



Can Queensland develop a viable fresh cut pineapple industry?

Freshly cut packaged fruit can multiply the 'value' of the uncut fruit by as much as ten times. Many of us are familiar with packaged cut apple, conveniently served by airlines in special cellophane bags that preserve its colour and keep it tasting fresh.

Apple has long been the 'golden child' of the fresh cut market, with proven success across Europe, the Americas and Australia but how much more convenient would it be to serve pineapple as a fresh cut product?

An opportunity was brought to the AIC that would enable Australia to follow on from the success with apples, and to develop a new, fresh cut market for pineapple.

This opportunity has the potential to provide a host of economic benefits through exporting and job creation opportunities, and health benefits by providing more convenient healthy food options for Australians - particularly the nation's children.



The Opportunity

To explore this opportunity further, the AIC first facilitated an R&D Forum on behalf of Queensland Government's Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation (DEEDI).

The objective of an R&D Forum is to assemble and draw upon national expertise to frame an industry challenge or opportunity, and to reach a shared understanding of the alternative solutions available.

Fast Facts

- A TechClinic™ was held to explore opportunities to develop a fresh cut pineapple industry for Queensland
- A TechClinic™ identifies the necessary steps required to develop innovative solutions
- 95% of respondents felt that this TechClinic™ made positive steps towards finding a workable solution for the issues discussed

“ A well managed process allowing for all components of a project to work together for a successful outcome. ”

Jason Martin | Soudan Lane



AIC TechClinic™:

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The AIC TechClinic™

Further to the R&D Forum's findings, the AIC facilitated a TechClinic™ on behalf of DEEDI to determine if a consortium could develop and sell fresh cut pineapple snacks.

The key objective of a TechClinic™ is to identify and facilitate the necessary steps required to develop innovative solutions to satisfy a market need.

A range of interested parties from industry, government and the research sector attended the TechClinic™ including representatives from Soudan Lane, Tropical Pines, Pinata and CSIRO.

A number of expert and industry insight presentations took place and a range of issues and opportunities were also highlighted and debated.

Issues and opportunities

Participants addressed a range of issues and opportunities:

- The availability of packaging to allow extended shelf life;
- Competition issues between major growers that could limit market cooperation for fresh cut processed foods;

- Funding issues for research to develop innovative tropical fruit processing technology;
- New technology opportunities that might be crossfunctional and provide further economic benefits.

Outcomes:

A number of outcomes resulted from the TechClinic™, including;

- Undertaking consumer market research to identify distribution channels and market needs;
- Investigating funding sources available from state and federal government programs;
- Preparing a health properties communication plan;
- Facilitating a collaboration between pineapple growers and food marketers to investigate the formation of a sustainable new business model.

95% of respondents felt that the TechClinic™ made positive steps towards finding a workable solution for the issues discussed.

Actions:

Follow up sessions have now been undertaken to progress the opportunities identified during the TechClinic™, including commercial discussions between Soudan Lane, Tropical Pines and Pinata to explore a potential business model.

Moreover, Agri-Science Queensland (a service of DEEDI) has conducted primary market research in Sydney and Melbourne with main grocery buyers, in order to gauge and evaluate a number of consumer metrics and perceptions related to the opportunity.

The findings of this research have been utilised in subsequent discussions to assist in the evaluation of product concepts, price points and potential marketing angles for fresh cut pineapple.

Soudan Lane, Tropical Pines and Pinata are now in the process of appraising a range of product concepts, conducting taste tests and assessing the most suitable business structure in order to progress the opportunity further.

Seeking to create opportunities or overcome challenges in your sector?

Contact us to find out how AIC TechClinics™ can help.

t: (07) 3853 5225

e: info@ausicom.com

“Great facilitation of a group with wide experience, interest and commitment.”

Mala Gamage | CSIRO

