



14 December 2006

media release

## Australia celebrates the return of bananas – now 16 million bananas a week, approaching 26 million

With Christmas approaching, Australians have another reason to celebrate as bananas return in greater volumes to retail stores and prices adjust accordingly.

Those celebrating are not only banana consumers who make the fruit the number one selling fruit by far, but everyone in the banana supply chain from growers and farm workers to transport companies and wholesalers.

Since Cyclone Larry all wiped out 90 percent of the Australian banana crop in the Innisfail and Tully areas of far north Queensland, many in the industry have endured months without any income or managed on severely reduced earnings.

Director of Melbourne-based banana wholesalers, John Holman & Co, Anthony Holman said, "Prior to Cyclone Larry Australian markets were supplied with 400,000 cartons of bananas a week, which equates to roughly 5.2 million kilograms or 26 million bananas.

"This week we have crossed the 250,000 carton mark (16 million bananas) and can confidently forecast that by next month and throughout summer supplies will reach pre-cyclone levels barring any unforeseen interruption.

"When supplies bottomed out at 40,000 cartons the retail price reached \$15 a kilogram and beyond, but now with the first supplies of bananas from new plants grown in far north Queensland after the cyclone, prices have been accordingly adjusted to under \$8 a kilogram.

"The return of Australian bananas is sure to be welcomed by the many families who rely on the fruit as a snack for children, a mid-meal pick-me-up or an addition to the meal menu, said Craig Allen..

"While some were prepared to pay high prices during the glut, most people now find they can put bananas back on the shopping list.

"At the same time the industry thanks the Australian public for their patience and joins banana lovers in celebrating the return of the nation's number one fruit," Allen said.

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**Video and audio news release details follow on page 2**



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**Video News Release**

TX to all metros & all regionals, 1000 - 1015, Thursday 14 December, Optus  
Satellite D1 / T 15 / Slot 5

**Audio News Release**

Various interviews with Saul Eslake, ANZ Chief Economist, plus banana  
growers and traders: Audio & transcript available for download  
at [www.quotable.net.au/bananas](http://www.quotable.net.au/bananas)