

Farm Gate Trail Round Up – 17th July, 2004

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IN SEASON ON THE TRAIL

Good Morning Simon,

There are fantastic juicy, very sweet - navel oranges, Imperial & Susumi (they are the seedless ones) mandarins, grapefruit and Seville oranges. In the way of apples there are still some pink lady, granny smiths and **Lady Williams** & both Packham & **Burbosk** pears. There are also the delicious pajeros strawberries.

In the vege line - the old fashioned Zola Tomatoes, there's also sweet potato, mushrooms, broccoli, cauliflower, silverbeet & jap & Qld Blue pumpkins. Also pecans and some Bilpin grown **macadamias**.

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

This week I spoke with Vicky & Joe from the Hawkesbury Vegetable Farm – 135 Carrs Rd, Wilberforce

They both come from a farming background – both their families had farms in the Hawkesbury region and they always wanted acreage to start their own farm. Vicky worked for the tax office for eleven years but loved working outdoors and so ten years ago they bought the property at Wilberforce and two years later had established their vegetable crops.

This is certainly a family business?

With 6 children (aged from 12 to 2 months) Vicky certainly has her hands full – the kids all have their chores both inside and on the farm from collecting eggs, picking veges and generally enjoying their outdoor lifestyle.

Do they only grow veges?

Yes, because veges were what they knew, they grow some veges all year and seasonal crops. The endive and chicory are all year, the capsicums and eggplant are summer and now they grow the spinach as well as dicon and Korean radishes. They are also planting more rhubarb.

Does any produce go to market?

Yes, twice a week Joe takes produce to the growers market and the rest is sold directly at the farm gate. Visitors to the farm often are surprised as they expect to buy from a stall. However, Vicky says that no one complains when they realize that they go for a walk through the rows of veges, choosing what they want! You certainly can't get any fresher than that!

This is also a bit of an education for some visitors?

Yes, not only to children but some adults get to see first hand how some veges are grown, not all of us have the opportunity or the time to grow our own.

Mt Tomah Plant of the Week

Scientific Name: *Chimonanthus yunnanensis* W. W. Smith
Common Names: A Wintersweet,

Plant Family: CALYCANTHACEAE

Head for the Residence Garden via the ramp from the Visitor Centre viewing deck, continue past the Residence and take the path down toward the weather station.

From a Family of ancient lineage with beetle pollination come three genera of shrubs or small trees with aromatic bark and often with fragrant flowers. The most commonly cultivated member of the genus *Chimonanthus* is *C. praecox*, which can be glimpsed on the up-hill side of the path as you pass from the Visitor Centre to the Residence. Our plant of the week, *Chimonanthus yunnanensis*, also comes from China and the two differ only slightly in leaf shape and flower colour. A cool climate is a must for good flowering and a deep, well-drained soil with as much sun and wind shelter as possible will give good results. From the Greek *cheimon*, winter, and *anthos*, flower we understand the winter flowering nature of these fragrant delights.

Events

Helleborus Festival 31 Jul 04 - 1 Aug 04

This most beautiful flower springs to life in Winter. Ingrid, your host, will tell you all about this fantastic flower. How to look after it and how to grow it.

Your journey to the Helleborus Nursey at Bilpin (turn left of Bells Line of Road at Mountain Lagoon Road) will take you through some of the best picturesque country.

Contact Details: Ingrid on 02 45671107

Email: nemetz@bigpond.com

The Ladybird Chronicles exhibition finishes this weekend at Mount Tomah. It is a spectacular outdoor photographic display that captures the secret lives of beetles. While aphids, mealybugs and scale insects are the staple diet of Ladybirds, just before hibernating for Winter, they often eat protein-rich pollen and then look for comfortable quarters and friends for company.

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 – navel oranges, Strawberry Farm at Vineyard (local strawberries & corn), Tizzana Winery, Hawkesbury Estate (Seville oranges) and The Orange Spot, (**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), Galston Strawberries, Berry Good Farms, and Nati Roses, Geranium Cottage, 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 (**Macadamias, pecans**, honey, zola tomatoes, mandarins), Blue Mountains Natural Spring Water at Grose Vale, Heavenly Belle Café at Kurrajong Heights, Tutti Fruitti (hot soup, 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, corn, 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, Susumi – Enniskillen, Penrith Valley Oranges, Orange Spot, Hawkesbury Estate

Apples - Granny smiths, pink lady, Lady William

Navel Oranges – Penrith Valley Oranges – Hawkesbury Estate

Seville Oranges – Hawkesbury Estate and The Orange Spot

Strawberries – fresh and frozen

Pears – Packham, Burbosk

Pecan nuts & Macadamias - Enniskillen

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.
