

Australian Chestnut Grower's Handbook

Ray Borschmann
Chestnuts Australia Inc

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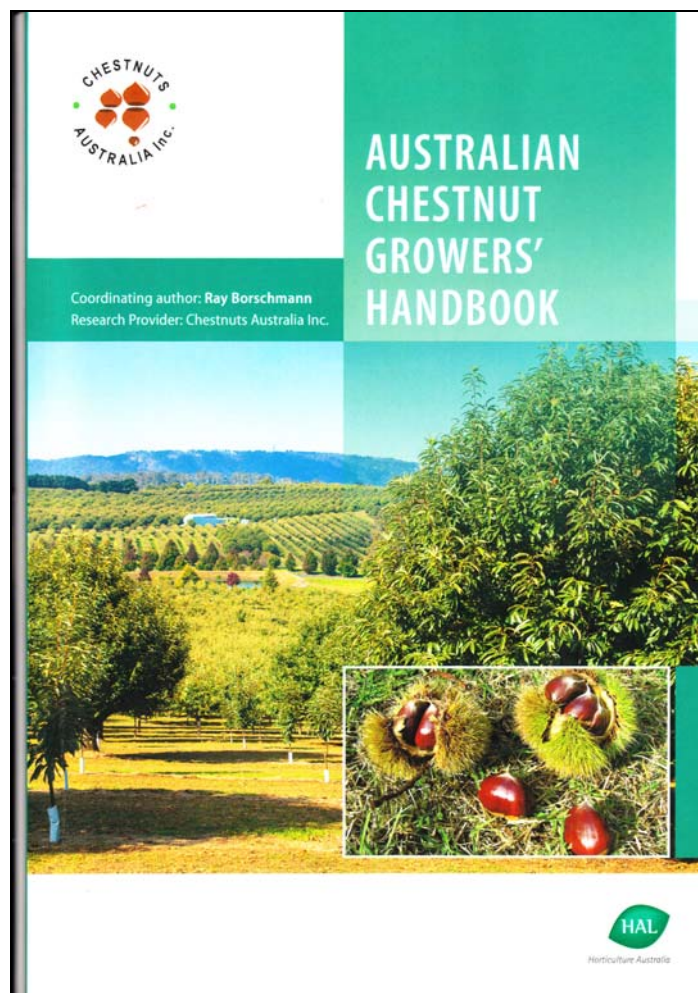


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The Australian Chestnut Growers' Handbook.



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CH12003

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Purpose:

The purpose of the project was to develop an Australian Chestnut Growers' Handbook to be the principal reference resource for current and future chestnut growers in Australia.

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Table of Contents

Media Summary2

Foreword3

Method & Output.....4

Media Summary.

Chestnuts Australia Inc. (CAI) is an association for chestnut growers. It is the peak industry body for all chestnut growers in Australia and aims to educate and inform growers on all aspects of chestnut production. An overarching goal is to encourage growers to consistently produce a high quality product in a sustainable and profitable manner.

During and after harvest the adoption of best practice becomes paramount as poorly managed chestnuts can quickly deteriorate and become a liability in the market.

The Australian Chestnut Growers' Handbook is part of CAI's strategy to help people interested in growing chestnuts commercially make well informed decisions. This involves distilling the most objective information relating to the Australian chestnut industry provided by recent research, and information from growers who have years of experience in the industry.

The handbook includes a history of the Australian chestnut industry, agronomy, species and varietal choice, orchard establishment, tree nutrition, chestnut harvesting , post-harvest storage of chestnuts, environmental assurance, production economics and market opportunities.

The handbook was launched on 8th February 2014 at Beechworth Victoria.

Copies of the Australian Chestnut Growers' Handbook can be obtained from Chestnuts Australia Inc. at PO Box 472 Myrtleford, Victoria 3737; by telephone 03 5751 1466; or by email admin@chestnutsaustralia.com.au. The handbook is available in both hard copy and as a CD.

Foreword

From Heather Kane, Chair of Chestnuts Australia Inc.

Chestnuts Australia Inc. is an association for chestnut growers. It is the peak industry body for all chestnut growers in Australia and aims to educate and inform growers on all aspects of chestnut production. An overarching goal is to encourage growers to consistently produce a high quality product in a sustainable and profitable manner.

The process to produce a high quality chestnut starts before the trees are planted. At this stage a grower must assess their site, the attributes of their soil, making any appropriate adjustments, and choose the variety of chestnut best suited to their needs and area. Good management practices must continue throughout the establishment and growing phase of the chestnut orchard.

During and after harvest the adoption of best practice becomes paramount as poorly managed chestnuts can quickly deteriorate and become a liability in the market.

This handbook is part of our strategy which aims to help people interested in growing chestnuts commercially to make well informed decisions. Our aim is to include the most objective information relating to the Australian chestnut industry, drawing on recent research and information from growers who have years of experience in the industry.

We recognise that there are, and will be, hurdles and opportunities for the chestnut industry, but if we all strive to consistently maintain a high quality product, our troubles will be fewer and our rewards greater.

Method & Output

The aim of this handbook is to provide information about the growing of chestnuts, and a broad insight into current state and future potential for the Australian chestnut industry. It covers a broad range of topics aimed at assisting potential entrants to the industry as well as existing members who wish to update or improve their knowledge. While it is primarily aimed at growers many others in the industry should find it beneficial.

Most topics are presented relatively concisely, with references to articles, including Chestnuts Australia Inc.'s website for those who desire more detail. The source of material has been referenced. Some is from scientific publications and it therefore has varying degrees of scientific rigour. Other material has been sourced from websites and growers, and while it may be the best information available it has not had the scientific rigour one preferably seeks.

The handbook is a comprehensive guide that is arranged in the following chapters:

- Introduction
- Growth requirements
- Species and varieties
- Propagation
- Establishing and managing an orchard
- Fertiliser and nutrition
- Sustainability of chestnut production
- Irrigation
- Harvesting and handling
- Post-harvest management
- Food safety and environmental assurance
- Pests and diseases
- Nutritional profile of chestnuts
- Economics of production
- Marketing
- Bibliography

The Chestnut Growers' Handbook is available in hard copy and on CD from:

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