

We The People

Program 161

Buy Australian Save Australia



Remember back to early school days and standing in the quadrangle while the national anthem was played and our flag flew aloft. Remember the pride in Australia and those who came here for a better life and to contribute. It was a time uniquely Australian with our staple diet of three vegs and meat and chooks down the back. It was the time of the chiko roll and fish and chips and it was a time we rightly valued the unique Australian bard, Dorothea Mackellar and her momentous poem, *My Country*. We could all recite it from the heart and did so with great pride. **I love a sunburnt country, A land of sweeping plains, Of ragged mountain ranges, Of droughts and flooding rains.* This is the land which sustains us, this is our home. It was a superlative sonnet truly reflecting the Australian psyche. There was an earthiness to Australia as we rode on the sheep's back and celebrated all we were and all we had built. This is a nation of misfit convict immigrants and others from around the world creating the Australia we know and love and the stable mono culture we have today.

Now in 1909 Jack Simplot was born in the USA. He too came from humble stock and became a self made billionaire through the promotion and growing of the Idaho potato and general vegetable processing. He was proud of the fact his own effort and modest beginnings built the company known today as the JR Simplot Company. In Australia Simplot owns many well known iconic food brands and takes great care in their production. When brands are bought by international business we mourn their loss but I can now tell you that without Simplot many Australian farmers would be overwhelmed by Chinese and other imports of unknown quality. There is an irony to this story where we have a business immigrant contributing to our country which in the end is the only Australian company now processing high quality frozen vegetables in Australia. Brands like Birdseye and Edgell and even the humble Chiko Roll all use Australian produce.

I don't like or trust vegetables from other countries and especially not from China simply because I don't know how they are grown or what they do to force growth along and I certainly don't believe many of them look after the earth. This is why I appreciate what Simplot has done for us and our farmers and the food they process here is all Australian. Few remain now to feed us and some like Dick Smith Foods are in peril of closing because we don't support them. Simplot's web site is a real eye opener and their attention to the environment and sustainability is impressive and I encourage you to take a look at it.

Now here's where you come in. If you want quality frozen vegetables actually snap frozen on site and grown right here in Australia then we should all support Birdseye and Edgel as they are the very last of the quality Australian brands. You can't even trust made in NZ as it's often a Chinese product camouflaged by a NZ processor across the ditch. This week I spoke with an articulate representative from Simplot Australia, and a fine ambassador. She rightly went on at length about the rich Tasmanian soil, cool climate and the pristine environment in which some of the vegetables are grown. Even the humble Chiko roll is made from Australian chooks and vegetables and she's proud of that too. So the message is simple to all of us. If we want quality Australia frozen vegetables then support Edgel and Birds Eye and avoid other cheap and nasty brands. In fact both Coles and Woolworths are doing just that with some of their own in house brands by sourcing from Simplot and this is helping to save our farmers and is truly Australian produce.

Core of my heart, my country! Land of the Rainbow Gold, For flood and fire and famine, She pays us back threefold.

There is a way we too can have the heart of Dorothea Mackellar within us and that's to help ourselves and the Australian farmer by purchasing and perhaps even paying a little more for real Australian produce. It's up to We The People to support those companies which offer real quality and which use genuine Australian produce grown in our soil. Buy Australian, be Australian and save the Australian farm. **Until next time this is Kent Bayley.**