

## Organics heating up menus: Organics tipped as hottest trend for chefs

**ORGANICS HAS PLAYED** a pivotal role in the evolution of the international fine dining scene and Australia has been no exception. Organic culinary creations are now a common feature of many of the country's most acclaimed and award-winning restaurant menus and the trend is only expected to increase as consumer tastes and a shift in ethical consciousness play a more significant role in dining choices.

According to 1800 professional chefs of the American Culinary Federation (ACF), organic produce, nutrition and sustainable menu items are set to be the "hottest" fine dining trends for 2010. The annual "What's hot" survey conducted by the National Restaurant Association (USA) found that 73 percent of ACF chefs believed organic produce would be in high demand from diners across the country. And it appears the popularity of organic beverages is also on the rise with organic coffee voted the second hottest non-alcoholic beverage, and organic beer, wine, and spirits also tipped to be the top alcohol trends in 2010.

In Australia, demand for certified organic produce from some of the country's most highly awarded chefs has confirmed this trend with names such as Kylie Kwong, Kym Machin, Justin North, David Pugh, and Dominique Rizzo, and all fans of organic.

**Kym Machin**, former Courier-Mail Young Chef of the Year and head chef and co-owner of the newly refurbished Brisbane restaurant, Urbane, is an avid supporter of organic produce. At the highly anticipated launch of Urbane last November, Kym introduced the city's connoisseurs to a brand new menu teeming with epicurean delights – much of which was organic.

Kym has a long standing interest in organics – valuing the nutritional benefits of the produce and the superior taste and quality that he says is a consistent feature of the certified organic produce he sources – including vegetables from 2009 Vogue Produce Award winners Bauer's Organic Farm.

"Organic produce has been around forever but it has been forgotten and pushed aside for too long. By combining modern techniques with traditionally produced food we can showcase the best of both worlds."

"Society is looking for healthy food but



Kylie Kwong interviews Rob Bauer on a visit to Bauers Organic Farm for research and images for her new book - *It Tastes Better* (Lantern, June 2010, rrp \$69.95).

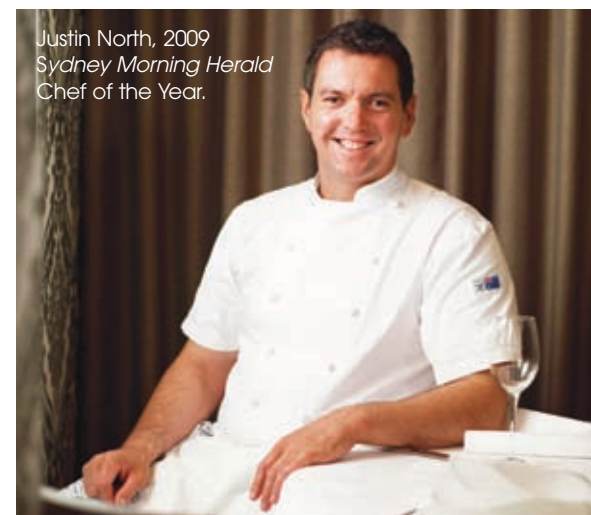
one of the main reasons I chose to go organic is because of its superior flavour," Kym says.

**Justin North**, 2009 Sydney Morning Herald Chef of the Year, agrees "While restaurant patrons have become undoubtedly more health and ethically conscious, it is still freshness and quality that has driven us to source organic produce," says Justin.

From his first encounter with organic food during the writing of his first cookbook 'Bécasse – Inspirations and Flavours' in 2003, Justin is now serving up certified organic produce from Bauer's Organic Farm at his award-winning Sydney restaurants Bécasse and Etch.

**Dominique Rizzo**, celebrity chef from the popular TV series Ready Steady Cook and former Mondo Organics head chef, has put her passion for organic into founding her own chef/consulting business Pure Food Cooking in 2007, with a focus on educating about working with produce for a healthy and balanced diet and lifestyle. Dominique sources produce from Queensland organic farms including Bauers Organic Farm for her regular cooking demonstrations.

Rob Bauer, owner of Bauer's Organic Farm, Lockyer Valley Qld, says he has been thrilled that so many of the country's best chefs have discovered the many benefits of organic produce, with Kym Machin and



Justin North, 2009 Sydney Morning Herald Chef of the Year.

renowned chef and author **Kylie Kwong** making visits out to the farm to witness first-hand what it takes to produce the finest quality and tasting produce. Kylie Kwong visited the Bauer's farm last year for research towards her upcoming sustainable and organic cookbook – *It Tastes Better* (Lantern, 2010).

"Australia's best chefs want the best produce - produce that tastes the best, smells the best and is the best - and they are finding organic produce fits this criterion and is of the highest quality." Rob says. 