

MEDIA RELEASE

Monday 26 October 2015



L-R back Chris McDermott (LHF), Peter Brinkworth and Melissa Clogg (Zerella Fresh)
front Robbie Davis (CEO Potatoes South Australia), 2015 Queen Natasza Zablocki and Karen Malzard (Zerella Fresh)

\$940,000/tonne paid for New Season Baby Potatoes!

Attendance at the Annual Potato Industry Dinner at Next Gen, North Adelaide, South Australia on Friday night exceeded all expectations!

The auction of new season baby potatoes, the only one of its kind in Australia, resulted in a final bid of a very impressive \$9,400. This was for 10 kgs so that means these very special potatoes actually sold for \$940,000 per tonne! Mr Peter Brinkworth, National Sales and Marketing Manager, Zerella Fresh bid on behalf of the company.

This surpassed last year's bid of \$9,000 by Mr Paul Capobianco, Tony & Mark's Direct, Suppliers of Fresh Produce and Fine Food. In 2013, Thomas Foods International started this process with a bid of \$8,500.

Mr Tony Wetherall, Stud Stock Manager, Elders Ltd, a Corporate Partner of the Association, worked a room of 150 key industry stakeholders to produce this outstanding result.

Ms Natasza Zablocki, representing Zerella Fresh, was later crowned 'The 2015 Queen of Potatoes' by the Hon David Ridgway MLC, Shadow Minister for Agriculture, Primary Industry, Food & Wine. The auctioned potatoes (Lady Christl) were kindly donated by Oakville Produce.

All proceeds from the auction will be donated to the Little Heroes Foundation, a charity dedicated to supporting children living with cancer and serious illness, and their families.

Little Heroes Foundation Chairman Mr Chris McDermott, said "Potatoes South Australia have been a great supporter of the foundation for the last four years. This event is getting bigger and bigger and the foundation is grateful for the support of a great South Australian industry."

Ms Robbie Davis, CEO of Potatoes South Australia Incorporated, the peak industry body, said "It was wonderful to see such united, collaborative support for the most significant sector of horticulture at both a state and national level, and for our Charity, the Little Heroes Foundation. It is clear that our representation covers the value chain with such wide state and national stakeholder attendance including primary producers, seed technology experts and certifiers, researchers, government representatives, service providers, wholesalers, retailers and of course consumers."

Ms Davis also announced a new Corporate Partner and the Dinner Sponsor; Peats Soils and Garden Supplies and a presentation was provided by Mr Trent Milford, Sales Manager.

Guest speaker at the Dinner was Wayne Phillips ('Flipper') who delighted the audience in commentary with MC, Tim Ginever. Tim was a former employee and is still heavily involved with the foundation. Flipper is a national cricketing legend and regularly hosts events for the Little Heroes Foundation.

Together, the duo entertained the 150 guests with stories of their past glories and antics, of course including Flipper's famous debut test score of 159.

The Dinner, coordinated by Next Gen's Executive Chef, Damien Sharpe, demonstrated just how sophisticated potatoes can be and how much potential there is to showcase their versatility, health benefits and their flavour.

"This enhances our intended national marketing campaign which will be aimed at building consumption and returning better profits at farm gate" Ms Davis added.

The Auction for the Little Heroes Foundation is held annually in Spring and it is evolving into an increasingly larger event.

Potatoes South Australia is delighted to be associated with such a worthwhile cause.

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