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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Local Nursery Sweeps Up at NGIV's Horticultural Industry Awards

Narre Warren East's Speciality Trees has been recognised at the Nursery and Garden Industry Victoria (NGIV) 2023 Annual Horticultural Industry Awards Night, taking home two of the night's most illustrious awards.

The prestigious awards ceremony, held on Saturday night, acknowledged and celebrated outstanding contributions and achievements within the horticultural industry.

Speciality Trees were recognised with the Commitment to Environmental Stewardship Award and the Horticulture Student of the Year Award, which was awarded to Speciality Trees employee and Swinburne University of Technology student, Mr Jacob Chizik.

Speciality Trees operates on 3 different nursery sites in Victoria, producing trees in a variety of ways, utilising sustainable horticultural management techniques. Their application for the award outlined the values underpinning their practices. They pride themselves on "Understanding the environmental aspects and impacts of our business activities upon the community and industry in which [they] operate; changing the way [they] operate through innovation, development and technology; Ensuring at all times that both staff and external contractors are aware of [their] expectations; while measuring [their] performance against agreed objectives and targets."

Mr Chizik was acknowledged for his career and study achievements, team and communication skills, and his ability to be a representative for the horticulture industry. He received the award from NGIV CEO, Craig Taberner, who thanked him for his dedication and commitment to the Victorian horticulture industry.

Through the application process it became clear that Mr Chizik had an "an appreciation for how horticulture draws upon many elements to bring a quality product to the market."

In his application for the award, Mr Chizik said, "This industry is part of the solution for climate change, and we need to grow and plant more green life. This makes horticulture a forward-moving and vibrant industry to be involved in. It is important to recognise that we all work with living things that need specific requirements to thrive in the environment, as well as routine care and maintenance for long-term survivability, functionality, and enjoyment. The higher we hold our values and the better we produce will benefit everyone."

The Victorian horticultural industry is one that is steeped in history and now forms a vital part of the national economy, contributing more than \$2.5 billion annually. It's an industry that our association, Nursery and Garden Industry Victoria (NGIV), is proud to oversee, first being formed in 1903. Our members continue to play their part in supporting our state and the national economy, environment, and community.

Through recognising high-achieving members, as well as those setting exceptional standards, we move towards further developing our Victorian horticultural industry as a leader across the nation.

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