

## Breaking Rural News : HORTICULTURE

Massive glasshouse to supply Blush tomatoes year round Australia Monday, 9 October 2006. After a three-month break, the highly popular Blush tomato is back in season again. And thanks to technological innovation and the construction of Australia's biggest glasshouse, the popular variety will now be available all year round.

Grown in the New England Tablelands town of Guyra in Australia's largest and most-advanced glasshouse facility, Blush tomatoes have rapidly become a household name since production began in August 2005. The five-hectare hydroponics facility currently produces 3.3 million kilograms of premium truss tomatoes annually. With the second glasshouse now being constructed, annual production will reach in excess of 6m kg when its crop commences production in May 2007.

The final stage of the Guyra project involves a 10ha glasshouse to be built in 2007, resulting in a total of 20ha of hydroponically grown tomatoes that will supply markets all over the east coast.

Blush is owned by the Costa Group, a family owned, Victorian-based fresh produce company that chose the Guyra site purely on climatic suitability. Guyra has an altitude of 1300 metres, its summer temperatures remain relatively cool, and during its frosty winters the light intensity levels are favourable to the fruit.

Glasshouse manager, Godfrey Dol, says that during the recent downtime there had been strong feedback that consumers were still seeking supply of the Guyra tomato.

"It's the second glasshouse that will enable our product to be available year round," Mr Dol said.

"The product we are picking now (from the first glasshouse) will last until May, and then the crop in the second glass house will be ready after that."

**SOURCE: National rural news updated daily on FarmOnline.**