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Media Release

The bells are ringing for Bananas

Bells, or the flowers that produce a bunch of bananas, have appeared on the first new banana plants cultivated in far north Queensland after Cyclone Larry. Taking nine months to yield fruit, these plants will be ready for harvesting from December signalling the start of the return of Australia's most loved fruit.

From the moment a new banana plant begins to grow from a 'follower' or 'sucker', there is a nine month plus growing period before fruit can be harvested, depending on growing conditions dictated by weather patterns.

This means that new banana plants grown after Cyclone Larry in Australia's major growing area in far north Queensland will be ready for harvesting from December onwards.

"The growing period can be divided into two stages, firstly the growth of the plant which takes around six months and secondly the development and emergence of the bell which develops into the banana bunch over the next three months," says Craig Allen Chief Executive Officer of The Australian Banana Promotions Company.

According to Allen, "Growers are now witnessing the second phase with 'bells' appearing and bunches forming on new plants grown after the cyclone in the Innisfail and Tully areas south of Cairns."

Although banana production has increased slightly from the record low levels of 40,000 cartons per week in July to around 85,000 cartons, production is still well short of the pre-cyclone average of 400,000 cartons per week.

However, Allen says, "Bananas are now not far off now with production expected to continue to build gradually over the next two months as bananas arrive from more mature plants that have recovered after the cyclone, in the lead up to more sizable increases in supply with new plants delivering fruit from December onwards.

So whilst it has been a tough few months for banana industry and consumers alike, the bells are now ringing, signalling the countdown to the return of bananas in December.

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