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## **Banana industry weighs-in on nation's health**

The nation's banana growers will soon be 'a-peeling' to Aussie families around a sizeable issue, as the industry gears up to launch one of its boldest marketing campaigns yet.

Set to kick off on Fathers' Day this Sunday, the inaugural Weight Check 2017 initiative aims to get dads, and all Australians, to better understand their current weight and take action towards living a healthier life by utilising a handy online tool.

By stepping on the scales and registering their weight at [www.weightcheck.com.au](http://www.weightcheck.com.au), participants will be able to find out how they measure on the Body Mass Index scale and learn their projected weight creep into the future if they do not manage their weight.

In preparation for the massive campaign, growers from Carnarvon in Western Australia and Coffs Harbour in New South Wales have sent the industry's promotional 'Benny Banana' costumes to Sydney to appear at select train stations, on national television, social media and other locations.

Hort Innovation chief executive John Lloyd said the banana industry identified Weight Check 2017 as an ideal marketing investment opportunity.

"Bananas are the non-stop energy snack, so it made sense for us to partner with SP Health to deliver this creative campaign to help Aussies curb their weight and encourage them to take up healthier food options like snacking on an Australian banana," he said.

Doriana Mangili from The Sweeter Banana Co-operative in Western Australia said there are misconceptions out there about bananas, and campaigns such as this help bust those myths.

"Bananas are the most sold item in supermarkets for a reason. They are a nutrient-packed fruit filled with vitamins, minerals, protein and fibre," she said.

"As an industry, banana growers are very passionate about their product, and campaigns such as Weight Check 2017 give us the opportunity to lift the profile of bananas and do good work in the community at the same time."

The campaign will also raise money for the Garvan Institute of Medical Research, with Weight Check making a donation to support research that aims to understand the circumstances under which obesity can lead to diabetes, with the goal of improving the way we predict, prevent and treat metabolic disease

Weight Check 2017 was developed by SP Health and is sponsored by Australian Bananas, a Hort Innovation initiative funded through banana industry levies.

Around two in every three Australian adults (63.4 per cent) are now overweight or obese ([ABS 2016](#)).

SP Health chief executive and Chairman of Manly Warringah Sea Eagles NRL Club, Scott Penn, said the issue stems from complacency.

"Despite growing community awareness about the need for healthier habits, Australians aren't as concerned as they should be about putting on weight. Most people think it's normal to gain weight, especially over winter, and dismiss the long-term impact these extra kilos have on a person's health," he said.

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