

Fresh Asparagus ...it's easy

Media Release
June, 2002

A Preview of Spring...

Asparagus announces the arrival of Spring like no other vegetable!

Asparagus is easy! Simply snap off the coarse ends and you are only minutes away from a tantalising dish. Whether you steam it, stir-fry it, bake it, blend it, toss in a salad or even throw it on the barbie ... it's easy! Forget having to rush out to get your very own 'you beaut' asparagus steamer. And the same goes for asparagus peelers.

It's time to dispel the myth that asparagus is only for gourmet cooks. Check out our delicious yet simple recipes, which are also available in digital format on the enclosed CD along with a selection of stunning images for your use.

The most delectable of vegetables, asparagus is sure to please even the most health conscious – it's fat free, low in kilojoules, rich in folate and vitamins C and E as well as being a natural laxative and diuretic.

The Australian Asparagus Council, a group of 60 asparagus growers in the Koo Wee Rup, Bairnsdale and Lindenow areas of Victoria, proudly brings you this package. Over 70% of Australia's asparagus crop is produced in this region. But there is more to this region than meets the eye! It is rich in stories ...

Leading export nation...

Here you'll find passionate and committed farmers who have helped boost the Victorian economy to the tune of \$40 million, with more than 60% of Victorian asparagus being exported, accounting for 45% Victoria's vegetable exports. Australia is the biggest world trader in asparagus.

The integrity of times past...

In times past, you would have seen umpteen teams of Clydesdales pulling carts piled high with dewy fresh asparagus through the characteristic morning mists rising from the rich peaty soils. Today, George Giles - the last working Clydesdale horse in the Koo Wee Rup area – provides a valuable link with the past. Whilst all the other growers in the area now use modified self-steering tractors to pull their asparagus laden carts back to the packing shed, Hayden is as thrilled with the job that George does as he is with his companionship.

From times past to innovation in farming techniques...

Frank Butera, director of VBA Farming Pty Ltd, discovered an innovative way to dispose of fern debris, albeit very much trial by accident! A friend in another area recalled the story of how his son accidentally set fire to a section of the paddock, and how production was surprisingly good the following year. Frank has since developed a naked flame burner to clean up the asparagus fern debris and help prevent disease.

Emerging from the paddock, then on to the plate...

Did you know that at the height of its growing season, single spears of asparagus can grow over 2cm in one hour? Join the Jeffrey family on one of their popular Asparagus Tours, which operate between September and December each year. See for yourself how this fascinating vegetable grows, emerging triumphant from the soil. Then watch, from a specially built viewing platform, how freshly picked asparagus moves through the 'state of the art' Gippsland Green computerised asparagus processing system - one of the most technically advanced systems internationally. You'll move from the processing shed to the kitchen where you'll be greeted by Kerri Burge, who'll show you how asparagus can be transformed into sumptuous dishes.

Eat at home...

It's time we appreciated how delicious and versatile this amazing and delectable vegetable is. With this in mind, let's spread the word that best describes fresh asparagus – it's 'easy'!

For more information, please contact

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