

# The Sauce

September 2024

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## CEO's Update

After a total of 19 years, with the last 8 as CEO, I am both excited and a little sad to announce that I will be leaving Kagome Australia at the end of this year. I am, however, staying within the Kagome family, relocating to the US to take on the CEO role for operations in California. Over the years, there have been many challenges—2023 comes to mind—but working with our amazing team in Echuca, and with our customers and suppliers, has been the highlight.

I am delighted to announce that Brad Free, who has been with the business since 2005 and most recently served as Production and Site Manager, has accepted the role of CEO, effective January 1st, 2025.

Brad and I are extremely proud of what we do: growing and processing fruit and vegetables, always with "quality first" as our priority. Under Brad's guidance, I am confident in the future success of Kagome Australia.



Jason Fritsch  
CEO

As I write this, my first contribution to the Kagome Newsletter, it's a moment of personal reflection on the journey, memories, and highlights of the past 19 years of my career.

I'm sure many of you have a strong connection with Jason and his likeable personality. He will be greatly missed, and we wish him every success in his new role, knowing he remains close to the Kagome family.

As you digest this news, I want to assure you that I live and breathe Kagome's mission and values. I have a deep understanding of the market and the specific needs of our customers.

I'm incredibly fortunate to inherit a capable and diverse team that delivers our "Seed to Table" story through vertical integration.

I look forward to meeting you all in person soon, and it's truly an honour and privilege to be appointed as the next CEO of Kagome Australia.



Brad Free  
General Manager Factory

## Farms Update

### Carrots

We are nearing the end of our carrot season, which has been incredibly difficult. Unseasonal rain at the start of the year caused flooding and delayed planting, which affected crop growth. Unfortunately, we expect the carrot crop to be 20% below the budgeted yield due to the extreme weather conditions.

I want to acknowledge the immense effort and resilience of the farming team in achieving the results they have under such challenging circumstances.



### Winter Crop



We are midway through our winter crop program, covering over 1,300 hectares of wheat from Rochester, Victoria to Pretty Pine, NSW. This crop is used for rotation with our tomato program. The team is currently irrigating the crop to maximise yield and quality. Unfortunately, some non-irrigated areas will be cut for hay due to moisture stress from the dry, windy winter, which prevented grain formation.

### Garlic

We have 86 hectares of garlic growing for Australian Garlic Producers (AGP), a mix of purple and white varieties. The crop looks strong and healthy. We expect to start harvesting the early crop in the first week of November, with the late variety to follow in mid-December. Garlic, grown in rotation with our carrot crop on sandy soil, is irrigated through centre pivots. It also serves as a natural biofumigant, helping to control soil-borne diseases.



### Potato



This year, we have introduced 72 hectares of potatoes, grown in rotation with our carrot program on sandy soil at Pinegatta Farm in Deniliquin, NSW. We're excited to add this crop to our rotation and look forward to the benefits it will bring.

### Tomato

Preparations for the tomato season are well underway, with planting having commenced on 24th September in Deniliquin, NSW, and with contracted growers in Boon and Lake Boga, Victoria. Early-season seedlings, planted in August, are looking fantastic, thanks to the excellent work of Boomaroo and Withcott Nurseries near Toowoomba, QLD.

The team is developing 150 hectares of new tomato land across multiple locations, which promises premium yield and quality. This season, Kagome Farms will plant and grow 700 hectares of tomatoes.

We are also expecting the arrival of our second Ferrari automatic tomato planter, which will reduce our reliance on labour and improve the quality of our planting process.

There is plenty of water in local storages for irrigation this season, and we're ready for a productive summer ahead.



## Product Highlight

# NinjinFibre®

Naturally derived from the processing of carrots.

Did you know? NinjinFibre® can significantly improve the mouthfeel of plant-based foods, protein balls, and bakery products!

Its excellent water-holding capacity ensures a moist, satisfying texture in these applications. NinjinFibre® can also act as a sauce thickener, helping to extend sauces and reduce costs while maintaining quality and consistency in every dish.

Curious to learn more?

Contact us today!

## Staff Focus

### Tiffany Urquhart

Receptionist/Administration Assistant

Tiffany serves as Kagome's Receptionist/Administration Assistant. She joined the team in January 2023 after relocating from Queensland to be closer to her family and pursue a new career direction. Tiffany is currently studying for a Double Diploma in Logistics and Leadership & Management.

She manages all aspects of reception, from welcoming visitors, contractors, and transport to our Echuca site, to handling incoming and outgoing mail and parcels. Tiffany is also a key member of our supply chain team, assisting with daily tasks and working closely with our sales team, particularly on functional powders.

Outside of work, Tiffany enjoys spending quality time with her fiancé and their 2½-year-old daughter. They love visiting local parks and spending time on the family farm, located 40 km northwest of Echuca. As a family, they enjoy four-wheel driving, fishing, camping, and exploring the beautiful countryside.

Tiffany looks forward to welcoming you to the site and assisting with any inquiries you may have.



### Chris Taylor

General Manager Field Operations

Chris Taylor is a seasoned professional in the agricultural industry and currently serves as the General Manager of Field Operations for Kagome Australia, based in Echuca, Victoria. In this role, Chris oversees Kagome's 6,000-acre farming operation and supports Kagome Australia's tomato grower group.

With 17 years in the industry, Chris has extensive experience in cultivating tomatoes, carrots, garlic, beetroot, corn, small seed crops, and winter cereals under both overhead and drip irrigation systems.

Chris is passionate about his family, his people, and agriculture's vital role in feeding our nation and the world with sustainable, healthy produce.

He holds a Bachelor's degree in Farm Management from the University of Sydney and currently serves as the Vice Chair of the Australia Processing Tomato Research Council (APTRC).



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