

Biological Farmers of Australia Media Release Monday 18th May 2009

“This one’s for organic!” Ladybird Organics flies high at Australian vegetable awards

Certified organic fresh produce is finally being taken seriously says Steve Skopilianos, whose *Australian Certified Organic* company *Ladybird Organics* has won this year’s *Innovative Marketing Award* at the *Ausveg Vegetable Industry Conference* – one of the fresh produce industry’s peak events.

Displaying flair, creativity, and a serious environmental conscience **Ladybird Organics** (Keilor, Vic) beat large-scale operators to the punch for committing to biodegradable corn-resin – not plastic – bags for their high-convenience lettuce packs.

Steve Skopilianos, Director, says steering clear of plastic could not have been a better decision, providing an eco-friendly answer to the question “*How do you wrap organic?*”

“The idea of using a petro-chemical product for extra packaging was completely at odds with the philosophy of organic – and our own values,” says Steve. *“We risked alienating our core customer if we didn’t find a plastic alternative.”*

The corn-resin compromise has seen Ladybird Organics lead the way in the Australian market in the commercial use of biodegradable film, still an unknown concept to many operators.

All Ladybird Organics products are packed in biodegradable film and supplied to a wide range of retail outlets, including supermarkets.

“One of the criteria of the award was that there be an industry up-take of what we were doing. We have put biodegradable packed goods on literally hundreds of shelves, and we have had an influx of inquiries from companies who became interested in the idea after seeing our products,” says Steve.

He says while many are dissuaded by price – *“biodegradable film is about four times the cost of plastic packaging”* - at least one other organic operator has since converted to corn-resin wraps.

Steve’s company has also drawn applause for making the most of their ‘ladybird’ motif.

Jin Ju Wilder, President of US-based **Coast Produce Company** noted Ladybird Organics’ items were among the only products – organic or otherwise - to stand out on supermarket shelves.



Quality
Endorsed
Company

**BIOLOGICAL FARMERS OF
AUSTRALIA CO-OP LTD**
ABN 75 699 664 781

HEAD OFFICE · BRISBANE

PO Box 530 766 Gympie Rd
CHERMESIDE QLD 4032
Ph: +61 (0)7 3350 5716
Fax: +61 (0)7 3350 5996

info@bfa.com.au

SOUTHERN DIVISION OFFICE

PO Box 503
NURIOOTPA SA 5355
Ph: + 61 (0)8 8562 2769
Fax: + 61 (0)8 8562 3034

info@bfa.com.au

www.bfa.com.au



"The problem in Australia is fresh produce is not marketed well," says Steve.

"If we want people to eat more fruit and veg – and ideally, I'd like that to be certified organic – we need to make the concept attractive, just like any other sector. We've gone to significant lengths to make sure our lettuce is as interesting as it can be!"

He says there is no reason for organic to have a reputation for below-par marketing.

"Organic companies are innovators and are prepared to pioneer new methods in marketing and operations, often before they are commercially adapted."

But he says broader recognition from the wider vegetable industry is an important sign organic is here to stay – *"This one's for organic!"* he said upon accepting his latest award.

ENDS

For images relating to this award, please phone: (07) 3350 5716 ext 232

Media contacts:

Jaime Newborn, BFA Media Department, Ph: (07) 3350 5716 ext 222, E:

jaime.newborn@bfa.com.au

Steve Skopilianos, Ladybird Organics, Ph: (03) 9331 6692

The BFA is working to improve organic industry growth and education in Australia. Ask about your copy of the Australian Organic Market Report. More information is available at http://www.bfa.com.au/index.asp?Sec_ID=260



Quality
Endorsed
Company

**BIOLOGICAL FARMERS OF
AUSTRALIA CO-OP LTD**

ABN 75 699 664 781

HEAD OFFICE · BRISBANE

PO Box 530 766 Gympie Rd
CHERMESIDE QLD 4032
Ph: +61 (0)7 3350 5716
Fax: +61 (0)7 3350 5996

info@bfa.com.au

SOUTHERN DIVISION OFFICE

PO Box 503
NURIOOTPA SA 5355
Ph: + 61 (0)8 8562 2769
Fax: + 61 (0)8 8562 3034

info@bfa.com.au

www.bfa.com.au