



MEDIA RELEASE

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Page 1 of 2

Hot food and warm people make Canberra's Farmers Market a real winter treat!

Canberra's popular Saturday morning market, the Capital Region Farmers Market, is a must-taste on a visit to Canberra this winter.

"There's no doubt the weather can be cool in the nation's capital at this time of year. Browsing and tasting the range of hot food and beverages on offer at the Capital Region Farmers Market is sure to warm the soul and is a real winter treat," said Rotary Club of Hall spokesperson, Tony Howard.

The market is a genuine farmers market with over 100 stalls attracting over 5000 customers to Canberra's Exhibition Park each week. All funds generated are fed back into regional communities and other projects chosen by the Rotary Club of Hall which was responsible for founding the market back in 2004.

"Visitors can trawl a wonderful variety of fresh food and agricultural produce direct from the farm gate. And with deliciously tasty hot food and beverages combined with the buzzing atmosphere and warm friendly nature of our stallholders, the market really 'heats up' each Saturday morning. It's all about keeping our customers warm and their bellies full," said Tony.

First stop on a winter morning at the market is always for coffee. *Jindebah Hills Coffee*, a roasting house based in the Canberra suburb of Mitchell, sells around 700 coffees on a normal day at the market. Using fresh roasted Arabica beans grown in Byron Bay, Jindebah is a family owned company with three generations now involved in growing, roasting and coffee sales.

For a different comforting warm drink, visitors can try *Real Chai*. Owner Anthea Cahill has always got a 20 litre pot of hot chai on her stove to keep her market customers warm. "After discovering Chai overseas, nothing compared back at home, so I decided to make my own," said Anthea. Ingredients in Real Chai have been uniquely sourced and hand blended and visitors just love it – as evidenced by the 80 litres of Chai Anthea sells on a normal market day.

One of the most original hot foods sold at the Capital Region Farmers Market is the *Stikkie Bikkie*, always sure to delight as they come out deliciously warm and toasted from under the cooker at the market. Stikkie Bikkie is a traditional Dutch syrup wafer, known in Holland as a 'Stroopwafel' and they are made by Dutch born Henny van Kleef.



MEDIA RELEASE

16 July 2009

Page 2 of 2

Henny grew up in Holland eating these biscuits and with only an imported product available in Australia, he thought it left much to be desired and returned to Holland to learn the process of making the wafers. Now one of the hottest stalls at the market, they've had people come from Sydney and Melbourne to devour the real Dutch Stroopwafel made in Canberra. On a winter's morning there's nothing better than a warm Stikkie Bikkie washed down with a hot apple cider made fresh with lemon myrtle and spices.

For something more hearty, visitors can try the all natural gourmet 'bangers' from Desirees Fine Food. Stuart McKinnon from Desirees cooks up his bangers each morning for market customers to sample a changing selection all day, and says some of the recipes have been influenced by market customers. The gourmet sausages are produced by hand in small batches once a week from fresh primary cuts of meat and seafood. Chicken with sage and tarragon, and lamb with coriander and pine nuts are the most popular choice of banger, and Desirees' pies and curries are definitely the perfect comfort food on a cold winter weekend.

Nut lovers will melt over hot caramel macadamias from the Batemans Bay Nut Roasting Company, vegans will love take home soups and curries from Pilpel Fine Foods. And the list of tasty winter warmers available at the Capital Region Farmers Market goes on...The Capital Region Farmers Market is held every Saturday morning at Exhibition Park in Canberra from 8am until 11am.

More information on the market, including stallholder information can be found at www.capitalregionfarmersmarket.com.au

[high resolution images available on request]



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