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AUSVEG launches new advertising campaign



Examples of the vegetable promotion campaign held Australia wide in February.

Australians don't eat enough vegetables but industry body AUSVEG hopes a new ad campaign will change eating and buying habits.

Stats show that most Australians eat just 1.8 serves of vegies daily, only 36 per cent of the recommended 5+ serves. To improve that figure, and hopefully keep farmers employed, an advertising campaign was launched at the end of January to promote the benefits of vegetables as healthy and affordable.

The 'Fresh veg, deliciously affordable' campaign was run in collaboration with the Outdoor Media Association and Health and Wellbeing Queensland. The

campaign showed that fresh vegetables are affordable at just 65 cents per serve and was designed to inspire consumers to add one more serve a day. It is an important message in the face of the current cost-of-living crisis.

Slogans included 'Carrots; cheaper than chips', 'Corn; a fresh and sweet summer treat', and 'Broccoli: slice, dice and serve with rice'. They appeared on billboards, buses and at tram stops.

The advertising campaign ran across all states and territories during the month of February with prominent signage in metro and regional locations. Learn more about the campaign at boostyourhealthy.com.au where there are also recipes and a free, downloadable e-recipe book.

Berries boom in UK



The British berry market has reached cracked £2 billion says British Berry Growers. Photo Adobe Stock Photos.

British Berry Growers say the market for British berries has reached a significant milestone, with a total market value of £2 billion (around \$4 billion).

The industry body represents 95 percent of British berries sold in the UK. That's a double in value since 2015.

The berry market's growth has been driven by rising consumer demand, with sales volumes increasing by 4.3 per cent in the past year. Market penetration has also reached 85.3 per cent, highlighting the widespread popularity of British berries.

In the past year, the average year-round price of berries rose by 6.9 per cent, contributing to the industry's overall value growth. Additionally, a report commissioned by British Berry Growers revealed that the industry contributed £624 million to the UK economy in 2023, supported £134 million in taxes, and created 16,317 full-time equivalent (FTE) jobs.

Despite these positive figures, British berry growers are bracing for a challenging year in as rising energy costs, wage increases, and insufficient returns from retailers put pressure on the sector.



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Fruit Logistica attracts record numbers to Berlin

Fruit Logistica is held annually in early February in Europe, organised by media company Fruit Net. This year's event attracted more than 2600 exhibitors from 90 countries to Berlin.

"Our guiding theme is Fruitful Connections, and that's because Berlin is the place to make contacts, share new plans, and build partnerships," says Kai Mangelberger, who was Director of Fruit Logistica 2025. "We are excited to offer our exhibitors and visitors countless opportunities to strengthen existing relationships and forge new ones, all aimed at driving sustainable growth."

Kai has now taken over as head of the recently created Mobility Division and has been replaced in the Director role by Alexander Stein.

Record numbers

This year 90,000 visitors attended the three-day show which held February 5-7. The show was spread across 26 exhibition halls and also included a program of talks and panel discussions. Topics ranged from the genetics of strawberry ripening to the development of risk models in the face of extreme weather.

One of the Australian exhibitors at the event was Norton Kelly-Boxall, Co-Founder, Lyro Robotics, which has designed a robotic harvester.

"Being at Fruit Logistica in Berlin has been a great opportunity for us, having everybody concentrated in one place, as we are expanding into the European market," said Norton. "It's great to generate leads and meet new people in the 'Startup World'."

Awards

Awards for innovation and products are also voted on and presented during Fruit Logistica including the Fruit Logistica Innovation Award (FLIA) for technology. This year the FLIA Technology Award went to Croptimus™ from Fermata Technology, which is image analysis technology that enables farmers to detect diseases or pest infestations on vegetables in the greenhouse at an early stage. As software as a service (SaaS), Croptimus requires no additional hardware and can work with both installed cameras and smartphone images. According to the manufacturer, the innovation from Israel promises up to 50 per cent less scouting effort, 30 per cent less crop loss and 25 per cent less input consumption - a sustainable and efficient solution for agriculture.

Fruit Logistica will return to Berlin in 2026. To discover more about Fruit Logistica, see reports on www.fruitnet.com.



Above: The award for technology went to Croptimus™ from Fermata Technology for early pest and disease identification.

Right: Norton Kelly-Boxall presented his company's robot harvester at Fruit Logistica.



Virtual conference for CEA

The virtual CEA & Indoor Farming 4.0 event will return for a fifth year, offering knowledge and assistance on the evolving solutions, processes, technologies, and practices being developed, used, and implemented to enhance productivity and yields for indoor growing and farming.

The virtual conference platform goes live on May 2 with virtual sessions on May 9 and May 13 (UTC time) and is free for farmers and growers growing for direct consumption.

To find out more, see the website www.tech40.net/cea40.



A community greenhouse brings new technology to Australia

A small town in Tasmania has taken on the challenge of building a greenhouse with a difference. Jennifer Stackhouse went to Miena to investigate.

The road to Miena from Deloraine in the northwest of Tasmania was long, winding and shrouded in fog as I headed towards a newly built greenhouse.

The temperature outside was just 8C and it was the middle of summer. Miena is a small town nestled beside the Great Lake in alpine Tasmania. It has a permanent population of 90 but the population is boosted during the trout fishing season when fishers flock to their 'shacks' (holiday houses). Multicoloured shacks line dirt tracks that lead away from the main road into the gnarled cider gums and boulders that dot this landscape.



Snow often isolates the area in winter while fire is a summer threat. Photo Adobe Stock Photos.