



MEDIA RELEASE

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CON DECLARES SUMMER STONEFRUIT DAY

Con "The Fruiterer" Dikaletis reckons 'ah cuppla days' *does* matter and he wants to gift his adopted homeland a special day of celebration to extend Australia Day commemorations.

The iconic character from the 1990s hit comedy series *The Comedy Company* has declared January 25th "Summer Stonefruit Day" in an impassioned address via YouTube.

A huge fan of the summer stonefruit quartet – nectarines, peaches, plums and apricots – Con believes Australia would be a better place if we lost ourselves in the joy of eating his favourite fruits.

"Life is often not fair," Con said. "Like turning right on the yellow when you waitin', waitin', waitin' for the oncoming cars to notice the light he's yellow, but I'm the one what gets booked!"

"But as long as you are eating these dribbilicious, sexy summer stonefruits you is not paying petrol tax on a tax, worrying about getting booked or thinking about what's wrong... because you too busy thinking about what's right."

"That's why we need a special national day of appreciation for summer stonefruit. I was thinking Tuesday – like, *every* Tuesday – but then I thought it should be the day before Australia's birthday because it's like the present you get the day before and it makes you excited because you know it's there and you get reminded about why it's great to have a birthday."

Con, the alter ego of renowned comedian Mark Mitchell, reckons all Aussies should devour summer stonefruit on Summer Stonefruit Day, as long as they embrace the appropriate kit.

"Paper bibs, the kind you wear when eating spare ribs, should become standard for all patriotic Australians to protect their bewdiful singlets and footy jumpers."

"So, here's to our great summer stonefruit, available tax free, right now. And here's to January 25th – Australia Summer Stonefruit Day! Get a bit of Dribbilicious into ya!"

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About Mark Mitchell

As Con Dikaletis, the Greek fruiterer, Mark Mitchell became one of Australia's most popular performers. Each week millions of Australians tuned into The Comedy Company to watch the adventures of Con, his wife Marika and six daughters. Con The Fruiterer remains one of Australia's most beloved characters and still frequently makes live appearances. Mark has since starred in a number of television shows and movies and was the voice of "Buck Cluck" in *Chicken Little*. He also voices commercials promoting radio as an advertising medium.

AUSTRALIAN SUMMER STONEFRUIT FACT SHEET

- Australian summer stonefruit is produced by about 1,200 growers in 26 regions across the country. Production has risen by approximately 25% over the last decade with growers producing over 100,000 tonnes of fruit from October to April each year.
- Early season's bounty comes from sub-tropical Queensland and northern areas of Western Australia and New South Wales and are followed by crops from areas in mid to southern New South Wales and Western Australia, parts of Victoria like Swan Hill and the Riverland of South Australia. Fruit from cooler climates are last to market.
- Renmark, Swan Hill and Goulburn Valley (Shepparton and Cobram) constitute more than 50% of production.
- Tasmania produces all home-grown apricots harvested in mid-January to February.
- Supply of summer stonefruit is based on a staggered flow of different varieties, each lasting only a week or two which means there is a fresh, new variety at green grocers and supermarkets each week.
- Summer stone fruits are rich in vitamins A, C and E and a great source of dietary fibre and potassium.
- In 2008-2009, Australia exported 10,435 tonnes or \$30.06 million worth of summer stonefruit. This was 7% higher than the previous season due to an increase in exports of peaches, nectarines and apricots.
- The majority (65%) of summer stonefruit exports are shipped from Victoria, with New South Wales and Western Australia accounting for a further 27%.