

Harvest Round Up

3rd November 2007

Now with this weekend's news from Hawkesbury Harvest we have Adrian Maguire on the line from Enniskillen orchard. Adrian how's it going?

G'day Simon, not too bad how are you?

Good. So how's the fruit and veg out your way this time of year?

It's great. We have lots of spring vegetables, zucchinis, cauliflower, rhubarb, spinach and radishes. So it's a good time to be eating these sorts of things because they're nice and fresh and certainly on the Farm Gate Trail- they're affordable.

Great, now we heard in the news this week that scientists recommend we eat more fruits and vegetables- You'd be happy to hear that wouldn't you?

Of course, you know I think it's just a general rule that we should try to eat everything in moderation. I mean I think it's important to eat meat and I think like everything it's important to eat it fresh.

And it's hard to get much fresher than the trail isn't it?

But certainly when it comes to eating fruit and veg we should really be trying to eat them when they're in season and as fresh as they can be so that antioxidants and vitamin levels are at their peak.

O.k. now we're well into spring- it must be time for stonefruit by now isn't it?

Yeah that's right. We've been picking for more than two weeks now.

And are they any good? Or would it be best for people to wait a while?

Well in the case of the Hawkesbury and Hills districts growers tend to grow the best early fruit because our climate is just right. Also because our fruit doesn't have to travel long distances to reach our customers we can leave them on the tree a bit longer to ripen up a bit and taste just a little bit sweeter.

So how would this year compare to others?

Well so far it's been great. The rain we had early in the year filled up dams and gave the trees a real boost which we're seeing the results of now so as long as we manage to avoid storm damage or "heaven forbid" too much rain these next few weeks, local stonefruit look to be in good stead for this year.

And the same goes for berries?

Yeah that's right- strawberries have been out for a while and raspberries are coming in soon. So long as there isn't too much rain their flavour cannot be beaten.

And of course let's not forget that oranges are still available at Penrith Valley Oranges.

That's right, but as Alan has mentioned access to picking is limited because of Equine influenza.

That's right. Now from conventional fruit to something a little different at the Deerubbin centre tonight.

Yes the "Fruits of the figure" art display has it's opening night tonight in Windsor. The life drawing group has been meeting for the past seven years at Richmond to create a range of works on all kinds of different media.

And this is the sixth annual display of their life drawings?

It is and they've got some really talented professional artists in the group so today and tomorrow only, try and get down there to see it.

Now next weekend we have two big annual events out in the Hawkesbury what are they?

Well the first is the farming small areas expo which kicks off on Friday at the Clarendon show grounds.

And they've got a lot on this year don't they? With all kinds of farm machinery, animals and exhibits.

Yeah they do. Over 400 sheep will be there with 100 working dogs to round them up. Miniature cattle, alpacas, vintage machinery as well as modern equipment.

Now if people are on a few acres and want to do something with it but aren't sure what or how to go about it this is a really helpful expo for them isn't it?

Yeah that's right. But it's also a bit of fun for kids too with everything that goes on.

Great. Now the other event that's on next week is the "Woodgreen" garden open day isn't it?

Yes it is.

Now am I mistaken or was "Woodgreen" on Gardening Australia the other day?

Yeah that's right it was. Peta Traher of "Town and country gardens" at Bilpin which is on the trail specialises in rare shrubs and bulbs and has a magnificent garden which will be open to the public as part of the "Australian open gardens scheme" along with two other gardens at Mt Tomah "Perfick" and "Winterwood".

And this rain we're having should help add to the spectacle next week shouldn't it?

Yeah I certainly hope so. As well as this, Peta is opening her nursery to the public next weekend and will continue to open on Sundays and Mondays throughout November, January, February and March.

So if people are interested in filling their gardens with exotic plants they need to just take a quick trip up the Bells line of Road this weekend.

Yep. As always though, more details are available on the website, or people can pick up Farm Gate Trail maps from information centres and Hawkesbury Harvest businesses in the Hawkesbury and Hills districts.

And it's a good idea too to check the website and plan ahead before heading west to avoid disappointment isn't it?

Oh definitely. The website is full of information like what's in season, who will actually be open on the day you come out and how far it is from one spot to another.

And Adrian that web address is

www.hawkesburyharvest.com.au

Adrian we'll let you get back to the peaches.

Thanks simon.