

## **New fumigant registered for Australian wildflowers**

A new fumigant has been developed in Australia to assist wildflower exporters. ECO<sub>2</sub> FUME<sup>®</sup>, previously known as Phosfume<sup>®</sup>, was originally developed by Agriculture Victoria for fumigation of stored grain. The new methyl bromide alternative was registered for use on wildflowers following four years of assessment studies.

ECO<sub>2</sub> FUME<sup>®</sup> is a cylinder gas formulation of phosphine with carbon dioxide as a carrier gas. Treatment with this fumigant enables flower consignments to meet quarantine requirements of overseas markets while maintaining the flowers in prime conditions. Two main benefits offered by this fumigant are:

- It can be released rapidly into a fumigation enclosure; and
- It does not leave unexpended chemical residues in the enclosures, thereby eliminating any safe handling or disposal problems.

Tests were carried out on significant insect pests and the main Australian wildflower exports including Geraldton Wax, Thryptomene, Kangaroo paw, Banksias, Proteas, Leucodendrons and Waratahs. Tests have shown that application of phosphine over an exposure period of 15 hours at a minimum temperature of 15°C killed important pest species. ECO<sub>2</sub> FUME<sup>®</sup> readily penetrates deep into flowers such as King Proteas to kill insects such as earwigs that hide within them. A combination of Pestigas<sup>®</sup> and ECO<sub>2</sub> FUME<sup>®</sup> tends to flush insects out of flowers to die on the floor of the fumigation chamber. (Website: <http://www.nre.vic.gov.au/agvic/ihd/resources/mr-000229.html>)