

# SPEAKERS LINEUP for Southern Africa 26<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference 2024



We are very excited to announce a few of our speakers for the upcoming Southern African Annual Conference 2024.

We have a great line-up of both local and international Speakers.

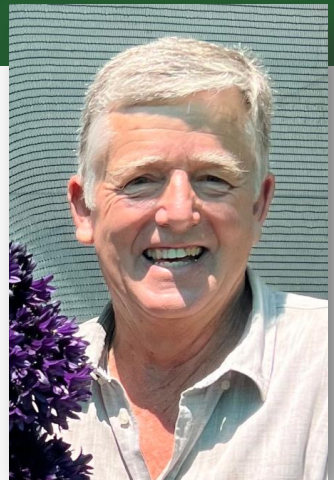
Following, is a preview of some the industry's leaders in their fields, who they are, and what they will be talking about.

## Andy de Wet

Our Breeding of endemic South African Plants

As a student Andy started with breeding aloes, with the aim of creating varieties that would be suitable for domestic and commercial horticulture.

Today, 50 years later, together with his partner, Quinton Bean, De Wet Plant Breeders now grow and sell all over the world. Most recently having achieved the highly coveted RHS "Best New Plant of the Year 2023" at the Chelsea Flower Show in the UK.



## Gayle Suttle

Lessons Learned: My 43-year journey with commercial micropropagation

Graduating with a BSc in both Botany and Soil Science from Oregon State University, Gayle has recently retired as CEO of Microplant Nurseries.

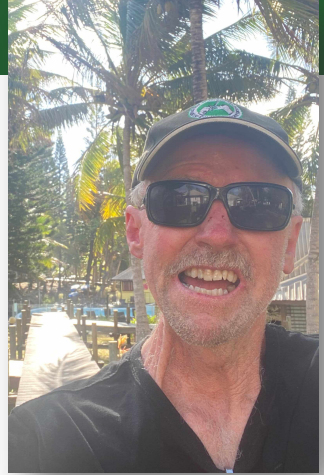
With her experience of 43 years building and growing a profitable business, her story is full of key scientific discoveries, triumphs and few epic disasters.



## David Hancock

Construction of our new Nursery in Perth

David founded the Natural Area business in 2001 having a broad on ground experience in environmental restoration, weed control, erosion control and fire fuel load management, having worked in the field during the initial years of the business' operations. His community environmental work has been recognised with numerous awards and he is a former City of Joondalup Citizen of the Year and Department of Environment & Conservation Volunteer of the Year.



## Tom Saunders

Thinking Outside the Box (wood)

***International Plant Propagators' Society newly elected Chair and Treasurer***

The family business has been a tradition since 1915, when five brothers formed a partnership. The brothers stood for integrity, morality, and honesty.

At present, the business is owned primarily by four brothers, Tom, Bennet, Jim and Robert and three 4<sup>th</sup> generation grandchildren.

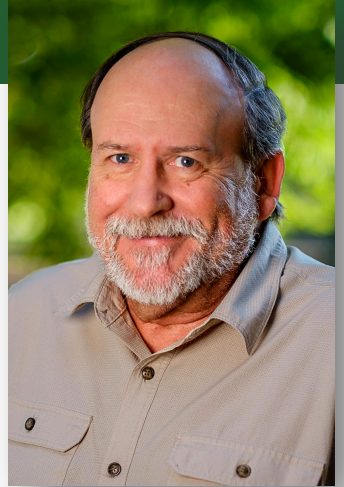
The business has earned numerous awards for their environmental policies, the most recent being: 2022 Sunbelt Expo Southeastern Farm of the Year Award.

## Dr Robert Geneve

### Auxin use in cutting propagation - Then and Now

Dr. Robert Geneve has been a faculty member of the University of Kentucky, Department of Horticulture for over 35 years performing teaching and research in seed biology and clonal plant propagation.

With over 100 journal, proceeding and industry publications, and having serviced as a Past – President for the International Plant Propagators' Society – Eastern region, he is currently the International Plant Propagators' Society Editor.



## Tony Van der Staay

### Mechanisation in a Tasmanian Production Nursery

As a second-generation nurseryman, Tony and his family have had a long history with IPPS, travelling the world to glean ideas and adapt to the business.

Founded in 1956, Westland Nurseries is still going strong with the third generation now running the business as both grower and retailer with production of 500 000 plants per year.



**Jack van Batenburg**  
Chemical Properties of Coir and reuse of Coir

After studying horticulture and working as a consultant and later selling varieties and young plants of cut roses, his coir career started in the year 2000, and currently works for Klasmann-Deilmann.

The use of coir in professional horticulture started in the late 80's. Over the years the knowledge on coir has increased, and products developed with market expectations changing. Based on research and experience, coir reveals more about its chemical properties.

Better understanding of this leads to better results in cultivation.



**Jean Roudier**  
Evolution of Growing Media

As a graduate from the National School of Angers in France as Horticultural engineer, he first worked in soilless vegetable production in Gabon. Then, for an association of more than 200 nursery growers, developed a practical research and consultancy center for ornamental horticulture on the Mediterranean coast. Joining the Klasmann-Deilmann group 28 years ago as technical manager for France, he has also devoted 20 years of those years to Africa.

## **Coleen Cronje**

### Scalable Hydroponics for boutique farmers in the South African Environment

A background in all things green and growing, was solidified by studying a degree in Plant Pathology at the University of Pretoria. The love of technology as well as a desire to do things a little more cheaply, a little more wisely and a little less cumbersome than the current assumptions, led to adaptation of the oldest plant growing technique known to man. The result is a small company growing lettuce for boutique coffee shops as well as a farm stall outlet on the property.

When not active in hydroponics, Coleen is part of the first online school in South Africa.

