

# Food For Thought

10<sup>th</sup> March, 2010

## STOP PRESS!!!



Wet weather in Victoria, particular in Shepparton & North Melbourne has caused damage to **Strawberries, Tomatoes, Beans & Broccoli** affecting supply & quality. Rain in South East Queensland has affected the supply of **Ginger & Sweet Potatoes**.



### RECOMMENDED VEGETABLE BUYS THIS WEEK

#### Corn, Eggplant, Lebanese Cucumbers, Zucchini



**ARTICHOKES** – New Season *Jerusalem* artichokes have now started & are worth including on the menu.

**BEANS** – A sporadic supply of *Butter* beans are available, however quality has been unsuitable as they are badly weather marked. They are not recommended buying for the price. *Baby* Beans are available, but are also quite expensive.

**BEETROOT** – *Golden Baby* Beetroot is currently unavailable. *Large Golden* Beetroot is available if required; please order on Monday, Wednesday & Friday only.

**BROCCOLI & BROCCOLINI** – The price of *Broccoli* is up significantly due the heavy rains affecting the crop resulting in a lower yield. *Broccolini* is available.

**CAULIFLOWER** – Due to disease & grub infestation, farmers are experiencing heavy losses as they are unable to spray due to bad weather.

**CUCUMBERS** – *Lebanese* Cucumbers are by far the best value of the cucumber line this week.

**CORN** – Excellent local Corn is available; great quality & value this week.

**EGGPLANT** – Another local fruit that is excellent value this week. *Baby* eggplant also represents good value this week.

**HERBS** – *Mixed Exotic Herb Leaf* is now available again. The main lines which are limited this week include the following: *Watercress, Coriander, Red Beetroot & Parsley*. Problems have arisen with the *Red Leaf* lines. They have been affected by the humidity & are not growing. Some other lines are limited & although available, cannot be sold separately. *Micro Herbs* in punnets are available with *Red Shiso* being very limited. If you require a *Red Leaf*, then we suggest using *Red Garnet, Red Basil* or *Bull's Blood* which is a green/red mix.

**LETTUCE & LEAF LINES** – *Baby Rocket* supply has improved, however quality may suffer from the weather conditions last weekend. *Baby English Spinach* is available, however supply has dropped. *Snow Pea Leaf* demand has increased & supply is down – excellent *Snow Pea Leaf* in punnets is available as an alternative. Heads of *Iceberg & Cos* lettuce remain light due to weather conditions requiring lettuce to be picked early.

**MUSHROOMS** – *Oyster* Mushrooms have an improved supply this week. Excellent *Pine* mushrooms are currently available.

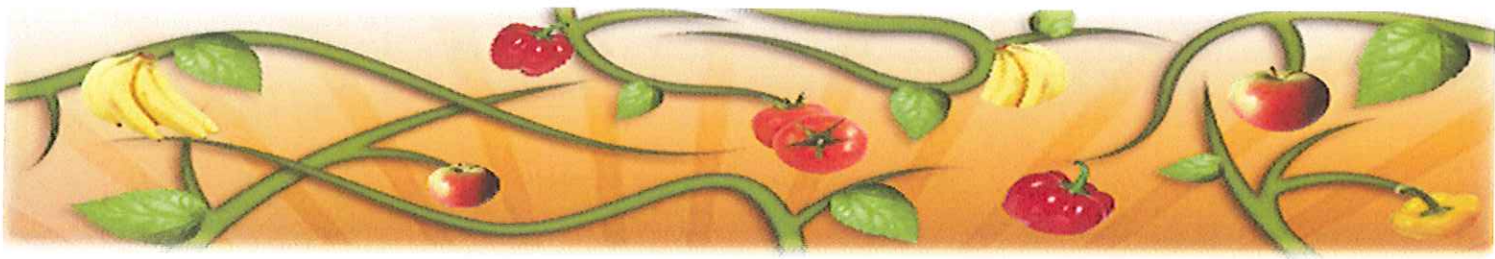
**POTATOES** – Some good news finally! *Graded potatoes & Large Desiree* potato supplies have improved & prices are back significantly. New Season *Kipfler* potatoes are expected this week & this will see prices come back down next week. *Sweet Potato* is very limited due to rain in Bundaberg making this product very expensive this week.

**TOMATOES** – Rain has impacted heavily on the supply of *Regular & Roma* tomatoes & prices are quite strong this week. *Cherry Tomatoes* are excellent quality because they have not been affected by weather, as the product is mainly grown in hot houses/indoors. *Ox Heart* Tomatoes are limited. *Vine ripe* tomatoes are very limited & as an alternative, we are supplying *Truss Tomatoes* which is a far better tomato, with better flavour. The sizing of the tomatoes may not be even.

**ZUCCHINIS** – Zucchini's from local areas represent great value & quality again this week.



*your connection to freshness*



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## RECOMMENDED FRUIT BUYS THIS WEEK Bananas, Rockmelon, Seedless Watermelon



**APRICOTS** – All fruit is from New Zealand. Considering the lateness of the season, quality remains good.

**AVOCADO** – Good supplies now & prices are easing.

**BANANAS** – Represent good buying this week.

**BERRIES** – Due to weather in Victoria, we will now be buying "Glasshouse" *Blueberries & Raspberries* out of Tasmania. *Strawberries* are continuing to have quality issues & the bad weather last weekend has only compounded the problem. Please only buy the fruit that is required on the day as shelf life is very limited

**CHESTNUTS** – New season fruit is just starting & is very expensive.

**DRAGON FRUIT** – Good quality fruit is available & is one of the more striking of the exotic fruits.

**FIGS** – Excellent local supplies continue, mainly *Black* with a few *Green* available.

**FINGER LIMES** – Excellent new season *Finger Limes* have started. This exotic fruit is referred to as *Citrus Caviar* – they are an ideal accompaniment to Thai & Japanese Dishes, Salads, Cocktails & dressings. The fruit can be frozen & used later in the season.

**FUJI FRUIT** – Excellent new season fruit out of QLD has started. Now is a good time to include on the menu!

**KIWIFRUIT** – *Baby* Kiwifruit have started again.

**GRAPES** – *Black Seedless* Grapes of any reasonably quality is impossible to buy; our *VIP Seedless* Grape will be '*Crimson Seedless*'.

**MANGO** – Fruit is at the end of the season & quality is moderate only. *Green* Mangoes are not available & the best alternative is *Green Paw Paw*.

**MELONS** – Rockmelon are excellent quality & great value this week.

**PEACHES & NECTARINES** – *Yellow & White* flesh varieties continue; however the *White* variety is expected to finish in the next couple of weeks.

**PEARS** – *Packham pears, Corella, Beurre Bosc & Ya Pears* are all available. *Paradise pears* have now finished.

**PLUMS** – Excellent eating fruit continues. *Blood* Plums are just about finished. *Sugar* plums are available.

**POMMEGRANITE** – USA fruit only.

**QUINCE** – New season fruit has started.

**RAMBUTAN** – Excellent quality fruit is available.

**STARFRUIT** – Reasonable supplies are currently available.

**TAMARILLOS** – New season *Red* Tamarillo's are available & in stock, so now is a good time to include on the menu. Some *Yellow* fruit is available, however they are not consistent.

**WATERMELON** – *Seedless* watermelon is recommended buying this week; great flavour & value.



### EXOTIC FRUIT

*Please note that Exotic Fruits may not be available every day.*

Starfruit, Rambutan, Longans, Finger Limes, Dragon fruit, Chestnuts, Baby Kiwifruit, Pomegranate, Tamarillo, Figs, Fuji



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