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Mushroom Madness to Run Rampant in Prahran

Kel Knight, move over! Gary the Butcher has an ace up his sleeve and it's mushrooms! Kath & Kim may have a worldwide following but so do mushrooms. On **Friday March 13th** Mushroom Madness will run rampant at Prahran Market.

Mushroom Madness acknowledges and celebrates excellence in Mushroom Retailing and that's just what you will find at **Damian Pike Wild Mushroom Specialist's** stand. Testament to this, Mr. Pike has taken out Australian Mushroom Growers' **Victorian Mushroom Retailer of the Year Award** for the second year running.

So where does Kel fit in? It so happens that Gary's Meats at Prahran Market is the filming location for Kath and Kim's butcher shop scenes with the infamous Kel. And although Kel is lovable, Gary McBean really steals the scene with the wonderful array of mushroom dishes he has on offer on a daily basis.

Damian Pike will be joined by Gary McBean in the Prahran Market Square to get some delicious mushroom treats sizzling. Rumbles Patisserie will be serving a range of mushroom delights to shoppers – including mushroom shots, mushroom risotto balls and mini steak and mushroom pies. And the mushroom theme doesn't stop there. Prahran Market has mushrooms popping up everywhere, including the fruit and vegetable hall, the meat, fish & poultry and deli arcades and the eateries (please see list attached).

The **Mushroom Retailer of the Year Award**, now in its fifth year, is chosen by a professional, independent mystery shopper program, which judges stores according to their mushroom quality, range, display, knowledge and point-of-sale presentation.

Australian Mushroom Growers' General Manager, Greg Seymour, congratulated **Damian Pike** and his team on their accomplishment and praised them for their commitment to excellence in mushroom retailing. "This competition is strongly contested and further boosts Damian's reputation as a greengrocer who is passionate about providing great quality produce and warm, friendly and knowledgeable service for his customers."

"Mushroom consumption in Australian has grown five fold over the past thirty years. The increasing demand for mushrooms reflects the community's awareness of just how important our everyday food choices are, and how tough it can be to maintain a healthy, well balanced diet. Mushrooms are an easy choice for families because they're tasty, versatile, and always in season. Mushrooms are described as one of Nature's super-foods, and you can enjoy them all year round," Mr. Seymour said.

Damian Pike said, *"It's wonderful to have been chosen as the Victorian Mushroom Retailer of the Year for the second year running. We were over the moon. The publicity we received last year just flowed on and on. 90% of our customers are regulars and become our friends, so our customers feel part of it. It's a win: win situation for everyone. Over the past five years since the Mushroom Retailer of the Year Award began the mushroom industry has done wonders for retailers."*

The Top Ten Victorian Mushroom Retailers are:

- Colonial Fruit Company, Ringwood
- Fruits on Coventry, South Melbourne
- Handpicked Fruit & Vegetables
- La Manna Fresh, Brunswick
- MT Eliza Village Fruits, Mt Eliza
- Napoli's Fruit Market, Williamstown
- Reliable Fruit and Vegetables, Prahran Market
- Top Shelf Fruits, Ashburton
- V & R Fruit & Vegetable Market, Geelong West

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