

From the editor

HOLLY VYNER



It has been a brilliant year for BFA and for many in the organic industry and it's a pleasure to bring you ACOM's summer edition of 2009 which celebrates the success of the organic sector as a whole.

Particularly evident over 2009 was the high and rising quality of organic produce, which is now being recognized on all levels for its innovation, taste, quality and sustainability. It is becoming the norm to see organic commended at various prestigious regional and national awards.

Research commissioned by BFA this year shows that consumers are beginning to understand the many benefits of buying organic. The top 10 perceived benefits are (from highest to lowest) chemical free, additive-free, environmental benefit, no-GMOs, hormone & antibiotic free, more nutritious, sustainable farming, better taste, animal welfare and low carbon footprint.

Despite the financial downturn, the organic industry continued to grow in 2009, with 6 in 10 Australian households now buying organic at least on occasion, and consumer demand estimated to be growing by over 20%.

Even in countries most affected by the downturn, organics has maintained positive growth. Organic remains the fastest growing agri-sector in the USA, with positive retail sales growth (albeit less than 2%) in the UK where the organic market is mature and where retail sales overall have been decreasing.

While growth for the sector is encouraging, there is still the need to educate the consumer - the ultimate driver of our industry. There are echoes wherever I have traveled this year from industry members requesting more consumer awareness raising campaigns and marketing. This request has come from growers as well as others further along the organic supply chain.

On the back of BFA's most profitable year ever, in the next edition of ACOM we look forward to reporting on joint promotional initiatives with industry and to hearing from you should you be interested in partnering with BFA to continue to grow the 'organic pie' in the year ahead. BFA wishes you all the best for an organic year ahead and we look forward to working with you in the near future.

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Special features

6 Fonterra expands organic four-fold in Australia

The world's largest dairy trader, NZ's Fonterra Pty Ltd, has increased sales of its organic ingredients to the Australian market by more than 400% in the past year.

8 Noxious Seaweed Turned Treasure of the Sea

It's CV reads like a therapeutic silver bullet – with applications for everything from treating arthritis to diabetes to cancer. Tasmanian-based Marinova has been awarded the 2009 NAB Agribusiness Technology and Innovation Award for exploiting the vast potential of a seaweed that arrived as an introduced pest species.

22 Organic Interlude with Nici McClean (nee Andronicus)

Nici McClean, former Australian triathlon champion, and current owner of 'Organicus' (specialising in organic soups, cereal and condiments) – is helping take organic mainstream, through the doors of the likes of Sumo Salads and Novatel Hotels.

26 Organic Brewing; the Old Mysteries Made New

Steel River Brewery's Ian Partland has taken the art of beer back to its organic roots with the added advantage of modern know-how.

32 The Organic Flavour Revolution - Readymade

Food manufacturers, keen to satisfy the growing consumer demand for organic food stuffs, now have the option of organic flavour systems for convenient value-added products.