

Media Release

RAINFOREST REMEDIES EYES DOMESTIC AND EXPORT MARKETS FOR LEMON MYRTLE PRODUCTS

Rainforest Remedies of Alstonville near Ballina is set to expand its domestic markets and export its fragrant product line with help from the NSW Government

Announcing NSW Government assistance to the company today, the NSW Minister for Regional Development David Campbell said the company would launch a new website early in 2004 to act as a sales desk.

"Rainforest Remedies specialise in Lemon Myrtle, and produce a range of merchandise from soaps and cleaners to dried leaf and essential oils," Mr. Campbell said.

"The company intends to expand its business by exporting its body care products which are presently sold locally".

Rainforest Remedies has operated in the Northern Rivers region since September 2000, when a small group of growers decided to sell merchandise that used Lemon Myrtle.

This merchandise included crushed and whole leaves, flavourings essences and herbal teas. A national herb festival held in Lismore in August promoted Lemon Myrtle as its culinary theme, which led to an increase in domestic demand. In addition, the small floral trade is becoming popular and gaining market significance.

The Lemon Myrtle (*Backhousia citriodora*) is a native of Southern Queensland and Northern NSW. The plant's oil is used to produce a range of soaps, cleaners, shampoos, and aromatherapy and pet care products.

Lemon Myrtle gained international and domestic attention because of its anti-fungal, anti-viral and anti-bacterial properties, and the market for personal care products is increasing as more consumers become aware of the health benefits and refreshing properties of Lemon Myrtle-based products.

In the Northern Rivers, plantations have been established to supply the bush food and essential oil industries.

Support for Rainforest Remedies comes from the New Market Expansion Program, which is managed for the NSW Government by the New South Wales Department of State and Regional Development (DSRD).