

Farms in fashion: traditional organic sweet corn unsurpassed at this year's Vogue Awards

It's not GM or grown with synthetic chemicals – and it's still good. One of Australia's largest organic producers has officially put local, high quality, and traditionally grown sweet corn back 'in style'.

'Australian Certified Organic' sweet corn from Bauer's Organic Farm near Gatton (Qld) has surpassed fresh produce entries from farmers nation-wide to take a gold medal at this year's Vogue Entertainment + Travel (VE + T) Produce Awards.

The win has sparked excitement in the organic fresh produce sector, which is increasingly being recognised for its merits in the wider fresh fruit and veg market.

Rob Bauer - an organic grower from a sixth generation farm - says he "is thrilled" the taste and texture of traditionally grown sweet corn is still a winner, after more than a century of production.

"To win an award for our organic sweet corn in such a well respected event – spanning hundreds of entries of all types of foods, not just certified organic, from all around Australia - is a wonderful result!" he says.

Holly Vyner, BFA General Manager, says Rob is an outstanding example of an organic farmer who has helped raised the profile of the organic industry – "Rob is recognised throughout the organic industry as a leader in organic production and marketing. The Bauer's have gone beyond their role as primary producers to tirelessly promote their produce and organics in general at events all around Australia."

Rob says 'going organic' has helped keep the quality of his kernels high – with the corn described by VE + T judges as 'in a world of its own'.

"It's grown in strong soil nurtured without synthetic chemicals – the Lockyer Valley naturally has some of the best soil in the world - perfect for robust crops and healthy plants."

"We take farm visitors out into the field to try a raw cob picked fresh from the stalk, and they say the taste is 'mouth watering' – a good fresh piece of corn should literally dribble down the chin!"

He says the sweet corn – know as "Grandma's corn" – is in part a tribute to his grandmother Norah Bauer, who helped on the family farm (established in 1885) and found picking corn by hand relaxing.

"Compared to milking a herd of cows twice a day, rearing a dozen children and carrying water!" says Rob.

He says he is proud to have converted the farm to organic, selling his produce to people seeking a better quality of life. "I was never comfortable with sending food that had been sprayed to market."

Rob's produce will be celebrated again at this year's Greenfest 2009 (presented by the Brisbane City Council in the city Botanic Gardens 5th – 7th June) where it will be used in a chef demonstration by the SMH 'Australian Chef of the Year 09' Justin North.

Further organic winners and finalists in the VE + T Produce Awards include: Daylesford Organics (overall winner, 'From the Earth' category) and Australian Certified Organic companies Barambah Organic Dairy, Grandvewe Cheese and Gundooee organic Wagyu beef.



Rob Bauer (Owner) and Trudy Townson (Publicity Co-ordinator), Bauer's Organic Farm at this year's awards ceremony in Sydney.