JCLM FARMING
plants to be proud of

Case Study

JCLM Farming Pty Ltd
"Cluny", 294 Dawson Rd
Ouse, TAS 7140



Fresh Berry Co. Bundy Berries

The Pettinella family has been growing strawberries for more than 50 years across three generations. Today, the family manages two significant operations in two vastly different growing regions in Victoria and Queensland.

After initially establishing Fresh Berry Company Pty Ltd in the Yarra Valley, Victoria in 1974, the family diversified operations with the establishment of Bundy Berries Pty Ltd at Sharon near Bundaberg, Queensland in 2011.

With two locations, the overarching farming entity is able to achieve geographic diversification and manage multi-region seasonal crop programming throughout the year.

Victorian-based executive director Michael Pettinella shares management responsibility of the operations with other family members, continuing the family fruit business started by his parents who worked as fruiterers and strawberry growers in Victoria, after emigrating from Italy. Today, the multi-generational operations span 20 hectares in Victoria and 20 hectares in Queensland with up to 100 pickers employed at any one time.

The business began sourcing plant material from JCLM Farming around 2020, firstly for Bundy Berries' winter harvest, then for Fresh Berry Co's summer production.

Built for resilience: matching tough plants to extreme climates

Potential climate extremes – from drought and bushfires in Victoria to floods in Queensland, mean it is imperative that resilient plant material sourced from JCLM Farming can cope with challenging growing conditions.

Varieties and plant types are also selected to match respective production methods ranging from protected cropping to table-top and soil production and their ability to deliver berries of a consistent colour, shape and flavour.

In Victoria, JCLM Farming supplies University of California-bred extreme day neutral variety, UC Eclipse as plug plants for protected cropping and soil production, over more than 1 hectare. These plants supplement other public varieties in production, offering a seasonal point of difference.

“Plug plants cost more upfront, but in the long run are a bit more forgiving, and easier to manage. Jack’s plants have good take-off and do very well, particularly UC Eclipse,” Michael says.



Jack Beattie and Michael Pettinella at Fresh Berry Co

For Bundy Berries, JCLM Farming supplies two popular sub-tropical varieties bred by the Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries – Red Rhapsody and Scarlet Rose – as plug plants for protected cropping and open table-top production spanning about 9 hectares. UC Surfline from the University of California’s breeding program will join the line-up from 2027.

Key priorities for today’s grower

Michael says growers rely heavily on ongoing global industry research to introduce new plant varieties that keep pace with consumer demand, while simultaneously adapting their production methods to withstand extreme weather events such as floods and bushfires.

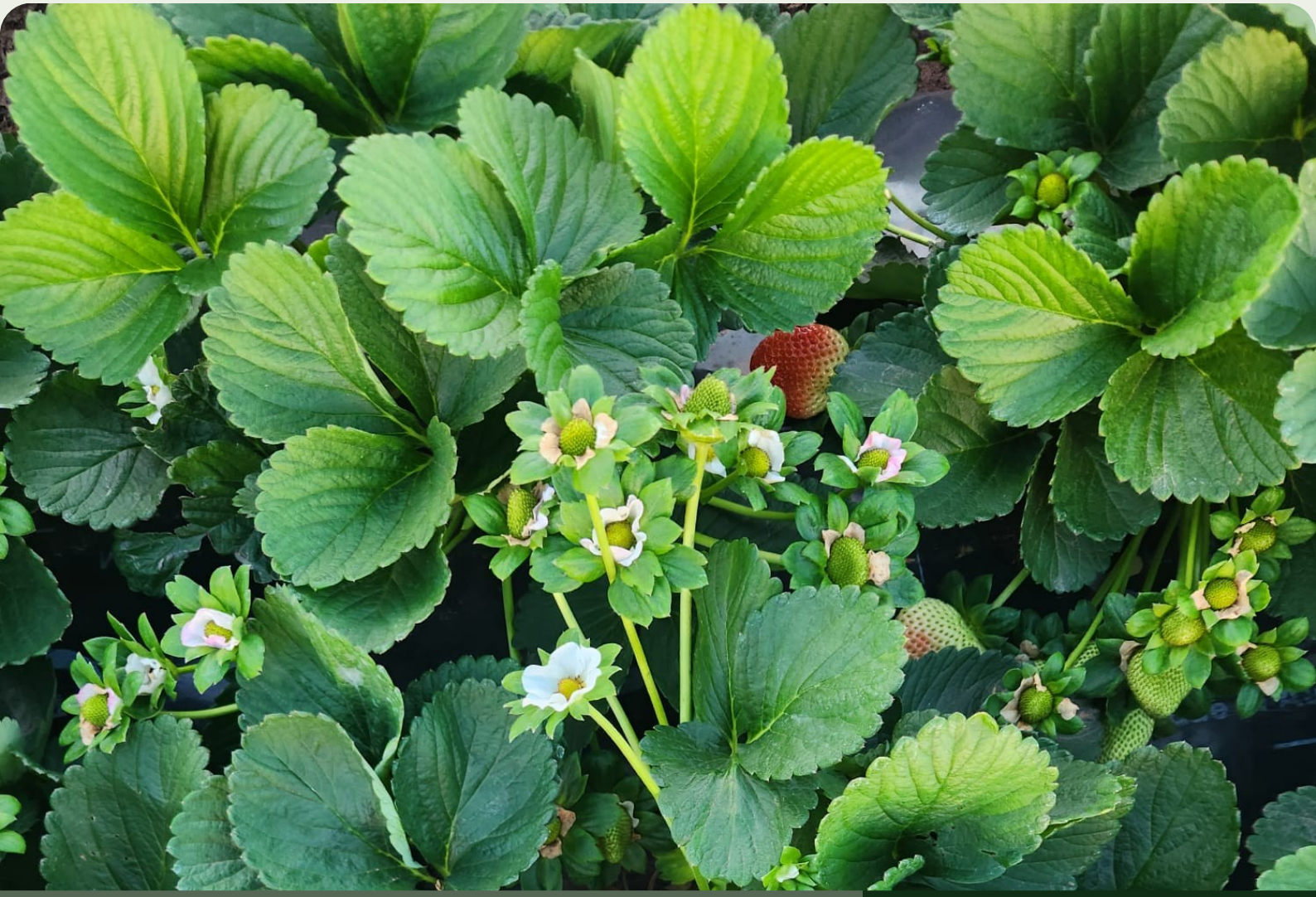
“When sourcing stock (such as JCLM Farming’s plants), growers demand reliable, high-quality fundamentals – specifically strong root structures, healthy crowns, and overall robust plant vigour that improves year on year.



> **“Jack’s plants are what I want when I want them.** Ultimately, the end product needs to meet strict look and taste standards, with consumers expecting uniform fruit colour, shape, and flavour.”

“The quality of plug plants received from JCLM Farming since we started working with the business has also improved our outcomes and we’re now growing 80 per cent plugs in Queensland and 20 per cent in Victoria.

“Transport to Queensland from Tasmania can be a challenge for any operator but we know JCLM Farming has worked hard on its cold chain management and is continually seeking to find efficiencies for the end grower,” Michael says.



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