



MEDIA RELEASE

22 November 2005
For immediate release

Enviomeat hits Melbourne Shelves in Australian first

In what is believed to be an Australian first, Melbournians will now have the opportunity to identify and purchase meat that comes from farms accredited as having minimal impact on the environment, stress on animals, and what's more, is guaranteed to be tender.

'Enviomeat' has hit the shelves in three Melbourne butchers and fine food stores in time for summer barbeques and is already selling fast with consumers showing great interest in what is taking place at the farm gate in terms of quality assurance and protecting the environment.

Initiated through the Gippsland Environment Management System (EMS) program, Enviomeat is now being produced by 25 farmers in the Gippsland area.

The producers must comply with the internationally recognised ISO 14001, an EMS that is externally audited on an annual basis and requires farmers to look at their environmental impacts and manage them for continual improvement. This results in the land, water and wildlife being protected and not sacrificed at the expense of production.

It also focuses on animal welfare, with stock not being fed artificial hormones and grazed free range.

All Enviomeat must also pass the Meat Standards of Australia (MSA) grading system, guaranteeing quality, tender meat for the customer.

Gippsland EMS Coordinator and beef producer Jenny O'Sullivan has been marketing beef for the past six years and is very excited about the launch of Enviomeat.

"More and more people want assurance that production techniques are not impacting on their health, as shown with the increase in organic produce, but also the environment.

"Our producers are very passionate about what they do and are continually looking to improve not only their own property, but the surrounding area," Ms O'Sullivan said.

Farmers that implement the principles of Landcare farming and EMS plant thousands of trees to provide shade for stock and create habitat for wildlife, undertake water quality monitoring of streams and creeks, protect remnant vegetation by fencing off areas from farming, rotate stock to maintain good soil, tackle erosion and salinity and where possible reduce vehicle emissions and recycle farm waste.

Phillip Island beef producers and Victorian Landcare Award Winners Bob and Anne Davie are excited about the prospects of Enviomeat, and see EMS as an investment in their future.

“We’re very passionate about Landcare farming, which led us to EMS. Since 1988 we’ve planted about 30,000 trees on our 440 acre property. We believe that customers have a right know how animals are treated, and to expect good quality meat,” said Anne.

“We had one customer tell us that his Mother had not eaten meat in years, but after eating Enviromeat, she sent him back to buy more the next week!” said Bob.

Enviromeat is also impressing Melbourne’s restaurateurs, with Head Chef of Porcino Restaurant in Collingwood, Trina Ellis placing it on her menu.

“The quality of this meat is exceptional. We ate the rib eye steak with a butterknife which shows its melt in the mouth tenderness. It’s also very flavoursome with a light, clean finish to the palate. I believe customers like ours, that appreciate great food, will be happy to pay a little more for such stand out quality,” said Ms Ellis.

Landcare Australia Chief Executive Brian Scarsbrick says that Enviromeat “shows how Landcare Farming can improve not just the environment but the quality, sustainability and taste of the product.”

“I’m sure that this is just the beginning of a movement that will see more and more farmers adopting EMS programs and ensuring that the needs of production and the environment are balanced,” Mr Scarsbrick said.

Enviromeat is also well priced for its excellent quality and sells for around \$25 (per kilo) for rump, \$15 for lean beef mince and \$17 for roast beef.

“As well as being part of their local Landcare group farmers link in with what the Catchment Management Authorities (CMA) are doing and ensure they are working towards the same natural resource management goals,” Ms O’Sullivan said.

Synthetic fertilisers may be used in EMS programs but farmers must test and replace nutrients that have been removed, and ensure any application improves soil health.

The Gippsland EMS project has been partly funded by the Australian Government through Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry as a Pilot EMS project.

Enviromeat is currently being trialled at Rendinas Butchery, Balwyn, Leo’s Fine Food and Wine, Heidelberg and at Len’s Quality Meats, Malvern Central.

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