a share of \$500,000 in cash and prizes and become part of an exclusive national business alumni.

Media contacts:

Rod Bruem 0419 523 776 Telstra

Marcela Balart 0422 483 371 Lighthouse Communications Group

www.telstra.com.au/abouttelstra/media-centre/

Reference: 174/2011