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MEDIA RELEASE

CON THE FRUITERER ON THE WARPATH FOR SUMMER FRUIT

New research shows Aussies not eating near enough, maite!

Con Dikaletis, the iconic Greek fruiterer from 90s hit comedy series *The Comedy Company*, is so fired up about new research showing Australians are not eating enough fruit, he's going on tour to encourage everyone to wrap their laughing gear around rich, succulent summer stonefruits while they are at their dribbilicious best.

An alarming four in 10 Australians (39%) say they are eating less than the recommended two serves of fruit a day – be it fresh, dried, frozen or juice - according to a new Newspoll survey of 1200 adults.

And when it comes to fresh fruit, which packs the best nutritional punch, the figures are even direr with only half of all adults eating two serves a day dropping to 45% for men and just 41% in the case of 18-34 year olds.

The new survey backs up findings from the 2007 Australian National Children's Nutrition and Physical Activity Survey which showed only 1% of 14-16 year olds consumed enough fruit.

Con The Fruiterer, AKA renowned comedian Mark Mitchell, says Australian peaches, nectarines, plums and apricots are at their 'suplime peek' right now and should be gobbled up.

"I tell you something, Australia is the lucky country. We have some of the world's sweetest, joosiest, unbelievit bewdiful summer stonefruit thanks to our warm weather, so go crazy and get stuck in while it's fresh in-store for yous," he says.

"I say to my bewdiful wife Marika, who is the hole world to me - well she's the same shape - and my six daughters Roula, Toula, Soula, Voula, Foula and Agape, plus the two little gentlemens, Nic and Ric, we is so lucky we live the good life. We can eat as many plums, apricots, nectarines and peaches as we like because I own the shop. But for other Aussies, I worry they is not getting enough."

Con The Fruiterer, a purveyor of all things dribbilicious, bewdiful and seasonal, says the best way to work out if stonefruit is ready to eat is to first check they are the right colour.

“Peaches and nectarines range in colour from red through to pink with a yellow/orange background. They lose their sheen as they ripen and the sweetest fruit of all has small white spots on the top half. These are a good sign, not an indication of poor quality fruit. To be sure, just choose the ones you think look worst – I know it sounds stupid but the perfect looking ones usually come from the middle of the tree and don't get enough sun on them. These speckles mean sugar-spice and everything nice, no, better than nice – bewdiful,” Con says.

“Plums come in a range of colours and generally become dull just before they are ready to eat. Apricots vary from yellow to orange with a red 'blush'. Wait until they lose any green before you tuck in,” he says.

Con says the next step is to give them a little squeeze.

“If they give a little when you touch them and they smell like heaven you don't need to wait a couple days, they'll be bewdiful straight away,” he says. “Remember, they are over 90% nectar and their juices are turned into nectar by the sun what is hot therefore these stonefruits love hot and hate cold. So don't put them in the fridge because you'll kill them and the nectar turns to tears and bruises,” Con says.

“Better still get stuck in while they are at their juosy best. Eat them in the car like me cos I'm eating them in the truck. Warning – can attract ants because of the nectars therefore lick all nectar off the dash when you park,” he says.

Con The Fruiterer will be appearing in selected supermarkets and greengrocers in Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne in early February to give consumers fresh tips on choosing, storing and eating delicious Australian summer stonefruits during their peak season.

Con's Favourite Family Summer Stonefruit Treats

- Best of all is a bowl of bite-size pieces of stonefruit in their own nectar served cool with or without whipped cream
- For a tasty sauce with duck, fish, chicken or pork, juice stonefruit and add lime juice and chilli
- For something completely different make a peach syrup and pour over barbecued or smoked game such as kangaroo and emu
- Once fruit is past its best stew it or make crumble or pie
- Make jams and preserves so you can enjoy summer stonefruit throughout winter

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.

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