

CRUISING AND OPPORTUNITY MEET AS P&O CRUISES AUSTRALIA RAMPS UP MULTI-MILLION DOLLAR SPEND ON FRESH PRODUCE FOR RESTART

May 20, 2022



Western Sydney farmers, brothers Steve Grima (left) and Sam Grima, are pictured on their Horsley Park vegetable farm.

In emphatic confirmation that the rebirth of cruising is also the rebirth of economic opportunity for suppliers, P&O Cruises Australia flagship Pacific Explorer today received a massive loading of fresh produce for its return to cruising on May 31.

The cruise line's celebrity chef Luke Mangan and suppliers whose produce was delivered to the ship were at the White Bay Cruise Terminal in Sydney for the loading of hundreds of pallets carrying more than 100 tonnes in eggs, meat, seafood, vegetables, wine and beer and other supplies. Each pallet weighs around 500kg.

Today's loading of more than 220 pallets with 7.3 tonnes of meat, 9.6 tonnes of fruit and vegetables, 6.6 tonnes of seafood and 30,000 shelled eggs was one of a number of big shipments as Pacific Explorer gets ready to resume cruising with the value of food alone at \$1 million.

Stephen Wagner, whose family-owned company Wagner Enterprises, based at Coldstream in Victoria's Yarra Valley, supplied a 1.4 tonne consignment of egg pulp – the equivalent of 26,000 eggs -- was at the terminal to see today's loading.

The loading also included vegetables grown by Sam and Steve Grima, owner-operators of the family-owned Grima's Farm Fresh Produce from Horsley Park in Sydney's west, and apples from Caroline Pisciueneri's Seven Springs Orchard at Batlow, an area still in recovery mode following disastrous bushfires in 2020.

P&O Cruises Australia celebrity chef Luke Mangan said: "As a chef and restaurant owner and operator including a number of signature outlets on P&O Cruises Australia ships, I know that the quality of Australian produce is the key to success. So, it is fantastic to see that the return of cruising also means the return of opportunity for our farmers and other producers including winemakers and craft beer makers. Many have done it tough over the past two years and it is good to know that the benefits will only increase as cruising ramps up."

President of Carnival Australia and P&O Cruises Australia, Marguerite Fitzgerald, said Australians were witnessing the rebirth of the \$5 billion a year cruise industry in terms of its pre-pandemic economic contribution. As Carnival Australia brand ships gradually return to service in coming months, suppliers would each month be delivering produce valued at around \$10 million. "Today's big delivery of produce to Pacific Explorer is where cruising and economic opportunity meet. It is also strong confirmation of the multiplier effect of cruise tourism and the diversity of the 'cruising ecosystem,'" Ms Fitzgerald said.

NSW Minister for Transport and Veterans David Elliott said the many tonnes of 'fruit and veg', meat, seafood and pallets of wine and beer were just the "tip of the iceberg" in terms of stimulating jobs and economic benefits. "The cruise industry is an economic powerhouse because its impacts are felt from the farm gate, through our freight and supply chains all the way to our tourism destinations – it generates jobs far beyond the ship, boosts regional economies and supports farming communities," Mr Elliott said.

Fruit supplier Caroline Pisciueneri from Seven Springs Orchard in Batlow said Australia is renowned for growing the world's best produce and cruising was an important in showcasing its quality. "We support anything that gives our industry a boost and the cruise industry is a big part of that," Ms Pisciueneri said. Stephen Wagner said the opportunity to supply egg pulp for thousands of onboard meals was an opportunity two years in the making. "Cruising has become a great opportunity for us," he said. "We have scaled up and invested in new machinery so that we can pursue this new direction for our business."

Sam Grima, winner of the 2018 Sydney Markets Producer of the Year award, said: "We have really missed the cruising business and it is great to know the ships are returning. It is not just us; there are so many growers at Sydney Markets who have looked forward to the restart of cruising." Select Fresh Providers' Steven Biviano said today's loading was a great symbol of the resurgence of economic opportunity that has come with the return of cruising. "The resumption of cruising has also brought a great wave of optimism confirming that two years of uncertainty are well and truly behind us," Mr Biviano said. "Today's delivery is a great sign that better days have returned."

In2Food Sydney business development manager David Antico said: "The return of the cruise business to Australian shores has sent a great wave of excitement across the In2Food Australia business and throughout all areas of our supply chain partners and growers. As the tourism and hospitality sectors continue to go from strength to strength, this is a welcomed addition to a portfolio which stands at the very core of our offering. In2food

Australia is delighted to reignite what is a long-standing partnership with Carnival Australia and is honoured to play a significant role in the economic and social benefits this industry brings to our state and country.”

Pacific Explorer is scheduled to sail from Sydney on May 31 on its first commercial cruise since the cruise ban in Australia was lifted. Guests will enjoy a four-night itinerary with a call to Brisbane on June 2 where Pacific Explorer will become the first cruise ship to berth at the Brisbane International Cruise Terminal.

Media information, please contact:

David Jones – Carnival Australia

M: 02 8326 4111

E: media@carnivalaustralia.com