

TAPPING EMERGING DIETARY TRENDS TO INCREASE CONSUMPTION OF EGGPLANT

MARCH 2017

VG16027 Vegetable Trend Forecasting and Analysis

Growers posed the question: *how can other vegetables do what kale did?*
The following presentation provides a top line review of research conducted into emerging food trends, and outlines a theoretical strategy for eggplant growers to capitalize on these trends through marketing and PR.

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- 23. A strategy for increasing household consumption of eggplant
- 29. Appendix and references

Please Note: Workshop advises that the following strategic plan recommendations include marketing activities. We acknowledge that the vegetable industry does not have a marketing levy at this time.

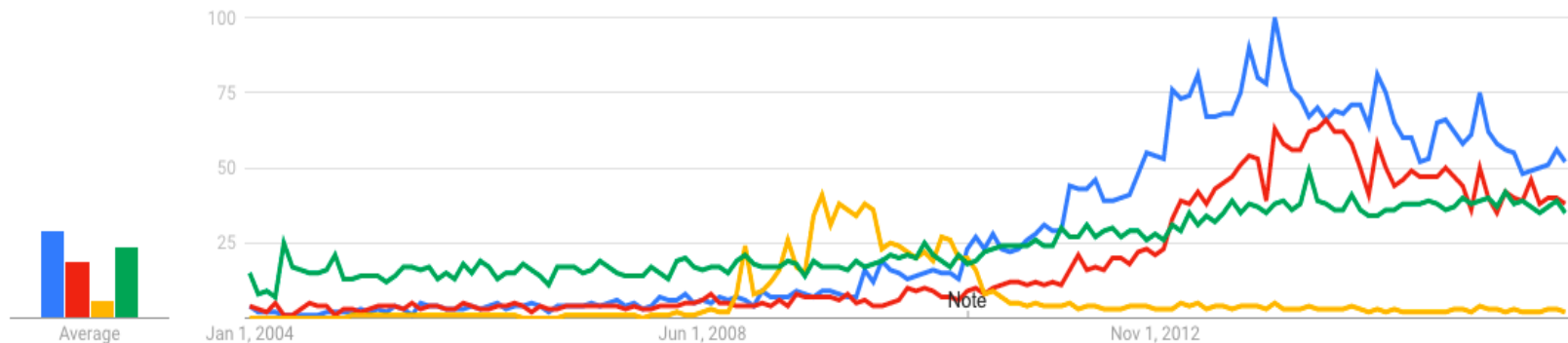
HOW CAN WE IDENTIFY A FOOD TREND?

We mapped current food trends against local and global google search volume to inform our strategy and determine our criteria for success.

WHAT ARE WE LOOKING FOR?

Trends vs fads vs megatrends

Interest over time ?



Quinoa Topic	Kale Vegetable	acai berry Search term	Gluten Topic
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Australian Google search volume 2004-present

Search volume for **GLUTEN** represents a macro trend, rising steadily over a long period and influencing the search volume of related foods.

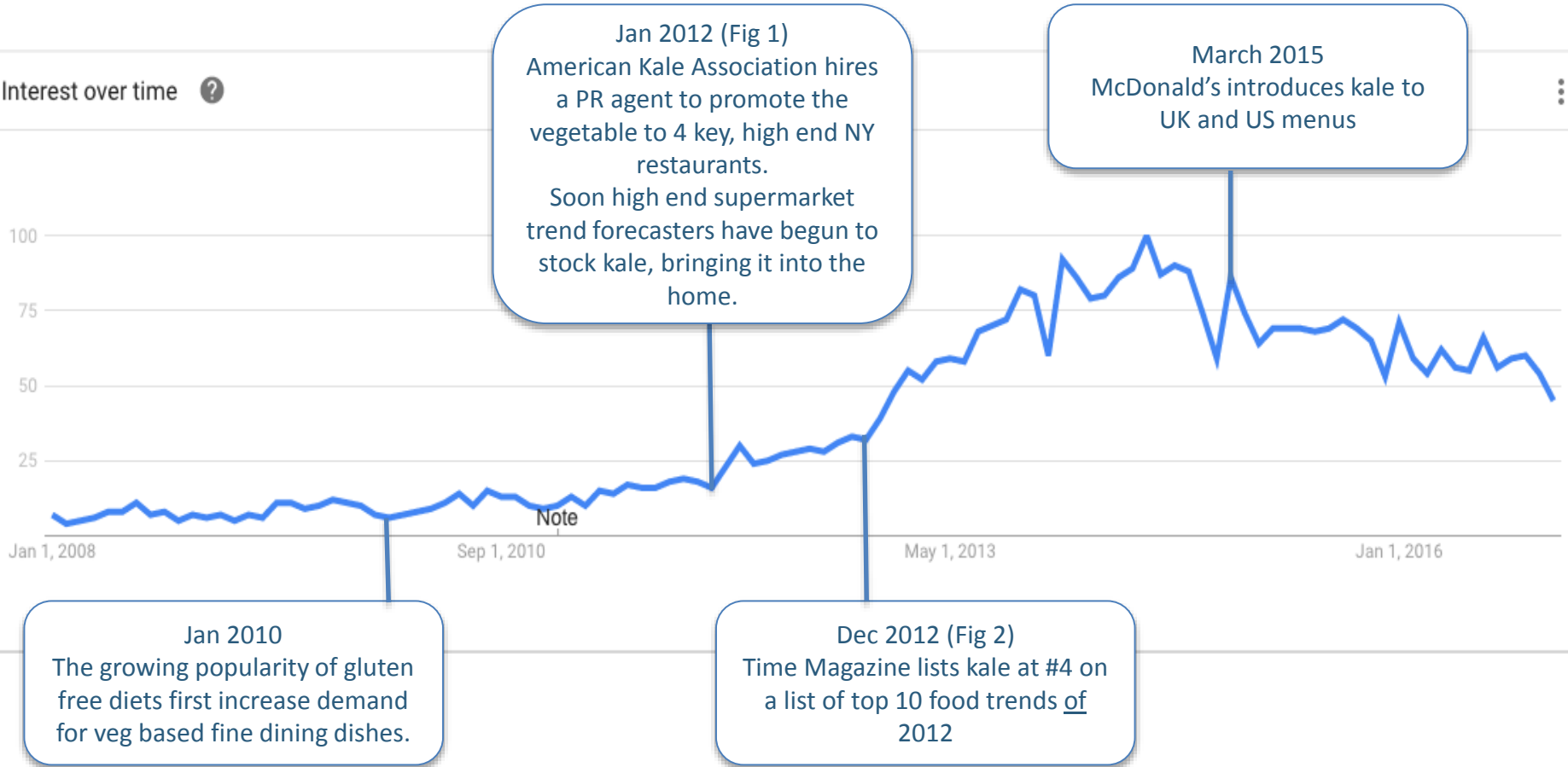
Search volume for **KALE** and **QUINOA** represents a genuine trend, rising steadily from a low base and eventually returning to a higher base than before the trend. This is the search interest we are aiming to replicate.

Search volume for **ACAI BERRY** represents a fad, rising quickly from a low base but returning to that low base just as quickly.

MAPPING THE PROGRESSION OF A TREND

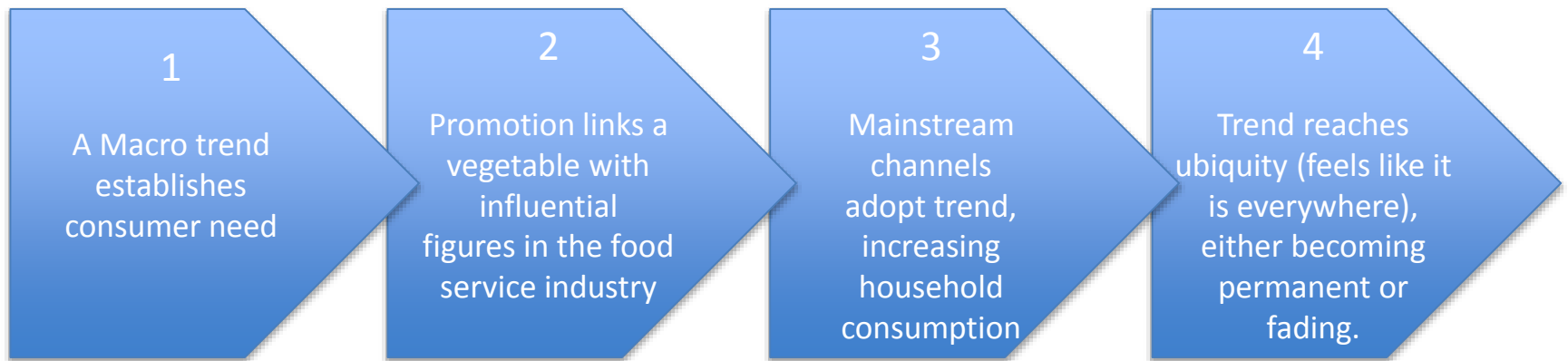
Key stages of the kale trend

Interest over time ?



Australian Google search volume 2004-present

THE FOUR STAGES OF A CONSUMER FOOD TREND



WHAT ARE THE EMERGING DIETARY TRENDS?

The two most significant macro trends set to influence our dietary habits in 2017 are a national increase in rates of vegetarianism and the increasing sophistication of health goals pursued through diet.

DIETS THAT PROMOTE BALANCE

As following dietary regimes and philosophies continues to grow in popularity, the goals of those regimes will continue to become increasingly sophisticated and specialized.

Current examples:

Ayurvedic eating (Fig3) (ancient Indian mysticism that focuses on balanced ingredients to promote spiritual and physical health).

Dieting to influence the gut's microbial community (microbiota) and its component genes (microbiome).



SEEKING NEW SOURCES OF PROTEIN

Roy Morgan (Fig 4) estimates the rate of Australians following vegan or vegetarian diets is set to reach 15% by 2020, many former omnivores will require meat substitutes and more varied sources of protein.

Natural protein (as well as fibre) is expected to be a growing trend in nutraceuticals in 2017.

Beyond dietary protein, new vegetarians will seek out foods with a *meaty mouthfeel* as ingredients to build a meal around.



DIETING FOR MENTAL HEALTH

An unabated search for improved health and wellbeing will spread to mental health in 2017 (Fig 5).

Differences in prevalence of mood disorders between cultures is increasingly attributed to differences in diet.

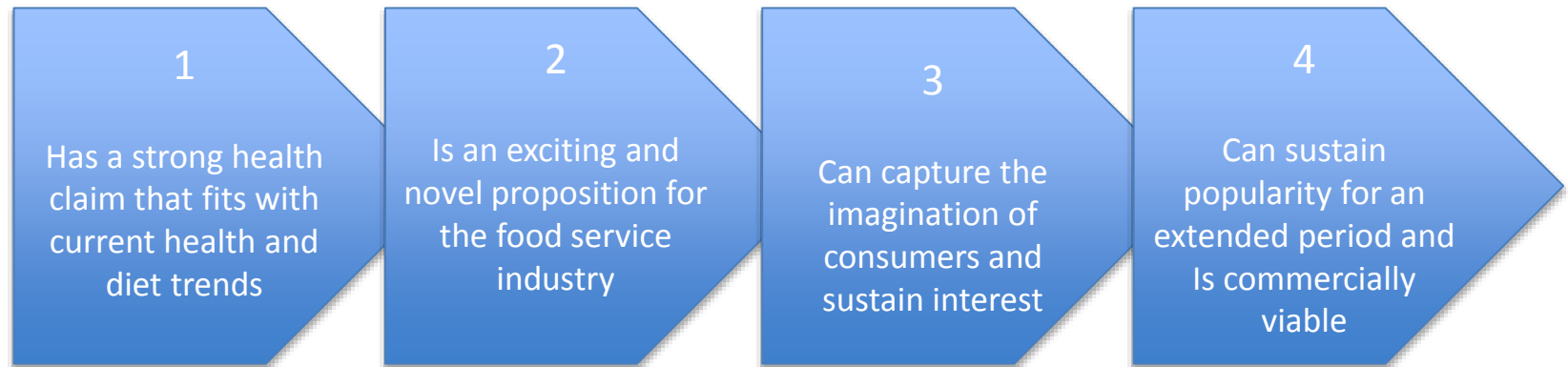
New example: Full calming diet regimes, balancing moods with food, eating to improve acuity, gut & brain connection.



WHY EGGPLANT?

We reviewed our research findings to determine what were the 4 key boxes to tick when choosing a vegetable to support. Eggplant satisfied all criteria and plays a role in all 3 macro dietary trends.

4 KEY FEATURES TO LOOK FOR IN A TRENDING COMMODITY



HEALTH CREDENTIALS ARE ESSENTIAL

Eggplant contains phytonutrients that increase blood flow to the brain, benefiting mental acuity and memory.

Eggplant is already among the most common meat substitutes across various cuisines. Coles have already witnessed an increased demand for eggplant, sustained over the last 3 recorded quarters (pg.99 Project Harvest Wave 43).

Eggplant is classified as a microbiota accessible nightshade (available as food for the health gut bacteria to thrive) and is central to healthy gut biome.

EGGPLANT



HEALTH BENEFITS

- Prevents Cancer
- Promotes Weight loss
- Better Skin Tone
- Prevents Cellular damage in Brain
- Lowers Bad Cholesterol
- Manages Type 2 Diabetes

NUTRITIONAL BENEFITS

Fiber	Vitamin C
Chlorogenic Acid	Potassium
Nasunin	Magnesium
Vitamin A & Beta Carotene	Calcium
B Vitamins	Phosphorus
Folate	

HOME BEAUTY REMEDIES

- See Freckles Fade
- Say Goodbye to Warts
- Regulate and Pamper Skin
- Gently Treat Your Hair

FACTS: 35 Calories in 1 cup
Eggplant Water Can Help Weight Loss

Nutrition Solution Lifestyle™

SOURCE: 3FATCHICKS.COM, LIVESTRONG.COM, ELEMENTS4HEALTH.COM

NUTRITIONAL PROFILE

Fibre, Vitamin B1 (Thiamine) & Copper – very high levels of these micro nutrients are found in eggplant which can assist healthy brain and nervous system, plus cardiovascular health.

Research on eggplant skin has focused on an anthocyanin phytonutrient called *nasunin*; a potent antioxidant and free radical scavenger that has been shown to protect cell membranes from damage. Nasunin has been found to protect the lipids (fats) in brain cell membranes; responsible for protecting the cell from free radicals, letting nutrients in and wastes out, and receiving instructions from messenger molecules that tell the cell which activities it should perform.

Rich sources of phenolic compounds that function as antioxidants. Plants form such compounds to protect themselves against oxidative stress from exposure to the elements, as well as from infection by bacteria and fungi. The predominant phenolic compound found in all varieties is chlorogenic acid, one of the most potent free radical scavengers found in plant tissues. Benefits attributed to chlorogenic acid include antimutagenic (anti-cancer), antimicrobial, anti-LDL (bad cholesterol) and antiviral activities.

<http://www.whfoods.com/genpage.php?dbid=22&tname=foodspice>

EGGPLANT AS THE NEW SUPERFOOD

"There are at least 20 types of eggplants and over 700 recipes - from char-smoked, to fried, dried, pickled and as jam," says Siviroglu. "When I came to Australia in 1995 there were only 'globe' eggplants and even they were a rarity, but now there's globe, Thai, Japanese, Lebanese, etcetera so it's definitely a trend." Somer Sivrioglu, a Sydney chef.

Sydney chef and author of 'The Healthy Cook' Dan Churchill says while the flavour is a win, its goodness really comes from its colour and the nutrient density found in its pigmentation. Why? The purple skin contains nasunin, an antioxidant that helps the brain by protecting the lipids in brain cell membranes that let nutrients in, and waste out. But it's not just the brain that benefits, eggplant also contains anthocyanins, flavonoids that reduce blood pressure and lower risk of cardiovascular disease.

<http://www.goodfood.com.au/good-health/health-food-why-eggplant-is-the-new-superfood-20161209-gt7xob>



NEW 'VEGETARIANISM'

Recent research by Roy Morgan revealed a total of 9.9m Australian adults now eat less red meat than in the past. The survey revealed interesting revelations about states, indicating a direct linear to the cost of living and veg uptake.

The incidental vegetarians – those who aren't exclusively vegetarian or meat eaters, but eat according to leading lifestyle factors such as the cost of living, quality and price of animal products and the want for a healthy body.

The survey found 30 per cent of those adopting a mostly vegetarian diet were young people from inner city neighbourhoods who were sociable, sporty, always on-the-go and careful to balance their lifestyle with a healthy diet.

"...And by not buying meat it's lightened the shopping bill which means when I do choose to, I can justify buying more expensive locally sourced, organic meat."



<http://www.goodfood.com.au/good-health/the-rise-of-the-incidental-vegetarians-20170118-gttxhw>

HARNESSING INTEREST VIA A LINK WITH INFLEUNTIAL CHEFS

Eggplant is already widely used as a meat substitute in **Indian** cooking, which is set to experience an increase in popularity due to the trend towards Ayurvedic eating.

Eggplant is also commonly used as a meat and substitute in Mediterranean cooking.

A theoretical campaign should aim to form a partnership with high profile chefs that specialize in these two cuisines. Ideally these chefs would have a large social media following.



Jonathan Barthelmess



Kumar Mahadeven



Adam De Ath

CHARISMA

Health credentials are essential, but creating a consumer trend will require a vegetable to capture the imagination of diners and early adopters.

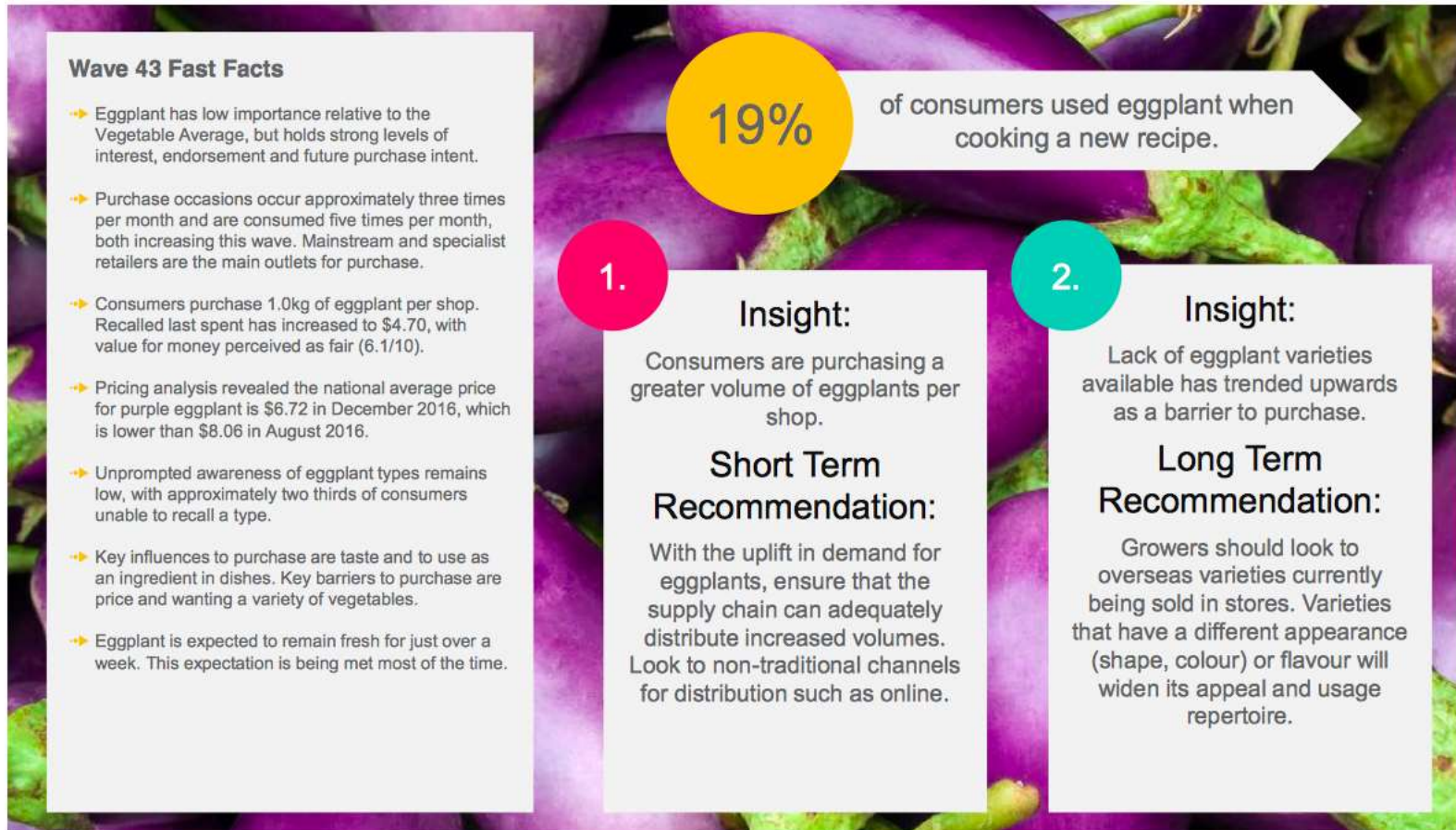
Sales data presented on the following slide shows consumers are calling for new varieties of eggplant, and new ways to prepare. Proposed consultation with chefs should explore the potential of more exotic varieties such as the Japanese eggplant or graffiti eggplant.



CURRENT STATUS: EGGPLANT (DEC 2016)

»»» Eggplant Grower Action Plan.

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Horticulture
Innovation
Australia

»»» colmar brunton.

POTENTIAL EGGPLANT VARIETIES



Indian Eggplant



Graffiti Eggplant



White Eggplant



Japanese Eggplant

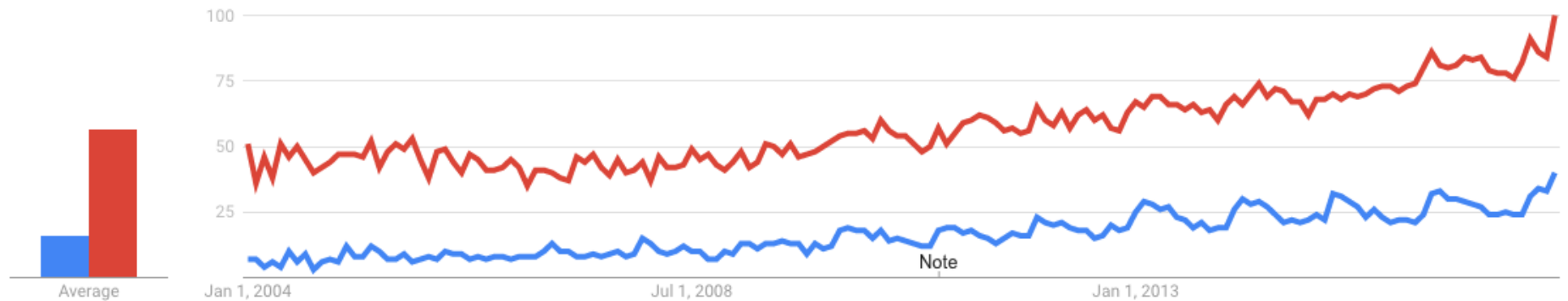
POTENTIAL LONGEVITY

The following slide charts local search volume for eggplant. It indicates a steady increase in seasonal consumer interest. We can therefore be confident that Australians will be responsive to eggplant promotion, and that success can be sustainable.



AUSTRALIAN EGGPLANT SEARCH VOLUME 2004-PRESENT SHOWS INCREASES IN LINE WITH INTEREST IN VEGETARIAN DIETS

Interest over time ?



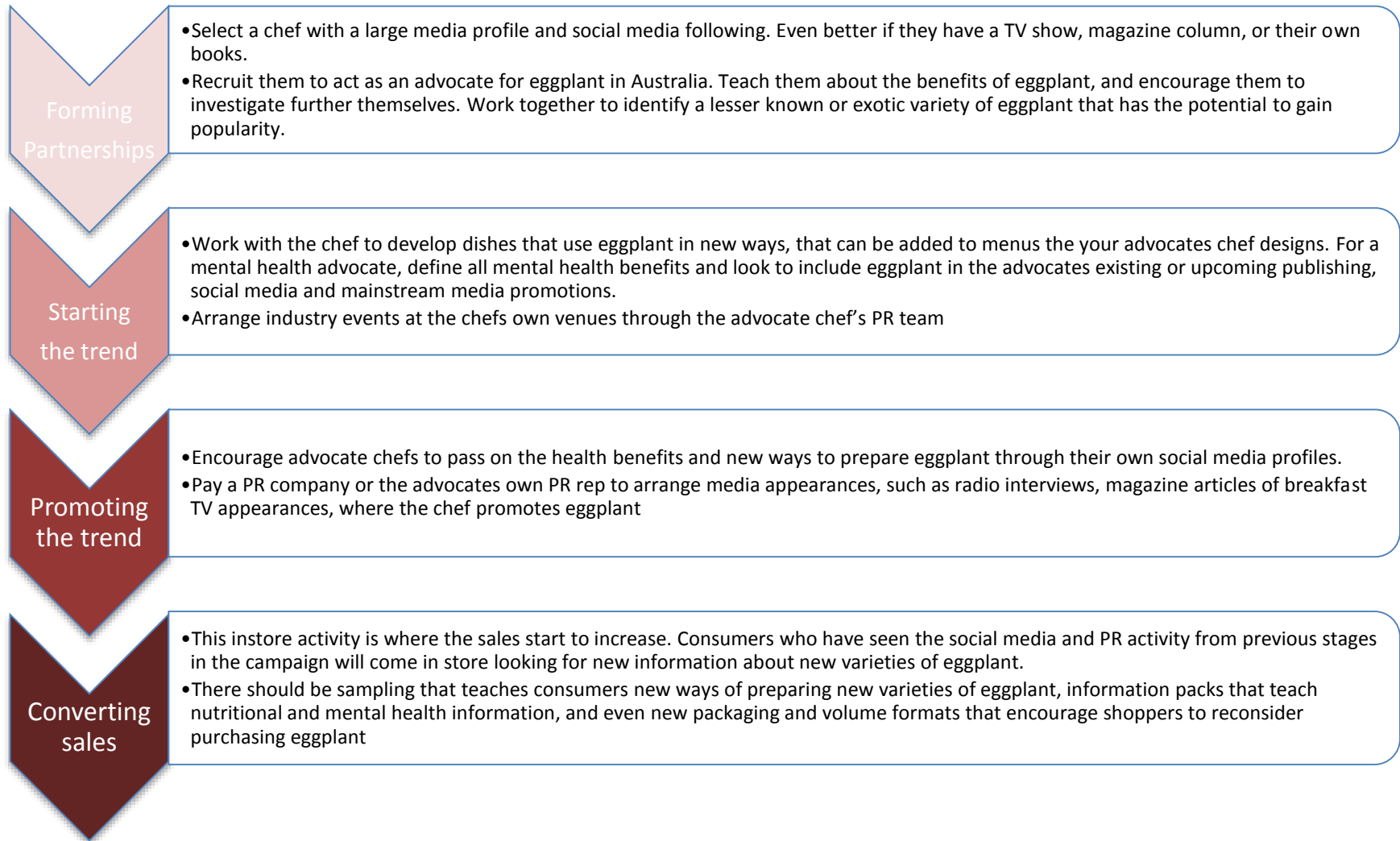
● Eggplant
Search term

● Vegetarian
Search term

INCREASING AUSTRALIAN CONSUMPTION OF EGGPLANT

Campaigns for kale and avocado show that creating a food trend involves recruiting high profile figures in hospitality (chefs) to spread the message of a commodity's health claims through TV, print and social media and PR. This should coincide with in-store sampling and promotion.

FLOW CHART OF POTENTIAL CAMPAIGN ACTIVITY



ENGAGE INDIAN, GREEK, AND VEGETARIAN CHEFS

Celebrity chefs and hospitality venues are the most influential channel on our aspirational household dietary habits.

Eggplant has the potential to play a large role in contemporary **Indian** and **Mediterranean** and **vegetarian** cuisine over the coming years.

The first step would be to identify which chefs are most influential in these cuisines and have them identify a lesser know eggplant variety that carries potential.



Jonathan Barthelmess



Kumar Mahadeven

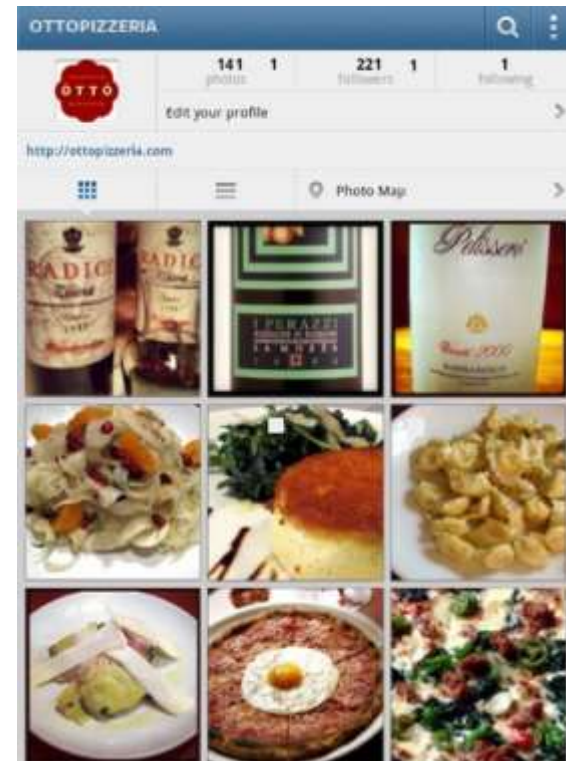


Adam De Ath

ENSURE NEW EGGPLANT VARIETY DISHES ARE ADDED TO MENUS

Adding dishes to menus influences more than just diners. Cook books, other restaurants and café menus, and importantly, food retailers, all reflect and amplify the popularity of trending commodities on restaurant menus.

Greater presence on restaurant menus beyond those of the participating chefs, in new formats and recipes will be the first indication that our new eggplant is beginning to trend



HAVE CHEFS PROMOTE HEALTH CLAIMS THROUGH PR

PR and promotion from ambassador chefs would be the primary driver of consumer awareness of the health claims and trend towards eggplant; i.e. really get them thinking and believing that it is the undiscovered health hero.

Previous stages of influence (i.e. just simply getting back on the menu at certain high profile chef's restaurants) will capture the imagination of early adopters and other members in the hospitality industry, while our advocate chefs actually spreading the health claims through the media will take the trend to the mainstream.



NEW PACKAGING AND IN STORE PROMOTION TO BOOST CONSUMPTION

Finally, the primary driver of conversion will be in store activity.

Sampling and in store promotion, including recipe cards, new packaging (potential companion packaging, e.g. “vegetarian dinner pack”) and portions, and information detailing the health claims of a newly popularized eggplant variety will be what convinces interested consumers to trial the new variety in their home.



MARKETING SPEND

Marketing and promotional budgets are very difficult to set until the full extent of requirements are known. Luckily, primary produce is a desirable product to partner with from an advocates perspective to exemplify health and goodness.

However, here are some budgetary estimates to consider:

- Public Relations investment required for engaging an advocate and managing the relationship with events/media consultations and send-outs: \$50-\$500k dependent on personal “brand” and social media audience of the proposed advocate.
- In store sampling can be subsidised by individual growers or as a conglomerate. However a national campaign (Woolworths, Coles & independents) can cost in excess of \$100k.



APPENDIX AND FURTHER READING

Fig1 <http://www.self.com/story/how-kale-became-cool>

Fig 2 <http://ideas.time.com/2012/12/04/top-10-food-trends/slide/king-kale/>

Fig 3 <https://www.jwtintelligence.com/2016/12/future-100-trends-change-2017/>

Fig 4 <http://www.bandt.com.au/marketing/study-lamb-ads-arent-working-aussies-going-vego-health>

Fig 5 <https://www.jwtintelligence.com/2016/12/future-100-trends-change-2017/>

THANK YOU