

Farm Gate Trail Round Up – 9th October, 2004

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IN SEASON ON THE TRAIL

Good Morning Simon,

Our journey this morning takes us along the majestic Hawkesbury River! Not only does the river provide irrigation for many of the farmlands along its banks, but it also gives us delicious school prawns!

This week I spoke with

Troy Ireland from Hawkesbury River Prawns at Wisemans Ferry – 0407 664 756

Troy's family have been boat builders and fishermen for 200 years along the Hawkesbury River at Webbs Creek near Wisemans Ferry. Troy's Dad has two boats and Troy himself has a 24' trawler named 'Loaner' and he is one of our newer members of the Farm Gate Trail.

There are restrictions on prawn trawling these days?

Yes, they are only allowed to trawl on weekdays, not on weekends or public holidays and so most days they start at daybreak and finish around lunch time. Troy trawls from Lower Portland to Box Head (opposite Barrenjoey) and the rules these days are that it must be an owner operated boat. There is no limit on how much they can catch however, and on average they haul in 20 – 30 kilos per day. Of course, this is dependant on the weather and the season. With the low rainfall that we've been having there has been no flushing of the river and so numbers have been down.

Hawkesbury River prawns have an excellent reputation. Why?

Well, the river is very deep, more deep than most rivers in Australia and as prawns are bottom feeders they thrive in the Hawkesbury. Troy uses a net with a 6 fathom head rope (about 11 metres) and the net has a 'tickle' chain which drags along the bottom and the prawns literally jump into the net. Prior to 1946 the nets used to be dragged by hand along the beaches with the person in the water being able to go as far as they could stand.

Where can we get these fabulous prawns?

Troy actually delivers in the Wilberforce area – but if you don't live in that area then the easiest is to send an email via the Hawkesbury Harvest website and we'll give you the locations where you can pick them up. www.hawkesburyharvest.com.au or contact Troy on his mobile.

Update on fruit and veges in season

Stone fruit are around the corner but in the meantime get those citrus while they are still around – the citrus trees are now covered in blossoms (a fantastic perfume). Plenty of strawberries.

However on the vegie front - the globe artichokes are fantastic (don't handle the stem as they leave a bitter taste on your fingers), tomatoes, Broad beans, carrots, potatoes, pumpkins, silverbeet, and rhubarb are excellent and of course there are plenty of mushrooms (it's mushroom month in the largest mushroom growing area in the world!

You can also pick up some duck, meat from the butcher, wine, fresh flowers, crepe myrtles and of course all the associated products like honey, jams, pickles and preserves.

For the latest update of the fruit and veges in season from our farms, check out the website.

Events:

Mt Tomah Botanic Garden: Last weekend for the Hawkesbury Waratah Festival. Once again prize-winning blooms will be on display in the Visitors Centre the walls of which glow red with the work of young artists.

Fruits of the Hawkesbury Festival – runs for two months (Sept/Oct) visit www.hawkesbury.nsw.gov.au

If your listeners haven't been able to download the map from the website they can call into the Visitor Centre at Clarendon (opposite the RAAF Base) and pick up a copy.

All details on the website at www.hawkesburyharvest.com.au

The River Drive: Penrith Valley Oranges – (Tangelos, navel oranges, mandarins, vegetables, olives), Strawberry Farm at Vineyard (local strawberries, tomatoes, corn), Tizzana Winery (Wine, Olive oil), Hawkesbury Estate (Seville oranges) and The Orange Spot, (Blood oranges, Navels, Mandarins, & Sevilles) & M & N Butchery at Wilberforce, Pepe's Ducks at South Windsor, Tanglin Lodge Alpacas at Tennyson. Then cross the River - Basha's Orchard (advanced trees), Berry Good Farms, and Nati Roses, Geranium Cottage, The Crepe Myrtle Man, Post Office Road, Glenorie, The Bay Road Gallery & Charltons Creek Studio Gallery at Arcadia, Kenthurst Fish Farm, Butterfly Café all at the Hills & Hornsby end of the trail.

Along the **Mountain Drive -** Enniskillen Orchard (Pecans, honey, mandarins), Blue Mountains Natural Spring Water at Grose Vale, Heavenly Belle Café at Kurrajong Heights, Tutti Fruitti (oranges & mandarins), The Local Harvest, Bell's Line of Road, at Bilpin.

All the information on the Farm Gate Trail will be on the website or from Hawkesbury Valley Tourism Office at Clarendon on **4588 5895**, where along with the Farm Gate map, your listeners can pick up the notes of today's roundup. Or **visit our website go to** www.hawkesburyharvest.com.au

Best Days to Drive the Trail

Friday or Saturday are the recommended days for self-drive tours of the Farm Gate Trail or, if you prefer not to drive, take a guided tour, all the details are on the back of the map.

Vegetables on the Trail

Tomatoes, lettuce, beetroot and rhubarb, sweet potato, leek, green capsicums, cauliflower, broccoli, zucchini, cabbage (savoy & plain), silverbeet, bok choy, Lebanese & gherkin cucumbers; parsnips, butternut, jap & Qld blue pumpkins, both red and white radishes, potatoes, flat and swiss brown mushrooms

Fruit on the Trail

Mandarins – Imperials, Emperor, Hickson – Enniskillen, Penrith Valley Oranges, Orange Spot
Navel Oranges – Penrith Valley Oranges
Seville Oranges – Hawkesbury Estate and The Orange Spot
Winter Pajeros Strawberries – fresh and frozen – Strawberry Farm, Vineyard

Pecan nuts & Macadamias - Enniskillen Orchard

Other Produce – Food & Wine

Wine, port including white port, aleatico; Verjus; Goat cheese & yoghurt; baked crisp breads including lavosh, honey, apple juice, free range eggs, ice cream with real fruit, fruit rollups with fruit fresh from the orchard. Jams, pickles and sauces and the range from the native bush tucker foods. Peking ducks, also sausages, breast fillet, Maryland & whole ducks; abattoir and butcher – large range of beef, pork and lamb, goat, venison and ostrich. Spring Water and Silver Perch.

Other Produce – Fibre & Flora

Koi and Goldfish, silver perch, field roses, pelargoniums and geraniums, alpacas & alpaca products such as jumpers, scarves etc. Open gardens and galleries with pottery, paintings and bowls and platters.
