

AGARI NEWS

A Mushroom Statutory Levy Update

April 2005

YOUR LEVY AT WORK

Welcome to the four-monthly report of the Australian mushroom industry's statutory levy funded programs. This report is the official communication to mushroom levy payers on the activities your levy is funding in line with the industry's strategic plan and annual investment plan.

MIAC RECOMMENDS 2005-2006 ANNUAL INVESTMENT PLAN TO HAL BOARD

At its meeting in February, the Mushroom Industry Advisory Committee (MIAC) recommended the 2005-2006 Annual Investment Plan for the Australian mushroom industry to the Board of Horticulture Australia Ltd (HAL).

The 2005-2006 Mushroom Industry Annual Investment Plan (annual plan) allocates \$1,396,000 of statutory levy funds to marketing and promotion programs and \$526,000 of matched funds to research & development programs. A further \$304,000 of industry endorsed voluntary contribution projects have also been recommended.

This brings the industry's R&D and M&P investment to just over \$2.2million which is less than 1% of the industry's value at first point of sale. Based on industry standards, the statutory levy represents about 0.75% of a grower's production at the first point of sale.

The 2005-2006 Annual Plan links directly to the Mushroom Industry's 2001-2006 Strategic Investment Plan (strategic plan) that was developed by a broad cross-section of mushroom industry representatives and technical resource specialists in December 2001.

Projects to be undertaken during the 2005-2006 financial year include:-

Research and Development Projects:

- Pesticide Management Project - \$75,000
- Pest and Disease Mgt Service - \$40,000
- Retail Category Development - continuing project
- Catering Sector Research - \$20,000
- National 2&5 Program - \$55,000

- Mushroom Consumer Research - \$100,000
- Anti-Dumping Project - \$40,000
- Spent Mushroom Substrate - \$26,000
- Mushrooms and Health Research - \$75,000
- Pest and Disease Monitoring Service - \$80,000

Market and Promotions Projects:

- National Below the Line activities - \$31,000
- Mushroom Lovers Club - \$1,000
- Consumer Radio advertising - \$455,000
- TV Advertorial - \$4,000
- Magazine advertising - \$10,000
- National public relations - \$18,000
- State Below the Line activities - \$480,000
- Recipe leaflets - \$200,000
- Greengrocer Club - \$8,000
- Food Service radio advertising - \$100,000
- Food Service magazine advertising - \$19,000
- Pie Competition sponsorship - \$4,000
- Food Service National activities - \$55,000

If you would like more information about any of these projects, give Greg Seymour a ring on 02 4577 6877 or email him at seymour@amga.asn.au.

2004-2005 RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM UPDATE

Mushrooms Support National Health Initiative

The mushroom industry, along with the rest of the fresh produce industry is supporting a national campaign to promote the consumption of fruit and vegetables.

'Go for 2 & 5' is part of an \$11 million 'Building a healthy, active Australia program' which has been designed to promote healthy eating and increase physical activity among Australian children.

Pesticide Studies Continue at Sydney University

The continuing program of trials in growing rooms at the Marsh Lawson Mushroom Research Unit (MLMRU) and subsequent analyses of samples is providing data for inclusion in applications to the Australian Pesticide and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) for pesticide registration or issue of permits.

Pest and Disease Management Service

The content of Agora web entries had been reviewed and updated. A promotional / information leaflet has been widely distributed within the industry.

Options are being investigated for laboratory testing of samples suspected of pest or disease attack.

The incidence of pests and diseases during this reporting period appeared higher than in recent years.

Slow down with category development project

Changes in personnel at the project retailing partner have made it necessary to acquaint new appointees with methodologies and objectives.

However, regular data continues to be generated, meaning that it will be possible to benchmark results when the project again becomes fully operational.

Successful research on promotion of mushrooms in the workplace

The project has worked closely with Spotless Catering – one of Australia's major contract catering companies, to explore opportunities to increasing the uptake of mushrooms by the business – catering segment of the food service market.

A specially designed mushroom promotion, called 'Celebrate Mushroom Month' was implemented with the company during September, 2004.

There was an increase in the use of mushrooms in Spotless Catering's business – catering sector. The overall promotion, methodology and materials were rated highly by the company's National Food Development Manager, Chef Managers and customers.

Spent Mushroom Substrate (SMS) trials linked with Landcare group

Establishment of SMS trials with vegetable growers in the north Adelaide Plains region has been held over to commence in Autumn 2005.

The work will be undertaken in co-operation with the Virginia Landcare Group, with field grown vegetables and greenhouse crops being included in the trials.

MARKETING AND PROMOTIONS PROGRAM UPDATE –January to April 2005

National Programs

The past four months of the M&P program were highlighted by an outstanding BBQ Mushroom promotion with our partner Elgas over summer; and tremendous Mushroom Madness promotion during March. Media support was fantastic and responses from those attending the functions was extremely positive. The presentation of the inaugural Mushroom Retailer of the Year Awards in each state went over well and has provided a strong base to build this promotion over the coming years. The radio advertising program continues to work well for us.

The release of the February recipe leaflet has brought a positive response from media and consumers alike.

Preparation of the Mushroom Mania campaign in June is well underway. Serge Dansereau, from Bathers Pavilion Restaurant in Sydney, is this year's Mushroom Mania Ambassador. Early signs indicate this will be our best ever food service promotion.

Following is a state by state round up of activities carried out to promote mushrooms.

New South Wales

Seniors Week Expo – Cooking demonstrations over three days at Darling Harbour to an over 55 audience of 3,000.

Mushroom Mania retailers and wholesalers function and NSW Mushroom Retailer of the Year presentation. - Greengrocers, supermarket representatives and grower representatives attended a function at which the General Manager provided an update on the industry's promotion and advertising activities and current consumer research

trends. The opportunity was also used to present the inaugural NSW Mushroom Retailer of the Year award to Sutherland Best Fresh.

Sydney Royal Easter Show. Celebrity Food presenters were provided with a bag of ingredients which included mushrooms and asked to cook a meal in less than 20 minutes. The presentations were made daily in the Dome Pavilion at Olympic park. Mushrooms were also featured in many of the other cooking demonstrations conducted in the Fresh Kitchen during the Show. Over 10,000 people visited the stands.

Radio station 2UE, 2GB and 2CH promotions. To compliment the industry's Mushroom Mania advertising, and to provide additional advertising reach, the State Coordinator obtained dinner vouchers to the value of \$3,600 from Sydney restaurants to give away as part of mushroom on air competitions. The promotions were conducted on 2UE, 2GB and 2CH. The audience reach during the month was in the vicinity of 800,000 to one million listeners.

Radio presenters' mushroom breakfast. The staff and presenters of the 2GB breakfast shows were treated to a mushroom breakfast. The presenters promoted and gave away the mushroom cookbook and gave mushrooms a great rap during the shows. Audience numbers were in the vicinity of 50,000.

Instore demonstrations and shopping centre cooking shows. 3 hour cooking demonstrations were conducted at greengrocers across Sydney. They included

- Carlingford Court, Carlingford Fruit World
- Castle Towers, Freshworld Castle Hill
- Macquarie Centre, LoSurdo's
- Cherrybrook Village, Martelli's Fruit Market
- Metro Marrickville, Metro Grocer
- Westfield Miranda, Panetta fruits Miranda
- Penrith Plaza, Penrith Plaza Growers Market
- Wetherill Park, Trim Fresh
- Nepean Square, Freshworld Penrith
- Sutherland, Sutherland Best Fresh
- Westfield Parramatta, Country Growers
- Cronulla, Cronulla Fruit Fair
- Bankstown Square, Fields Of Fruit
- Campsie, The World Of Fruit Campsie
- Sydney Fish Markets, Waterside Fruit Connection
- Caringbah, Best Fresh Markets Caringbah
- Cronulla Fair, Cronulla,
- Westfield North Rock
- Woden Plaza ACT
- Fairfield Plaza
- Erina Fair

Approximately. 6300 – 8000 consumers attended the demonstrations

Radio promotions. On numerous occasions during this reporting period, the NSW State Coordinator promoted mushrooms during her three weekly radio segments on 2UE and 2ST. There were over 1 million listeners over the 4 month period.

South Australia

Jag Kitchen Opening. Mushrooms were included in menus and demonstrations at the opening of new kitchen display showrooms. Recipe leaflets were handed out to over 500 consumers.

MLA photo shoot for Chefs Special Magazine. Mushroom product was included in shots and recipes for the Chefs Special May edition.

Kids in the Kitchen – TAFE Regency. Mushroom product was provided and included in the pasta and pizza making classes. Mighty Mushroom also attended and handed out recipe leaflets to the 1,500 children who attended the classes.

Radio interviews. Throughout the reporting period, Adelaide radio personalities Phil Sheldon and Micheal Keelan joined with Pam Tobin in presenting mushroom ideas and recipes.

Carnivale – Italian Food and Wine Festival.

Mushroom products were provided for cooking demonstrations by Chef Rosa Matt who joined with Pam Tobin in discussing all aspects of mushrooms - selecting, varieties, storage and cooking. Recipe leaflets were handed out promoting the mushroom industry's Elgas BBQ competition. Approximately 200 keen mushroom consumers attended each session.

Pete & Pepper Cooking Class. Mushroom recipes were included in classes; "A Foodies Paradise", and "A Journey of Food & Wine".

Chef's Training - Regency Hotel School. Mushrooms were included in a la carte menu at the school's restaurant. They were also included in salads, vegetables and the final buffet. Recipes and posters were presented to students and Pam Tobin provided a presentation on the nutritional benefits, storage and versatility of mushrooms. Over 120 chefs of the future were involved in the presentation.

Restaurant & Caterers Annual Picnic. A mushroom salad was a feature dish served to over 200 members of the Restaurant and Caterers Association. This provided an opportunity to

encourage current and up and coming chefs to include mushrooms on their menus.

Mushroom Madness. This campaign is designed for the retailer and includes demonstrations in selected major shopping centres. The South Australian Retailer of the Year Award was presented by Greg Seymour at a cocktail evening at the Adelaide Convention Centre. Over 30 retailers and growers attended the function. Mushroom Madness was also a feature on radio 5aa throughout the month.

Centro Colonnades Shopping Centre. A 2-day cooking presentation with recipe leaflets handed out to over 1,000 eager mushroom consumers.

Hollywood Plaza Shopping Centre. A 1-day cooking presentation with mushroom recipe leaflets distributed to 200 shoppers.

Taste the Adelaide Plains. Mushrooms were a feature of this prestigious event which was attended by over 250 consumers. They enjoyed the static mushroom display and took the opportunity of picking up a copy of the latest recipe leaflet.

Shopping Centre Demonstrations. Over 600 consumers enjoyed the mushroom demonstrations held from 10am – 2pm at Burnside Village Shopping Centre and Westfield Marion Shopping Centre. Recipe leaflets were also on hand so that consumers could try the mushroom recipes at home.

Radio 5rph. Following the announcement of the SA Mushroom Retailer of the Year award, the winner, Adelaide Fresh Glenelg was interviewed on radio 5rph for 45 minutes.

MLA Dinner at Rymill Winery Coonawarra. Mushrooms were included on the menu and complimented the delicious feature dish Terra Rossa Beef. Approximately 50 influential industry representatives attended the function.

Food & Wine festival - Burnside Shopping Village. Mushrooms included in over 12 cooking demonstrations conducted throughout the festival. Chefs from various restaurants were involved in the festival and were continually singing the praises of mushrooms from a nutritional and economical viewpoint.

MLA Chefs Table. In response to the successful MLA dinner at Rymill Winery held earlier in the month, mushrooms were again included on the menu at the MLA's industry dinner.

Western Australia

Australia Day Breakfast. BBQ mushrooms were served in 4 beach-side locations as part of a combined Australia Day breakfast and coast walk.

Media Coverage. Throughout the reporting period, mushroom recipes and ideas were promoted in newspapers around Australia, radio interviews and websites.

A full -page magazine story about mushrooms was also featured in the WA Homes and Living magazine.

Chilli Festival. BBQ Chilli Mushrooms were served for sale at the annual Chilli Festival at the Araluen Botanic Park. Over 6,000 people attended the festival.

Mushroom Madness radio promotions. The versatility of mushrooms was the theme of the industry's radio campaign which was heard on 3 prime WA metropolitan radio stations throughout the month. The mushroom madness activities culminated in the announcement of the WA Mushroom Retailer of the Year competition which was won by the team at The Fruit Market in Brentwood.

Bike to Work Breakfast. This popular event was attended by approximately 1,500 health conscious consumers. Participants were treated to a free breakfast, including mushrooms, straight from the bbq to celebrate the launch of the event.

Caravan and Camping Fair. To continue the "mushrooms for health" message, the industry participated in the centre-stage cooking demonstrations with well known chef Don Hancey. Mushrooms and mushroom recipes were a feature of the presentations.

Chef's Long Table Lunch and North Cottesloe Surf Club Fundraiser. Again, Don Hancey and his team of chefs included mushrooms in their menus. Over 500 influential foodies attended these two events.

Fruit and Veg Week. In April, mushroom samples were prepared and distributed to 800 students attending the Annual Fruit and Veg Week held at Murdoch University.

Curtin Healthy Lifestyle Expo. Easy and healthy mushroom ideas were demonstrated at the Expo with over 1,500 students in attendance.

Garden Week at Perry Lakes. Chefs presented mushroom dishes as part of the cooking demonstrations held throughout the week. Over 500 recipe leaflets were distributed.

Fairbridge Festival at Pinjarra. Mushrooms came alive amidst the entertaining and creative kaleidoscope of the festival with activities for kids and adults alike. Mushrooms were included in the chef demonstrations, cooking classes for kids and a delicious bbq breakfast.

VICTORIA

Frankston Sea Festival. Culinary Wizard Deborah Saunders teamed up with Caroline Westmore of McCormicks Foods to cook up a storm of mushrooms and seafood - and food consultant and media presenter, Ann Creber, got mushrooms cooking on the George Foreman Grill to celebrate BBQ Mushrooms! Audience/Attendance numbers were between 15,000 - 18,000

Healthy Eating Seminar for Glen Eira City Council. Food consultant and media presenter, Ann Creber featured mushrooms as a healthy ingredient in her cooking demonstrations and provided mushroom recipes for staff to try at home. The staff were so enthusiastic that they have asked for mushroom cooking demonstrations at the work depot in April. 35 staff attended the demonstrations.

Mushroom Madness Cooking Shows at ACME Field Days in Warrnambool. Mushroom cooking shows and tastings with recipes to take home with participation by an enthusiastic audience of 40,000 members. All visitors were encourage to enter the BBQ Mushrooms website competition.

Mushrooms cooking at Sustainable Living Festival. Anton Hooton of Anton's Flying Woks featured mushrooms as a great ingredient for stir-fries.



"Mushrooms go into the stir-fry at Sustainable Living Festival"

Mushrooms at Take Off Weight Naturally (T.O.W.N) Classes. Food consultant and media presenter, Ann Creber, enthused her audience of 70 about the attributes of mushrooms as part of a healthy diet.

Mushroom Madness at Hanging Rock. Mushrooms displays, ongoing entertaining and informative mushroom cooking shows, free tastings, recipes to take home, fresh mushrooms for sale, mushroom kits for sale and mushroom themed prizes on the hour every hour with attendance of an extra 100 visitors for the prize draw. Our team won a Gold Award of Excellence! There were over 25,000 visitors who attended the festival.



"Giant flat mushrooms were a hit at Harvest Picnic at Hanging Rock"

Healthy Cooking Demonstration Drysdale Club in Geelong. Food consultant and media presenter, Ann Creber, enthused her audience about the attributes of mushrooms as part of a healthy diet, cooked up fresh mushrooms and gave the audience recipes to take home.

Melbourne Food & Wine Festival – World's Longest Lunch. Over 1000 food and wine enthusiasts dined on a sensational three-course feast including mushrooms (kindly sponsored by Great Australian Mushrooms) on the promenade of the Melbourne Museum with the "Dinosaurs of China" theme. The lunch was created by festival caterer Tony Le Deux in consultation with Gilbert Lau and Anthony Lui of the prestigious Flower Drum Restaurant.



"Mushrooms were the icing on the cake at the World's Longest Lunch"

Farmers Breakfast with Mushrooms. Visitors could tuck into mouth-watering barbecued mushrooms with bacon, eggs and tomatoes alongside, shop for fresh mushrooms and collect free recipes to cooked up their mushies at home.



"Mushroom prize-winners at The Farmer's Breakfast"

Mushroom feature in Tupperware DVD. Media presenter Jo Richardson featured mushrooms (varieties, preparation and storage tips and recipes) in a DVD produced to show the versatility of Tupperware cookware and storage containers.

Mushroom Madness comes to the Melbourne Food & Wine Festival! A sensational mushroom-themed dinner was created by Northern Chinese Chef George Qing and his kitchen brigade at Bokchoy Tang restaurant at Federations Square. George showcased both white and specialty mushrooms (with the exotics kindly sponsored by Great Australian Mushrooms) with 8 mushroom dishes matched with 8 premium wines from the Sunbury region. Our Victorian Mushroom Retailer of the Year for 2005 – Joe Patti of La Manna Fresh in Brunswick – was presented with his award. Over 160 consumers and media attended the function.



"The La Manna Fresh team with Bokchoy Tang Restaurant Owner and Chef George Qing"

Fire – and Mushrooms – in the Oven! Celebrity Chef Bart Beek treated guests to cooking demonstrations and a four course meal including luscious whole baked mushrooms matched with premium quality wines.

Mushroom Madness Cooking Shows. Our Mushroom Cooking Team presented three-hour entertaining and informative cooking shows each day, with free tastings and recipes at The Glen Shopping Centre in Glen Waverley. The shows attracted an audience of over 4,500 consumers.

Mushrooms Come to Docklands Dockfest. Visitors were treated to Gourmet Mushroom & Goat's Cheese Pizzas piping hot from the Owen's Wood-fired ovens where they could collect free recipes to take home

Melbourne Food & Wine Festival – Seduced by the Vegetable. Leading Melbourne Restaurant Chef Gabriel Martin created a seven-course meal with the highlight being "A Study of Mushrooms" comprising 5 superbly crafted mushroom dishes. Guests each took home a Mushroom shopping bag with recipes to cook at home.



"Mushrooms backstage at Seduced By The Vegetable with leading Melbourne Chef Gabriel Martin"

Young Gourmet Project - Kids Cooking at Federation Square. Food consultant and media presenter, Ann Creber, cooked up a storm of mushrooms for kids and their parents as part of the Melbourne Food & Wine Festival's lively activities.

Mordialloc Fine Food, Wine & Music Festival. Over 40,000 visitors loved the gourmet mushroom pizzas created by Owen's Ovens using their wood-fired ovens and picked up mushroom recipes to cook up at home. Mushroom cookbooks were provided for prize draws on the hour every hour with 3AW's Derek Guile announcing the prize-winners on air.

Kids Arty Farty at Sills Bend. Families and kids came out in droves to enjoy a family day out. Owen's Ovens cooked up gourmet mushroom pizzas, which were snapped up by kids of all ages! Mushroom recipes were provided for the visitors to cook up at home.

Mushroom Madness Cooking Class. A hands-on mushroom cooking class was presented by chef instructors at Chisholm TAFE's Dandenong, Rosebud and Frankston campuses. Students were encouraged to cook the recipes up at home.

Gourmet Mushroom Pizzas. Over 1300 Farmers' market visitors could enjoy gourmet mushroom pizzas for breakfast or brunch, buy fresh mushrooms and pick up recipes to cook them at home.

Fresh Produce Program for Schools and Groups. Melbourne Markets fresh produce team presented mushrooms for tasting with other fresh produce to school students, teachers and parents and provided recipes to take home

- St Joseph's Primary School in Benalla
- Benalla West Primary School
- Ivanhoe Girls Grammar School
- Xavier College
- Berwick South Primary School
- Bentleigh Primary School
- Brunswick South Primary School
- Brighton Montessori Primary School
- Cockatoo Primary School
- Hume Valley Special School
- Heany Park Primary School
- St Francis Desalle Primary School
- Williamstown North Primary School
- Vermont Special School
- Heathdale Primary School
- Seaford Greenways Ladies Group
- Warringal Probus Club

Pasta making class at Eastern Regional Library. Food consultant and media presenter, Ann Creber whipped up delicious mushroom pasta sauce to go with her fresh pasta demonstration. Guests took recipe leaflets to try the recipe at home.

HIA Home Show. Vivacious media presenter Jo Richardson presented delicious mushroom recipes during two of her vibrant cooking demonstrations and provided recipe leaflets for visitors to take home. It is estimated that there were over 80,000 visitors to the Show.

QUEENSLAND

Promotional activities in Queensland during the reporting period saw 100 cooking shows, instore demonstrations, cooking clubs and roving chef presentations in shopping centres and independent retail stores. Locations included:-

- Westfield North Lakes
- Fairfield Gardens
- Mt Gravatt Plaza
- Centro Lutwyche
- Westfield Strathpine
- Centro Albany
- Robina Town Centre
- Australia Fair
- Sunshine Plaza
- Clifford Gardens
- Ashmore City
- Centro Taigum
- Beenleigh Marketplace
- Arndale Shopping Centre
- Logan Central
- Logan Hyperdome
- All About Fruit, New Farm
- Garden of Eden, Westfield Chermiside
- Fruitabella, Runaway Bay
- Fancee Fruit, Westfield Carindale
- Fabulous Fruit, Westfield Northlakes
- Day Fresh Fruit, Westfield Strathfield
- Sundome, Logan Hyperdome
- Carina Fruit Market, Carina
- Clayfield Markets Fresh, Clayfield
- Crispy Carrot, Mt Gravatt Plaza
- GS Fruit World, Treet Tops
- Sam's Fruit Bowl, Nerang Mall
- Fruits of Life, Upper Mt Gravatt
- Pacific Fair Fruit Basket
- Fruity Capers, Toowng

January also saw mushrooms coming on board with the Brisbane Markets in promoting the health benefits of fresh fruit and vegetables, including mushrooms to school children. The emphasis was on teaching children how to create healthy snacks using fresh produce.

Mushrooms were also featured in a number of activities during Seniors Week, in particular at Mt Gravatt Plaza Meal Masters Club, Brisbane. Over 70 keen mushroom foodies attended and were treated to a three-course meal which included mushrooms.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE WINNERS OF THE INAUGURAL MUSHROOM RETAILERS OF THE YEAR

The following winners of the 2005 awards were judged on a number of criteria, some of which were the store's presentation, variety available and knowledge of product.

- Adelaide Fresh Glenelg, Glenelg, South Australia
- Fruit Capers, Toowong, Queensland
- La Manna Fresh, Brunswick, Victoria
- The Fruit Basket, Brentwood, Western Australia
- Sutherland Best Fresh, Sutherland, New South Wales

2006-2011 STRATEGIC PLANNING WORKSHOPS – We need your help!

The mushroom industry will be embarking on the development of a strategic plan for 2006-2011 to map out the industry's future R&D and marketing and promotions activities. A series of workshops will be held in each state to provide an opportunity for all mushrooms growers to have input into the development of the Plan.

Here are the preliminary dates for the workshops:

- Adelaide – 30th August
- Perth – 1st September
- Brisbane – 5th September
- Melbourne – 6th September
- Sydney – 7th September

Further details about the program and meeting papers will be forwarded prior to the workshops. In the meantime, please put the date in your diary and come along and have your say.

2005 ANNUAL LEVY PAYERS' MEETING – MEETING NOTICE

The Annual Levy Payers meeting will be held on Friday 30th September 2005, commencing at 8.00am at the Country Club Resort, Launceston, Tasmania. All mushroom levy contributors are welcome to attend. The preliminary agenda is:-

- Marketing and Promotions Review - Greg Seymour
- Research and Development Review - Tony Biggs
- Strategic Review - Greg Seymour
- Economic Outlook - Prof Guay Lim - Melbourne Institute
- 5-year Strategic Planning Update - Greg Seymour
- MAC Chairman's Roundup - Bob Granger

2005 NATIONAL MUSHROOM CONFERENCE – REGISTER NOW!!

Details about the 2005 conference can be found on www.mushrooms.net.au. Register now for what is going to be an exciting and informative conference.