

MEDIA RELEASE

Consumers can be confident about the healthiness and quality of fruit and vegetables sold in Australia.

‘Fruits and vegetables, monitored for pesticide residues over many years, show 96%-100% of samples met the high compliance levels set by health authorities. This excellent result is similar to that found in the US and UK.’ Says scientist Lawrie Greenup, Consultant to the Fresh Produce Industry.

‘Compliance means the samples tested are below the legal limit [Maximum Residue Limit] set by Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) which has an in-built safety factor of 100 times below the Acceptable Daily Intake Level.’ Added Mr Greenup.

‘The Australian Chamber of Fruit and Vegetable Industries, its State Chambers and the various Central Markets take the concerns of consumers very seriously and over the years have initiated testing and quality assurance programs to ensure fresh fruits and vegetables, both domestic and imported, are healthy, nutritious and safe.’ Said Colin Gray, CEO of The NSW Chamber of Fruit and Vegetable Industries.

Both domestic and imported produce, are regularly checked for the presence of pesticides, under The Australian Chamber’s national ‘FreshTest’ project. Additional pesticide monitoring programs are undertaken by State and Federal government agencies.

FreshTest has tested more than 20,000 fruit and vegetable samples since it started four years ago. In 2005, FreshTest tested over 6,000 samples, 50% more than the 4,000 food samples analysed in a comparable UK pesticide monitoring program.

Based on estimates of produce passing through the Central Markets System, no more than 5% is imported, 95% being produced domestically. The main countries importing to Australia are New Zealand and USA, countries with similar production technologies and surveillance systems as Australia. To date, FreshTest results show there are no adverse detections in the imported produce and, overall, results are similar to those found in domestic produce...

‘The various pesticide and microbial monitoring undertaken by government agencies and industry show Australian fruit and vegetable growers are following good horticultural practices. This ensures Australian consumers have access to fresh produce which meet the stringent safety levels set by the regulating authorities.’ Said Mr Greenup.

Contact Details:

Lawrie Greenup

Phone: 02 9484 4337

Mobile: 0429 139 486

Email: lawriegreenup@ozemail.com.au

Retina Hong

Sydney Markets Limited

Phone: 02 93256201

Colin Gray

The NSW Chamber

Phone: 02 97643244