



THE STAR

Media Release

Sunshine Coast strawberries hit the sweet spot for tourism

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Strawberries are popping up across the city, especially in Brisbane Ekka's favourite sundae, with a Sunshine Coast producer putting a unique twist on the fruit that is tantalising tourists' taste buds.

You've heard of long-stemmed roses but the next big hit are long-stemmed strawberries – the perfect treat for a special night out.

The long-stemmed 'Aus-Splendour' strawberry is grown by Sunray Strawberries and is being used to 'surprise and delight' high-end domestic and international guests at Treasury Brisbane.

Treasury Brisbane is owned and operated by The Star Entertainment Group, the lead consortium partner developing the \$3 billion Queen's Wharf Brisbane integrated resort development.

Treasury Brisbane Executive Chef Steven Jones said as the company continues to grow and transform, it is always looking for unique Queensland produce to showcase in its offerings.

"We order 200 of these hand-picked strawberries in any one batch to help us provide an authentic food experience that our high-end guests can only find in this part of the world," Mr Jones said.

"These strawberries, which are more than twice the size of regular strawberries, not only pack a punch in flavour, but their unique long stem makes them perfect to use for dipping in chocolate fondues, on gourmet fruit platters, and in meringue desserts.

"They're an entertainer's delight and provide a visually tempting take on one of the most popular and well-loved fruits in Queensland, which also happens to be a real favourite at the Ekka."

Based in Wamuran, Sunray Strawberries owner Ray Daniels is a third-generation farmer with over 30 years' experience and learned his trade under the tutelage of his family who had their own strawberry business.

"Today, alongside 11 other growers in the Sunshine Coast, we produce about 4.5 million plants of this variety each year, harvesting them from May to the beginning of October," Mr Daniels said.

“We sell this variety both domestically and internationally to places like New Zealand and some parts of Asia.

“In addition to my farm in Wamuran, we also grow strawberries in Stanthorpe, which will start producing from October, enabling our business to deliver strawberries throughout the entire year.

“We also have strawberry farms in South Australia.”

Mr Daniels said the long-stemmed variety originated in the USA but he brought it out to Australia in 2007 and then commercialised it in 2012.

“In 2007, we transported a very fine cutting of the growing tip of the strawberry to Australia in an agae solution, which kept it free from any outside pests and diseases,” Mr Daniels said.

“It then went through the quarantine process for three years before we could start taking runners off the tissue culture to begin producing strawberry plants.

“Each runner produces about 50 plants and you typically need to keep breeding these to generate enough plants to make them commercially viable.”

For more information:

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