

**FARM GATE ROUNDUP Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2006**  
**Alan Eagle: 45782326 (W); 0415244477 (M)**

**Alan Good Morning,**

Good to be with you again Simon.

**What's Fresh on the Farm Gate Trail;**

**Lets get start with the Vegies.**

Vicki, called as she does most weeks from the Hawkesbury Vege Farm and she has given me a list of fresh veges out on the trail. At Vicki's as you know Simon, she takes you through the farm, you pick the vegetable and she plucks the vegies straight from the ground.

There is Chinese and Plain Cabbage, Cos Lettuce, Chicory, Leeks, Beetroot, Rhubarb, Carrots, Potatoes, Beans, and Free Ranges Eggs. Vicki also said the Capsicums will be ready by Christmas and the melons will be here in early January.

**How are the Peaches coming along ?**

Simon, Philip Barba from Galston 359 called and he has oodles of them, white and yellow, as well as Roma Tomatoes, Nectarines and has anew crop of fresh strawberries that taste like strawberries use to.

We will have some of Philips fresh fruit at our big Christmas Farmers Market next weekend.

John Maguire from Enniskillen Orchard in the Hawkesbury called and said the Nectarines and Peaches are just beautiful right now as are, Raspberries, Strawberries, Plums.

John pointed out that the drought has a good impact on the produce in that the flavours are actually enhance when the weather is dry. The balance between too much water and not enough make farming a tough industry and the Maguire and Barba families, as do other farmers walk a tight rope between a success and failure every season.

**The Hawkesbury Showcase at Parliament House on the 20<sup>th</sup> of November really demonstrated that the Hawkesbury still has an abundance of fresh, local produce.**

Yes Simon, Thanks for helping out at with MC role, we were able to show the food writers, providores and hoteliers that agriculture is alive and it is an important industry to Sydney, the Hawkesbury that day had on show high quality, vegies, Asian greens, duck, game, wines, honeys, oysters, cheese, herbs, native flowers, fresh cut flowers along with floral displays including a botanical artist, and don't forget those fantastic fiddlers, 'Anystring Goes', another Hawkesbury product.

**The Hawkesbury Chefs presented some fantastic, tempting our taste buds with their fare.**

Talking about chefs, I would like to thank Scottie, the Chef at Parliament House the meals that were prepared were fantastic. Carlos and his team make our stay very welcome. An excellent showcase of our regions food and wine.

**One of Hawkesbury Harvests sayings is 'Taste, Buy and Learn' and on the Learning side I believe you have had a student from UWS developing a methodology for capturing some Oral Histories of the Region.**

That's right Simon, Emma Anderson a 3rd year student from UWS has completed a project using oral history as a platform for capturing the stories regarding development of farming and the rich cultural history of the region. Hawkesbury Harvest hopes to continue to capture these oral stories over the next few years. It is very exciting, just sitting back chatting about how things were and what is to be is very rewarding.

**The Farmers and Gourmet Food Markets are on next week.**

Yes Simon, Saturday the 9th, this is our biggest market of the year and there is plenty of fresh tucker,

They kick off at 8am at the Castle Hill showground and your listeners can pick up a great array of local fresh produce and values added products.

## **Sounds mouth watering, what is available?**

Fresh Vegies, Peaches, Strawberries, Smoke Trout, Duck, Honey, Herbs, Cheeses, Nuts, Oranges, Small Plants, Roses, Ham, Bread, Jams, Sauces, Pasta, Native Foods, Flowers, Egg and Bacon rolls, Coffee, Teas, Cakes and Condiments of all types.

Also Simon, 8 lucky people will be sitting down to a Farmers Brunch, prepared by Urban Graze, a cooking school and a member of Hawkesbury, using fresh produce from the Market. It will be like a mini showcase.

## **Anything else is happening on the Trail**

Simon we are very excited about this. Penrith City Council have joined with Hawkesbury Harvest to extend the Farm Gate Trail into the Penrith Region. We are meeting with them next week to put down some strategies for future Farm gates outlets, so that more listeners can experience our Taste, Buy and Learn philosophy. We will keep you updated. We are interested in hearing from Growers in the Penrith Region and I have put a form for anyone interested in speaking to us on our website in the 'Latest News' section. Just fill it out and we will get back to them.

Also the Windsor Pastel Group have their second exhibition on at Sassafras Creek, starts today.

## **David Mason must be just about finished his Study into Urban Agriculture.**

Yes Simon, he arrived back into Australia on the 13th of December, He is in Vancouver at the moment. I am sure he will catch up with you in the new year to chat about how the rest of the world recognises the importance of the Agricultural Industry.

David telephoned last week and told me he attended a conference on 'Protecting Farmland as a Community Investment'. Information was presented on how farmland and open space protection achieves preservation goals and avoids the greater costs of community services related to residential development, which is more expensive than preservation. The American Farmland Trust has conducted many studies

across the country that demonstrates that the residential development costs to the community are greater than any hoped for revenue whereas the costs associated with preservation are cost effective.

In Lancaster County in Pennsylvania in the US, farmland and associated scenic amenity attract 7 million people a year who leave behind \$1 billion. This has a far greater positive financial outcome for the community than does housing development. Housing development is cost negative. That is that for every \$ spent on development for housing it cost the community more than a \$ - in some studies up to a \$1.70.

Listeners can follow his progress on his website:

[www.urbanagricultureworldwide.com](http://www.urbanagricultureworldwide.com)

**Listeners can get all this information on the website by going to**

[www.hawkesburyharvest.com.au](http://www.hawkesburyharvest.com.au)

Catch you later Simon, see you on the Trail.