

Nutty flavour to Territory economics conference

The 14th Northern Australia Regional Outlook Conference will provide insight into the latest trends, innovative business practices and a global commodity overview for the agriculture, fishing, forestry, energy and mineral industries.

The conference, run by the Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics (ABARE) and proudly supported by the Northern Territory Government through the Department of Business, Economic and Regional Development (DBERD) and the Department of Primary Industry, Fisheries and Mines (DPIFM), will be held at SKYCITY Darwin on the 31 October 2007.

The conference will be a valuable forum for Territorians to access market assessments and forecasts for the traditional mining and agricultural industries in the Northern Territory, as well as new industries including forestry, sustainable alternative fuels, crocodile farming and peanuts.

Managing Director Peanut Company of Australia (PCA), Bob Hansen, will be talking about the expanding opportunities for the future of agriculture in the Northern Territory. PCA has recently purchased an additional 11,000 hectares of land on the Katherine River, and their aim is to supply enough peanuts to the Australian market to remove the need for costly imports.

Geoff Warriner, representing the Packer family's Consolidated Pastoral Company Ptd Ltd (CPC) and their 17 properties, will also be speaking about the challenges of live cattle exports.

Taking this annual event in a new direction, Loren Beaman from Natural Fuels Australia Limited will discuss the potential for achieving sustainable alternative fuels from renewable resources.



Alternative renewable fuel discussions will drive the 2007 Northern Australia Regional Outlook Conference in a new direction

To contribute to the competitiveness of Australia's agricultural, fishing, forestry, energy and minerals industries, ABARE and Northern Territory Government economists will provide rigorous and independent economic research and analysis for specific commodities including performance, economic overview, production, marketing, risk management and trade opportunities.

Registration to the conference is \$77.00 and includes conference admission, copies of available speakers' papers, morning and afternoon tea, lunch and a post conference regional product tasting.

For more information about the Northern Australia Regional Outlook Conference, or to register to attend the conference visit www.nt.gov.au/business or www.abareconomics.com/regional or call Angela Ellerman on (02) 6272 2303.

The Cook and the Alice Springs Chef

Alice Springs chef Alexandra Brown has had a busy few months. In addition to opening her brand new restaurant, Red Sea, she has also won the 2007 Wild Bush Foods Culinary Challenge, coordinated by the Alice Desert Festival, with major sponsorship from Desert Knowledge Australia and various community partners.

To enter the Wild Bush Foods Culinary Challenge chefs must design a dish using the chosen bush products ingredients, and feature the dish on their menu throughout September. This year's chosen products were porterhouse (striploin) of camel along with a minimum of one other local (Central Australian) product.

Special guest Maggie Beer, internationally acclaimed cook, author and co-presenter of ABC's 'The Cook and the Chef', announced Alexandra as the winner at the Bushfoods Luncheon at Kungkas Can Cook restaurant. Alexandra was selected for her innovative 'Camel Striploin and Scallop Terrine with Lemon Myrtle Mash and Wild Rosella Chutney.'

One of the things Alexandra liked most about the competition was that patrons were asked to provide comments on the voting slips.

'It enabled me to get direct feedback from customers, which is always important for a chef,' said Alexandra.

'The competition was a very positive experience and it allowed me to experiment with different ingredients. Having to use one core ingredient made the playing field fairly even.'

Alexandra wrote the menu for her newly opened Red Sea Restaurant herself. She prides herself on her signature dish, the raspberry ravioli dessert.

'Everything at Red Sea is made onsite,' says Alexandra, referring to her breads and pastas.

'I tend to be a bit of a purist, but the sous chef and apprentice love the chance to experiment and learn by making things from scratch.'

Red Sea Restaurant is open for breakfast, lunch and dinner. The menu features a range of modern Australian cuisine including seafood and various vegetarian options.