

9 March 2018

AusGAP Independent Auditing Program kicks off 2018.

AusGAP - The Australian Genetic Assured Purity Turf Accreditation Program, is a quality control system that has been adopted by some of Australia's premier turf grass producers. It covers business compliance in quality control, WH&S, environmental stewardship and general business practices to ensure that customers receive the best in products and services from AusGAP certified turf producers Australia wide.

Now that the AusGAP program has reached a maturity that sees its original intake reaching full certification, the aim is to work with industry groups like Australian Sports Turf Consultants (ASTC <http://astcs.com.au/>) to offer not only the best turf products on the market through its certified growers, but also offer advice and assistance in the planning, installation and maintenance of turf projects Australia wide.

AusGAP's Nick Dorney has been working with the Director of ASTC Mr. Matt Roche to bring the AusGAP program up to a standard that will resonate with specifiers and commercial clients.

"I am looking forward to working with AusGAP and its national band of certified growers now and into the future." Mr. Roche said

"This initiative is a big step forward for the Australian turf industry and the clients that it services. Quality control is an integral part for the success of any project and with AusGAP, that quality of product and service is guaranteed".

ASTC provides independent technical and agronomic advice to sports organisations, the turf production, environmental, commercial and residential sectors and is considered a leader in the Australian turf industry.

Mr. Roche has over 15 years' experience in the sports turf industry both nationally and internationally and is heavily involved in the sports turf industry but also consults to turf growers, councils and government bodies for large scale turf projects and general agronomic advice.

"We chose to work with ASTC because of the professionalism they show and the reputation that Mr. Roche has in the turf industry and the broader commercial world." Dorney said.

Mr Roche recently completed a system audit of the AusGAP program to review the standards and inspection regime used by growers and inspectors. In order to review the effectiveness of the AusGAP program, Roche has also begun carrying out independent audits of certified farms and will continue to do so over the course of the next year.



Matt Roche from ASTC at Rivendale turf farm in Inverell NSW.

“Since Mr. Roche has been involved with AusGAP, he has provided new procedures and templates for the on-farm inspection of turf fields and business processes.” Said Dorney

The new format ensures that no stone is unturned when auditing compliance with the AusGAP protocols and the farmers are left with a clear outline of any shortcomings and given a timeline and suggested program for the rectifications, if there are any.

“Matt’s experience and input into the program has been invaluable. The system audit was undertaken to further improve the on-farm inspections through a 3rd party expert, adding an extra element of professionalism and authority to the AusGAP certification, which Matt has certainly delivered.” Dorney said.

Mr. Roche has also been thoroughly impressed by the program and the significant steps AusGAP has taken in setting the standard for the Australian turf industry.

“It is great to finally see a national quality control program in the Australian turf industry that is so thorough and transparent.” said Roche.

“ASTC has been working with AusGAP since mid-2017, in that time we have been able to come up with a program that built on the strengths of the original ITGAP¹ protocols, give the growers clear direction and focus on overall business excellence while also offering the consumer the peace of mind that they are purchasing the best turf products on the market.”

The AusGAP program has been active since 2015, the businesses that have taken the early initiative to join up and work through the vast compliance measures now have a clear market advantage over non-certified competitors.



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AusGAP will be continuing its hard work through an industry rollout in the coming years with the continued involvement of ASTC. Dorney is excited to see how Roche's expertise will take the program to the next level.

“With the national roll-out of the program, all growers taking part must achieve results of the highest quality and standard to become certified, so it is of utmost importance that the program and inspection regime is exceptionally executed, and I have no doubt ASTC will play an integral role in achieving these results.”

¹The International Turfgrass Genetic Assurance Program (ITGAP) is a quality assurance program that monitors production sites worldwide to ensure that turf grasses are grown, inspected, and sold under a rigorous set of rules and guidelines. AusGAP is an exclusive agent for ITGAP and administers ITGAP standards in Australia. AusGAP is committed to improving genetic purity of certain turf grass varieties being produced in the region.