



MEDIA RELEASE

LOCAL VEGETABLE GROWER announced as finalist in SA Food Awards

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Swanport Harvest, the largest lettuce & broccoli growers in South Australia and known for their brand STAYCRISP, were announced as finalists in the SARDI Innovation award in the annual South Australian Food Industry Awards Gala Dinner held at Adelaide Oval on Friday the 21st of November.

The annual SA Food Industry Awards acknowledge excellence among local producers & manufacturers who are leaders in innovation, sustainability, best practice and show significant contribution to the State's economy. The Awards Gala Dinner provides a chance for the industry to get together and celebrate the variety & quality of food & wine production in SA.

2014 marks 14 years since Don Ruggiero first launched the Staycrisp brand. He recognised the potential to value add a fresh product and turn a simple iceberg lettuce into a household brand. While travelling around Europe in 1997, Don discovered that this concept, particularly in the UK, was well advanced. He decided to bring the idea back to Australia and integrate it into his existing farming practices.

"We developed custom machinery, bags, stickers and purpose built display trays, all of which are unique to the Staycrisp identity" Don explains. "No one else was doing this concept at that time so we had to work really closely with our suppliers and develop everything from scratch."

Swanport Harvest believes value-added, fresh produce that has an increased shelf life, is the way of the future. Their innovative, forward thinking is leading the way towards a dramatic change in the way fresh produce is presented in today's market and is why, Don believes, they were one of three finalists in the SARDI Innovation award.

"It is a really great feeling to be recognised as an innovator in our field. We have put in a lot of hard work over many years developing the Staycrisp brand and it 's something that we are extremely proud of" Don says. "We were the first fresh produce company in Australia to successfully implement a fresh, perishable product in a bag that lasts twice as long in the fridge and contains no preservatives."

"We are constantly forward thinking, finding ways to be more efficient. In our industry you have to be innovative to survive."

As well as being able to identify what the market wants, their persistence & hard work, consistency, concept & branding have all helped make this new product an instant success. "Staycrisp has become a trusted brand in the South Australian & Northern Territory markets and we are really proud of that."

"Our customers are getting a product that is ready to display thanks to our customised packaging and trays. They have a product that creates less waste and saves time, it needs minimal handling. Our consumers can enjoy the convenience of a product that is hygienic, preservative free and can be kept in their fridge for up to two weeks."



Swanport Harvest is a third generation horticultural company that have been supplying supermarkets and independent grocers in SA for over 50 years. They grow all year-round and therefore have the opportunity to offer a consistent supply of product. All of their lines (lettuce, broccoli & cauliflower) are distributed throughout SA & NT and they now have a select value-added range in Woolworths stores across NSW, VIC and TAS.

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