



MEDIA RELEASE

AUSTRALIA'S LITTLE SUPER SNACK IN FOR A SWEET SEASON

People of all ages are being urged to kick the junk food habit and ***Munch-A Bunch-A Grapes*** this summer with a bumper crop expected in green grocers, convenience stores and supermarkets nationwide when the season kicks off in November.

Steady rainfalls throughout autumn and winter have contributed to sub-surface moisture in most growing regions, making conditions ideal for an above average harvest of sweet juicy grapes over the months ahead.

Australian Table Grape Association Chairman, Nick Muraca, said the rains were a boon for growers and will ensure consumers can munch to their heart's content on Australia's little super snack well into autumn next year.

"Australia is renowned for producing the highest quality table grapes thanks to our deep, rich soils, climate diversity and sophisticated horticulture practices," Mr Muraca said.

"This means our produce is bursting with flavour and is jam-packed with healthy vitamins, minerals and antioxidants. Grapes add colour and interest to children's lunch boxes and are a convenient, affordable anytime snack whether you're at work, entertaining at home, going on a picnic or out and about on the weekend," he said.

Table grapes add a sweet surprise to recipes and contain a number of nutritional benefits including natural fructose to provide energy and vitality, fibre to help cleanse and detoxify the system and Vitamin C to help maintain a strong immune system. Grapes also have a low GI certification from the Glycemic Index Foundation.

More than 2000 growers produce about 120,000 tonnes of table grapes each year, with nearly half of the bounty sent to an increasing number of markets around the world, making grapes one of Australia's top horticulture exports.



Fresh home-grown table grapes are available for six months from November, with the season peaking in February and March and closing in May.

Early season produce comes from the Northern Territory, Queensland (St George, Emerald and Mundubbera) and New South Wales (Bourke and Menindee). Late season grapes, which constitute 70% of production, come from the Sunraysia region of Victoria (Mildura and Robinvale). Western Australia produces table grapes for the majority of the season.

When buying grapes, look for firm, plump clusters that are securely attached to their stems, which should be green, not brown. With red and black varieties, look for a silvery coating; this is a natural bloom – not dust – that protects the fruit's freshness. Green grapes should show a slight amber tint when ripe.

To keep grapes fresh, store in an airtight plastic container or a snap lock bag in the fridge at very cool temperatures between 0-2°C. When ready to eat them, rinse with cold water and serve slightly chilled to enhance their natural crispness.

ENDS

Media Contact: Jackie Smiles, Crossman Communications, 02 9361 6099 or 0432 067 042