

# Cool food for hot times

## Media Release

16 October 2009

A summer food showcase of regional Queensland produce has proven that kangaroo, among other unique food, is leaping on to restaurant plates around the state.

Monday's showcase at Brisbane's Restaurant Two tantalised the tastebuds of chefs, food buyers, industry representatives and food media, and exposed some of Queensland's lesser-known treasures.

Queensland Primary Industries and Fisheries (QPIF) Associate Director-General Rob Setter said outstanding Queensland-grown produce featured at the event.

"Fresh, farmed and unique summer produce from regional Queensland, such as wild-caught Red Throat Emperor from North Queensland and native rainforest fruits from the Sunshine Coast, is starting to find pride of place in both chefs' and consumers' kitchens," he said.

"Queensland Chef David Pugh showcased kangaroo to other chefs and food buyers at the event, entertaining guests with dishes including seared kangaroo loin with beetroot risotto.

"Chefs like David play an important role in influencing consumer food choices – they really are the rock stars of the 21st century food world."

Kangaroo is a low-cost and healthy lean meat. The industry is important to rural communities in Queensland and contributes \$50 million annually to the economy.

Mr Setter said the showcase was designed to assist growers to develop skills in presenting produce to food buyers, build business networks and secure ongoing contracts with Brisbane restaurants and independent retailers.

"It also presents an ideal opportunity to inform the food service sector about our innovative and world-class food research," Mr Setter said.

"Our research in native foods, specifically, how to describe the flavours of new native foods emerging on to the market, will result in improved market awareness and greater consumer demand in the long term.

"Chefs are already starting to experiment with native flavours such as lemon myrtle, ribberries and native violets.

"Soon they will have access to an Australian flavour wheel to help them develop dishes that integrate these native ingredients more easily with traditional fare like beef and seafood.

"This is an exciting time for chefs, consumers and the producers who are making these native products available."

Mr Pugh said the event would assist chefs to offer more variety on their menus and create new dishes for discerning diners.

“Recent Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation research showed that one of the reasons the food service sector has been reluctant to use kangaroo is that many chefs don't really know how to cook it,” he said.

“These showcases help to profile some of the lesser-known Queensland produce and give chefs, in particular, an idea of how they can use it to their advantage.

“Chefs are always looking to push the boundaries of modern cuisine, and native foods really lend themselves to that challenge.”

The summer food showcase menu also featured smoked aquaculture barramundi from the Sunshine Coast, buffalo milk cheeses and Davidson's plum sauce from the Atherton Tablelands, rabbit from Stanthorpe, Achacha – a new tropical exotic fruit grown outside of Townsville, and free-range ham and bacon from Goondiwindi.

## **Breakout box**

### **Seared kangaroo loin with beetroot risotto**

*Serves 6*

#### **Ingredients**

6 x 100g kangaroo loin  
2 large beetroot, peeled and grated  
1 tablespoon horseradish, grated  
1 salad onion, diced small  
200ml red wine vinegar  
1 dessertspoon castor sugar  
½ orange, zest and juice  
50g dried currants  
200g Arborio rice  
100g butter  
700ml chicken stock  
75g grated parmesan  
½ brown onion, finely diced  
9 baby beetroot  
2 large leeks cut into pieces  
20ml extra virgin olive oil

#### **Method**

- In a heavy-based pot, over a medium heat, combine grated beetroot, horseradish, salad onion, red-wine vinegar, castor sugar, orange zest and juice, and currants. Stir.
- Reduce heat to low and cook until reduced (1 hour). Reserve.
- Heat 50gm butter in a heavy based pot on low and sweat brown onion.
- Put in the rice and add chicken stock until rice is just covered and stir whilst cooking for 15 minutes. Add parmesan, 50gm butter and beetroot.
- In a medium pot of boiling, salted water, cook leek pieces for 7 to 10 minutes, then drain.

- Bring a small pot of salted water with unpeeled baby beetroot to the boil and simmer til cooked. Remove and rub off skins. Cut in half and keep warm
- In a heavy based pan over high heat, sear seasoned kangaroo for 2 to 3 minutes each side and reserve.
- Divide risotto evenly on six plates, place baby beetroot halves and pieces of leek.
- Finish with kangaroo and serve.

**Recipe by David Pugh, Restaurant Two**

**End breakout box**



**Caption 1:** Queensland Chef and Restaurant Two owner/chef David Pugh is an advocate for cooking with kangaroo



**Caption 2:** Seared kangaroo loin with beetroot risotto, by Queensland Chef and Restaurant Two owner/chef David Pugh

**Media:** Kristal Hargraves (07) 3239 3014