

Premier's New Facilities aim to enhance lead in Fresh Produce

Premier Fruits Group has expanded its warehousing and logistical operations in Melbourne to keep it positioned as one of the nation's leaders in fresh produce. It has recently completed extensive enhancements to Premier's state-of-the-art packing, warehousing and distribution facilities to deliver greater efficiencies in product handling and logistics and to complement existing cold chain management procedures to maintain the freshness, quality and integrity of its products.

Speaking on the expansion, Premier Fruits Group Chief Executive Officer, Anthony Di Pietro said the new facilities laid the foundations for the Premier Group to take advantage of the continuing growth in the horticultural sector in Australia, which is currently valued at in excess of \$7 billion.

"The fresh fruits and vegetables industry continues to maintain its sound growth rate, however now, more than ever, there is an increased focus on enhancing the quality of the product from the packing shed to the retail outlet," he said.



Anthony Di Pietro – Premier Fruits Group Chief Executive Officer

"These upgraded facilities give us the ability to control the temperature of a product from the time it arrives from the farm through when it is delivered to our customers, therefore reducing the risk of bacterial development in products through fluctuating temperatures.

"The assurance of food safety and quality is a non-negotiable requirement of any marketplace. We are taking all possible steps to ensure our customers' assumptions about quality and safety is always correct."

Premier Fruits Group handles in excess of 100,000 tonne of fresh fruits and vegetables each year with farming operations in NSW and Queensland and central market

trading floors and distribution centres located around Australia.

Mr. Di Pietro said cold chain management was now maintained in every aspect of Premier's Melbourne distribution centre, with airlock unloading facilities that enable inspections for quality, in addition to temperature control.

There are also two multiple pallet capacity pressure cooled rooms that have the ability to bring product down to a required temperature within a short period of time, as well as having the ability to ripen products, such as avocados and mangoes, through a gassing and venting system.

Premier Fruits Group has also integrated its report based database program with the new facilities to provide comprehensive and extensive reporting to growers, transport companies and retail customers on stock flow activity.

**For further information contact
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Premier Fruits Group, which has a Melbourne based National Office, is one of Australia's major farming and wholesale fresh fruits and vegetables trading companies.

It has farming, warehousing, distribution and logistics operations throughout Australia, along with market selling floors in the Brisbane, Melbourne and Perth central markets.

Premier Fruits is also part of the AUF National Heart Foundation 'Tick' Project.

