



**Australia's leading health and research institutes urge  
Australians to continue enjoying fresh produce  
during COVID-19 outbreak**

**Sunday 29 March, 2020:** The advice from leading health and research institutes is that Australians should follow current Government advice that ***there is no evidence COVID-19 can be transmitted through food and extra care should be taken with hygiene when handling food*** <sup>1</sup>.

The coalition of groups urging Australians to follow Food Standards Australia and New Zealand's (FSANZ) recommendations are: Hort Innovation, Nutrition Australia, CSIRO and AUSVEG.

There is a lot of different information circling at the moment with regard to COVID-19 and its transmission. However, it's really important to know that food, including non-packaged fresh fruit and vegetables, is not shown to transmit the virus.

"Perhaps now, more than ever before, it is important that Australians eat a healthy, nutritious diet to boost their immunity and they can do this by purchasing and eating the range of fruit, nuts and vegetables that continue to be available on store shelves", said Matt Brand, CEO of **Horticulture Innovation Australia**.

CEO of **Nutrition Australia** Victorian Division, Lucinda Hancock, stated: "Healthy eating is proven to help build and maintain a stronger immune system, for all ages. I urge everyone to keep picking the fruit and vegetables from shelves, wash them and enjoy their health benefits."

Dr David Cox, Principal Research Scientist from **CSIRO** backed these sentiments, saying, "In a time of misinformation the best advice to follow is the advice of trusted sources based on the most up to date scientific evidence. That's why we are urging Australians to follow the latest advice from FSANZ that COVID-19 is not transmitted by food."

"Even at this difficult time, Aussie farmers are continuing to produce more than enough fruit and vegetables to supply all Australians. Keep buying fresh produce, wash it at home as you would normally do and use the natural nutrition to help you in your fight against COVID-19", said **AUSVEG** CEO, James Whiteside.

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**Additional advice and content for use by media:**

- For information on food safety during the COVID-19 outbreak visit the FSANZ website [here](#):
- [Watch and share this video](#) of Jemma O'Hanlon, Accredited Practising Dietitian and Nutritionist at Horticulture Innovation Australia giving her advice on how to handle and prepare fresh produce at this time.

**ENDS**

**For media interviews and information contact:**

Gareth Finch  
Hort Innovation  
0407 623 963  
[gareth.finch@horticulture.com.au](mailto:gareth.finch@horticulture.com.au)

Caitlin Morris  
Hort Innovation  
0427 269 561  
[cailtin.morris@horticulture.com.au](mailto:cailtin.morris@horticulture.com.au)

**References**

1. <https://www.foodstandards.gov.au/consumer/safety/Pages/NOVEL-CORONAVIRUS-AND-FOOD-SAFETY.aspx>

