

## **The Nursery Group – Member Profile**

### **Huntley Berry Farm**

Huntley Berry Farm was established about 16 years ago by a private operator. It was then taken over by DOCS who operated it until 1994 when it was passed over to OCTEC Incorporated as a community based not for profit organisation. It is located south east of Orange in the Central West of NSW and is approx 15 acres in size. We have a number of new projects in the nucleus stage which will enable us to more efficiently use the resources we already have e.g. sheds and land which is not suitable for berries. The farm has a very picturesque setting with barbeques and picnic tables available to the public.

The Huntley Berry Farm employs 12 supported employees and three specialist staff. There are two supported employees who work full time with the remainder working 2 or 3 days. The productivity ranges from 60% to 10%. The farm activities are worked around the skills of the supported employees with 100% of the work being completed by the combination of managers and staff. Farm activities include soil preparation, weed control, pruning, planting, picking, packing. We employ consultants for specialty advice and also have persons experienced in horticulture and retail on the board.

The Huntley Berry Farm specializes in the production and sale of 11 varieties of berries. Our main source of sales has been "pick your own" and markets with some wholesale sales of frozen berries. Last season we undertook an intense marketing campaign and managed to secure visits from bus companies on short day/overnight trips, vintage car clubs, social clubs, play groups etc. The introduction of a café/gift shop where we sold jams, sauces, pickles etc. helped to value add to the product produced from the farm.

This season we hope to have a mini nursery and the "pick your own" extended to vegetables as well. We have also planted a number of proteas which will eventually supply another revenue stream, as cut flowers. We are intending to expand our plantings of the "popular" berries such as blueberries this year which in the 2007/8 season should increase our turnover.

This season we intend to increase our marketing campaign to draw more tourists and locals to the farm and further expand our retail sales.

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