



Yates

THE MARKET

Gardening is one of the most popular leisure activities in Australia and New Zealand, and Yates has been synonymous with the development of gardening in this part of the world since Arthur Yates arrived in New Zealand in 1879.

The market for garden products has expanded in both countries to include a diverse range, from seeds to computerised irrigation control equipment. In recent years, as home owners attempt to balance competing demands for their time with their desire to enjoy a well-kept garden, the Yates brand has entered the expanding market for supplying gardening services.

ACHIEVEMENTS

Since the publication of the first Yates Garden Guide in 1895, Yates has been the provider of information on gardening in both New Zealand and Australia.

Yates is the largest supplier of seeds to both markets with their strength, not only in the consumer market, but also as a major supplier of vegetable and flower seed for horticulturists and commercial growers.

Yates was one of the first seed companies in the world to pack consumer seed in foil packs to ensure freshness and reliable germination. Yates has continued to lead the market in the consumer garden products field with not only its innovative product range and merchandising skills, but by introducing electronic order capture and use of EDI and VMI (Vendor Managed Inventory) with some of Australia's leading retailers.

Yates diverse product range has mirrored consumer demands for convenience products and,

recognising community concerns, Yates has also introduced products that come from natural sources and have a greater environmental appeal.

Consumer support of the Yates brand has enabled the company to maintain its strength despite ownership changes and some turbulent times.

HISTORY

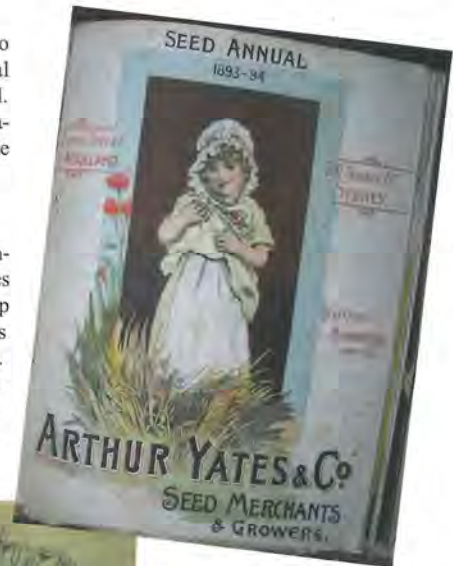
The Arthur Yates story has its beginnings in Manchester, England, in the 1800s, with George Yates opening a grocery and seed shop. A second shop was established in 1826 where Samuel, George's eldest son, ran the business of distributing seeds. Samuel Yates and Son expanded, with the five sons involved in different aspects of the business. Arthur, the asthmatic second son, was sent to New Zealand where it was hoped the climate would better suit his health.

After arriving in New Zealand in 1879, Arthur worked on the land and saw the opportunity for quality seeds from the "mother country". His first seed shop was opened in Auckland in 1883. The ledger for the first day records takings as 1/6 and expenses 2/6 but, in spite of this inauspicious beginning, the business soon flourished.

In 1886 Arthur visited Australia and was soon selling seed to the new colonies. His younger brother joined him in 1887 and soon after that Arthur moved to Australia. While both the Australian and New Zealand businesses operated as Arthur Yates and Co, they were separate entities. However they continued working closely together, not only with each other

but also with Samuel Yates in the UK, until their formal separation in 1906.

The first Yates range of packet seeds for home gardeners was launched in 1893 to cater for the grow-



ing numbers of middle class homeowners. This brought gardening to the masses, whereas previously it had been largely confined to the surrounds of stately homes.

In 1895, while recuperating from illness, Arthur wrote the Yates Gardening Guide for Australia and New Zealand. This small publication provided garden advice for conditions in both countries. Most of the publications that were then available had a European focus. The Yates Garden Guide in Australia is now in its 40th edition and has sold over 7 million copies. The New Zealand publication, which has reached its 75th edition, has sold more than a million copies. It is still considered the most comprehensive basic guide for garden-

ing in both countries.

The two companies grew as the countries prospered. Yates was seen as the leader in the supply of seeds, plants and consumer gardening information.

Regular catalogues were issued to rural areas and Yates established a range of distributors who were invited to stock Yates reliable seeds. During the First World War Yates provided advice on pro-





brought under the Yates umbrella brand.

In 1996 Samuel Yates was sold to Sakata Seed Company. The Yates UK market was a commercial seed market only and, although Yates was selling vegetable seed to the USA and Europe, this network of distributors could be serviced from Australia.

THE PRODUCT

Yates has moved a long way from just being a packet seed company. The range of products and sub brands includes seeds, bulbs, Dynamic Lifter, Zero Weedspray, potting mixes, Thrive and Gro-Plus fertilisers, Plassay Irrigation, premium pots and the Yates Garden Guide. In 1998, with the launch of Yates Garden Care, Yates entered into the garden services sector, one of the fastest growing areas of the domestic garden market.



PROMOTION

Yates has used all forms of promotion to get brand

and product information to its wide and varied consumer base.

The range of products sold by Yates provides different challenges to the agencies involved. The gardening market is well serviced with opportunities for promotion with a multitude of television shows, radio shows, magazines and newspaper columns dedicated to the pursuit of gardening on both a national and regional level. Yates positioning builds off the old established line "Yates Reliable Seeds" with the current promotion being "Trust Yates to Know How".

Customers continue to seek gardening information from all sources and the Yates web site, launched in 1998, is proving very popular with gardeners and retail customers. Information is changed regularly with seasonal advice. It's well worth a visit - yates.com.au.

Yates promotions have been focused on growing the gardening market by giving consumers confidence in their gardening activities. As the market is continually changing with new entrants, often with no prior exposure to gardening, the promotional activity covers all media options. To entice tomorrow's consumers Yates conducts promotions for children with special seed packs, and cooperative promotion with key retail groups.

Yates supports major garden shows and in Western Australia features prominently at Araluen Tulip Festival in spring.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

The garden market is ever changing, and Yates is at the forefront of innovation with new products to make gardening more interesting or easier for consumers. Recent innovations include the introduction of the Garden Claw, a novel tool that helps pre-

pare soil without the risk of back strain.

The new range of Tuscan pots features multiple drainage holes and root trainers, all features of Yates commercial pots but now available for home gardeners.

In 1997 Yates introduced reduced-odour Dynamic Lifter which meant gardeners could use Australia's leading organic fertiliser with less upset neighbours. An improved, faster-acting Zero was also made available in distinctive new packaging.

To cater for the growing need to conserve water the Plassay Aquatimer, a manual 2 hour tap timer, was developed for Australian conditions. This spring saw the introduction of new resealable packaging for Thrive and Aquasol soluble fertilisers, a new Zero Weeding Brush and Lawn Tamer, a product that slows lawn growth so there is less need for mowing - a real bonus for all gardeners.

In 1999 Yates will introduce a new range of highly scented and uniquely coloured Sweet Peas in collaboration with internationally acclaimed breeder, Dr Hammett. Some new Hammett sweet pea varieties are being grown as a commercial seed crop for sale to international seedhouses and overseas flower growers.

The biggest development for the Yates brand is the move into garden care services. This has started in Victoria and will move into other states as suitably qualified staff become available.

The 40th edition of the Yates Garden Guide will ensure new and existing gardeners can continue to Trust Yates to Know How.

BRAND VALUES

Yates is the leading company in the garden market as a result of continuing adherence to the values of its founders: to be a knowledgeable supplier of products that result in quality gardens. This responsible approach has meant consumers can be confident that all products carrying the Yates name have been tried and proven in the markets where they are sold.

ductive gardening for the war effort, and established seed production farms in Tasmania.

After World War 2 lifestyles changed and gardening became more than a food production activity; the emphasis was on recreational gardening. Yates Garden Guide evolved to reflect this, and Yates introduced convenience products such as Thrive, a soluble fertiliser that turned water into fertiliser.

In 1951 Arthur Yates was listed and in 1969 Arthur Yates (Aust.) purchased Samuel Yates (UK). In 1985 Yates was acquired by Cheetham Limited which already owned Hortico, so Australia's two leading garden companies were merged into one.

The eighties were the period for takeovers and in 1987 Cheetham was acquired by Acemex, a subsidiary of Industrial Equity Limited. In 1989 Yates New Zealand was purchased following the Equiticorp receivership and a year later IEL was acquired by Adelaide Steamship Company.

Still consumers gardened, and the Yates product range maintained its industry leadership. In 1993 Yates was floated by IEL as a unified company including Australia, New Zealand and United Kingdom.

In 1994 Yates acquired the Zero brand from Reckitt and Coleman and in 1995 purchased Dynamic Lifter from the Jennings family. Both these products have subsequently been



THINGS YOU DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT YATES

- In the period 1880-1950 Yates ran a sophisticated direct marketing operation that supplied product throughout Australia.
- Yates has a copy of every Yates Garden Guide ever published, including two copies of the original 1895 edition.
- Yates Garden Guide is the all-time best selling Australian book.
- In one of its earlier catalogues Yates offered *Cannabis sativa* (Marijuana) "a large leafed foliage plant, to five feet" for 6d a packet.
- Yates products are exported to gardeners in Europe, Asia, Middle East, Central and South America and the Pacific Islands.
- Throughout Australia there are more than four million chickens producing Yates Dynamic Lifter.