

Field Day launches new Horticultural Industry for Australia

Feijoa Fruit (pronounced Fee-Joe-Ah) has now found its way from Brazil, via New Zealand, and on March 5, Australia's first commercial size Feijoa Plantation at Lower Wonga, in Kilkivan Shire near Gympie, will be opened for inspection, heralding the soon-coming of a new fresh fruit taste sensation in Australia

While New Zealanders have enjoyed the unique taste of Feijoa for many years, it is still generally unknown in Australia. However, all of this is to progressively change over the next few years as the Casey family turns years of research and a powerful passion for Feijoa into a household name for a fruit that is highly in demand in other parts of the world for its fantastic taste and healthy benefits.

They have a bright green skin and when cut in half reveal the amber flesh that is sweet, juicy and beautifully aromatic, with a flavour reminiscent of ripe strawberries and pineapple. No doubt why they are known as "Pineapple Guavas" in America. A hardy, attractive evergreen, Feijoa grows into a large attractive bush and it will grow just about anywhere that Olives will grow. It will withstand a temperature range of -9 to 45 degrees C. Although the fruit may be damaged by frosts below -3.

The first Feijoa Industry Field Day will be your first chance to explore and see the amazing potential of this new industry. At the Field Day you can:

- See the first Commercial Feijoa Plantation.
- Hear details about Industry prospects from local and overseas experts
- Gain first hand information about Industry Entry and Establishment Costs and Returns.
- Hear about local Processing which will be established on the property later this year
- Register for supply of the first available Feijoa Grafted Seedlings

While Feijoa seedlings have been available in some nurseries in Australia, according to Jackie Casey, who has worked extensively in identifying and testing the right Feijoa varieties for Australian conditions, potential growers should not just rush in and plant any kind of Feijoa.

"It took years for us to source specific varieties overseas and trial them" - says Jackie. "Some varieties are better for juicing & wine, others lend themselves towards being better as export fruit as they have a longer shelf life, others are better eaten fresh as they are sweeter, some varieties are self-pollinating while others need two, sometimes three varieties to cross-pollinate each other and so on." Without this background knowledge, experience and access to the right varieties, Jackie believes that potential growers will be highly prone to making serious, costly mistakes.

Jackie says that initial stocks of key Feijoa Seedling varieties will be in high demand over the next few years and potential growers are strongly encouraged to make it to the Field Day to gain a full appreciation for the exciting potential of this emerging industry. Attending the Field Day will provide the first opportunity to register interest in seedlings as they become available.

Feijoa Australia's vision is to build a strong, coherent and mutually supportive Industry that has strength and competitiveness in the world market for Australian Feijoa Juice. The Caseys want to see the industry avoid fragmentation and to ensure a "pricemaker" status. Their vision also includes a major Feijoa Tourism venture at the Lower Wonga property, including Feijoa Fruit processing, Feijoa Wine and a Café/Restaurant.

The Field Day will be held at 243 Harvey Road Lower Wonga, starting at 10am. (Refer to the Feijoa Australia Website www.feijoaaustralia.com.au for details and a location map.) There is no charge - refreshments are provided - but for catering purposes, please register by email from the Website, or Telephone (07) 54861280.