



Juicy result from dry spell

By HEATHER GOODWIN

SOME like it hot – especially these juicy table grapes currently being picked and packed at Emerald's 2PH farms.

Grape grower Craig Pressler says he has the abnormally dry post-winter spell to thank for the superb quality of this year's crop of Flame red and Menindee white seedless grapes.

"We haven't had any rain of significance throughout the growing season which has certainly been beneficial for not having major issues with pests and disease," Mr Pressler explained as he prepared to send out the very first grapes of the season last month.

"The quality of the grapes is looking very good because we've had an abnormally dry period from pruning, which was in July.

"We had a lot of growth; we had good flowering; we had good fruit set."

Table grapes make up a third of the operation at 2PH Farms and it'll take some 160 pairs of hands to pick and pack them over the next few weeks.

These tasty Emerald specimens will find their way to tables across Australia via the major supermarkets to meet increased demand.

According to a study, Australians are now munching their way through more grapes than ever with consumption up by 50 per cent over the past 10 years.



■ **READY TO GO:** 2PH Farm's Craig Pressler gets ready to send out the first table grapes of the season.

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