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Media Release

## **Remember December for the banana countdown**

“Remember December- it’s when Australian bananas are back for summer” is the message Australian banana growers from far north Queensland are telling banana lovers as fruit on their plants begins to mature ready for delivery to markets from December.

Craig Allen, Chief Executive Officer of The Australian Banana Promotions Company Ltd (ABPCL) says, “Ever since Cyclone Larry wiped 90 percent of Australia’s banana growing in the Innisfail and Tully areas south of Cairns, we have been advising consumers that it will take some nine months for production to start to get back to normal levels.

“Growing conditions have been such that we are heading to the point when we can say with confidence that the volume of bananas coming into markets will grow significantly throughout summer,” he says.

Chairman of the ABPCL and Innisfail banana grower Mark Spagnolo says, “Although banana production has increased from the record low levels of 40,000 cartons per week in July to around 130,000 cartons, production is still well short of the pre-cyclone average of 400,000 cartons per week. Each carton weighs 13 kilograms.”

The banana industry is about to embark on a consumer education campaign to alert banana lovers that their favourite fruit will be back in December in greater numbers and why it has taken nine months for the industry to start to recover.

The ‘Australian Banana Countdown’ is an awareness campaign through fruit retailers designed to reinforce the “Remember December” message and provide consumers with information about banana growing and the nutritional benefits of bananas as a food or a snack.

Allen says, “When banana supplies are at normal levels, bananas are Australia’s largest selling fruit, and in the Top 10 supermarket items purchased by shoppers.

It has been a tough few months for banana industry and consumers alike, but in counting down to the return of bananas, we can look forward to bananas returning and to banana prices beginning to fall to more realistic levels.

### **For further information please contact:**

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