

## Persimmons Industry Marketing Program 2010~2011

The marketing objectives for the Australian persimmon industry are:

- To increase consumption and sales of persimmons
- To improve communication with and education to the domestic value chain

The key target market is:

Non or occasional users, defined as:

- Younger consumers aged 20~35 years
- Main grocery buyers both males and females

Some people grew up with having a persimmon tree in their backyard; particularly those that grew up in Queensland. However, in more recent times, the level of awareness of the fruit has declined significantly particularly with consumers under the age of 35.

There are two types of persimmons, sweet (non-astringent) and original (astringent). 90% of the persimmons in Australia are of the sweet type. There are different eating qualities attached to both types of persimmons. The sweet type of persimmons can be eaten both crunchy and soft (ripen) whereas the original persimmons can only be eaten when fully ripen.

Persimmons are a versatile fruit that can be consumed on their own, it can be a great accompaniment to a cheese platter or be used in cooking like salads, curry and made into jams.

The 2010/11 PR program objectives were to :

- Explain new names: sweet persimmons and original persimmons
- Encourage trial
- Communicate uses, selection, seasonality and storage
- Continue to outreach to food leaders, likely to recommend purchase, while expanding reach
- Balance long lead media coverage with that in short lead news

The PR activities carried over in the 2010~11 season included:

- 'Announce the season'
  - Two electronic media releases sent to leading media and trade partners such as retailers and wholesalers in advance of and also leading up to the season. The media releases reported on the season, varietal differences, usage suggestions, selection, storage and handling tips. They also included commentary from the ambassador, Warren Turnbull of Assiette restaurant. The electronic releases attracted very high opening rate, over 15% of the international direct marketing benchmark of 20%.
- Outreach to media & food leaders
  - A media package was also delivered to media outlets closer to the season. It contained the sweet & original messaging.
- Assiette briefings: Sweet & Original
  - To celebrate the start of the season, key food media were invited to experience sweet and original persimmons at Assiette. These briefings allowed industry to recruit new advocates, rather than reinvest in the same media

- Media attended half hour briefings where Warren Turnbull presented an assiette (assortment) of dishes using sweet and original persimmons. Media also received a kit and key ingredients from persimmon dishes
- Head of the persimmon industry Kent Andrew attended
- Key food media who attended: Daily Telegraph (Taste.com), Australian Good Taste, Super Food Ideas, Woolworths Fresh, Taste.com, Better Homes and Gardens TV, Prevention, Weight Watchers, Women's Health, Men's Health, New Idea, Australian Women's Weekly and Woman's Day

The Australian persimmon industry through the in-store demonstration program aimed to:

- Increase the level of awareness of the fruit, particularly with the younger generation
- Position the fruit as a versatile fruit that can be used in many ways
- To encourage trial of fruit that will lead to sales
- To educate consumers about how to select, store and consume the fruit

The persimmon industry conducted a four week in-store sampling program in April and May 2011 in NSW, Queensland and Victoria.

The primary target market was consumers aged 20~35. The secondary target market was main grocery buyers aged 35+.

The sampling program achieved a very high conversion rate of 43% on average over the 4 week period; whereby over 4 in 10 of the consumers that tasted persimmons bought the fruit as a direct result of trialing the fruit.

As part of the sampling program, those that tried the fruit were also asked to answer a few questions about persimmons. Below is a summary of the findings from the survey:

- Only 1 in 4 of the consumers had tried persimmons
- Nearly 9 in 10 of the consumers liked the taste of persimmons
- The vast majority was first buyers of the fruit (84%)