Kakadu plums taking off

Demand for bush tucker that doubles as superfood is creating work in remote communities with interest increasing for the vitamin-rich products despite the high price tags they carry.

A MELBOURNE-based superfood start-up is the latest company aiming to cash in on the Territory’s bush tucker, and is creating hundreds of jobs in remote communities.

Australian Superfoods, has been harvesting Kakadu plums from around Wadeye, where founder Hayley Blieden said around 200 women have harvested enough fruit this season for the company to stockpile during its first full year of production.

“People are more than willing to pay top dollar for imported superfoods, but Australia has some of the most nutrient-dense foods in the world,” she said, noting that Kakadu plums are the richest known natural source of vitamin C.

“It’s about creating a market and creating awareness for the product,” Ms Blieden said one of the start-up’s goals is to make superfoods commonplace in Australian kitchens.

“We want sprinkling dried Kakadu plums on top of breakfast cereal to be as normal as any other fruit,” she said.

Previous attempts to commercialise the fruit have had mixed results. Schemes to use the plums included cosmetics, and as a natural colour stabiliser for commercial seafood crops.

At a recent food expo in California, rumours began to circulate of a Chinese health food group wanting to place orders of up to 800 tonnes, the ABC reported.

Such moves would require the fruit to be cropped rather than harvested from native-grown crops.

Past attempts at commercial cultivation have been met with widespread interest, but so far have proven unsuccessful.

An untyreng effort scores Dunlop gong

DUNLOP Tyres and Batteries at Berryman was recognised as State Dealer of the Year at a gala dinner in Fiji.

Owner Kris Leonards said the award was recognising eight years of work building the business.

“While this is a great achievement, none of it would have been possible without the ongoing support of our wonderful staff and the community. It’s been so rewarding growing the dealers into what it is today,” he said.

National franchise manager David Stafford said the stores’ awards recognise the dealers that go “the extra mile” to help the company build its brand around the country.

“We are fortunate to have a group of dealers who are passionate about their work and are committed to the Dunlop Super Dealer brand,” he said.

He said the company was committed to its model of independent franchisees building their businesses under a national brand.

Stores were judged on sales figures and store presentation as well as customer service.

Noonamah Ridge talks this weekend

INTRAPAC, the developer for the 2800ha, multi-billion-dollar Noonamah Ridge development, will hold the first community consultation meeting this Saturday, at the Humpty Doo Village Green Hall.

The consultation forms part of the approvals process for the development, which could eventually house as many as 20,000 residents.

Intrapac chief operating officer Mark Schifman said the public feedback had been generally positive, despite concerns from some nearby rural residents.

“Residents will be able to speak to the Intrapac project team, including our planners, engineers, landscapers and town architects to get an insight into the proposed look and feel for the development,” he said.

Major details of the development are yet to be decided, including the density of the housing and the number of town centres.

At the highest proposed density, the development would see as many residents as Palmerston per square kilometre.

The four-hour consultation session begins at 10am.