Media Release

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COLES AND AUSSIE GROWERS HELP SANTA ON HIS SLEIGH
WITH COMPLIMENTARY CARROTS FOR RUDOLPH

Coles and Aussie carrot growers are set to sprinkle Christmas joy this festive season with an initiative sure to make Rudolph's red nose shine bright.

For the first time, families across Australia can collect a free 'reindeer carrot' from a designated collection bay when exiting their local Coles store, ready to leave out on Christmas Eve for Santa's hard-working reindeer.

Inspired by similar initiatives overseas, five Aussie growers from across the country have partnered with Coles to donate over 200,000 kilos of carrots that might otherwise have gone to waste. The carrots are available at Coles stores across Australia until Christmas Eve, while stocks last.

Global leader in supply chain solutions CHEP Australia is supporting this initiative by donating approximately 13,500 crates for suppliers to deliver these into Coles' stores.

Alongside spreading joy, the initiative will also help farmers to reduce waste in the lead up to Christmas, with growers donating surplus stock that may be a little wonky or blemished.

This initiative is in addition to Coles' ongoing work with food rescue organization SecondBite, as part of a partnership that has helped provide the equivalent of 160 million meals for Aussies in need over the past 10 years.

Each year, more than 800 Coles supermarkets and distribution centres donate unsold, edible food to around 1400 food relief and community organisations across Australia.

Coles Fresh Produce General Manager Craig Taylor expects customers will take advantage of some extra Christmas cheer in the lead up to the big day.

"We are always looking for ways to make this magical time of year even more special for our smallest customers, and we think this will put smiles on a lot of little faces. We encourage families to collect their complimentary reindeer carrot once they've finished their shop and leave it out for Santa's sleigh-mates on Christmas Eve," Craig said.

Each carrot will come from one of six Coles carrot suppliers based around Australia, and while they will be great gifts for Santa and his friends, the supply is also perfectly safe to eat.

One of the suppliers is Rocky Lamattina & Sons, a wholly Australian owned and operated family business situated on 6,000 acres in Wemen, 75km south-east of Mildura.

Rocky Lamattina & Sons director Angelo Lamanttina said he is thrilled to be supplying carrots into stores in time for Christmas.

"We just wanted to share some Christmas spirit after a couple of tough years. People have cooked with carrots more than ever before through COVID and we wanted to give a little back. While these carrots are a little wonky, we thought that Santa's reindeer would appreciate the snack instead of them going to waste."

In Queensland, Kalfresh Vegetables CEO Richard Gorman says he was keen to support Coles and make sure Santa's reindeer had plenty of delicious Australian carrots to munch on during their grueling Christmas Eve journey.

"We've been working closely with Coles all year to ensure supply of fresh Australian vegetables to stores remained consistent and reliable, despite the challenges of COVID and some very wet growing conditions here in Queensland," Richard said.

"When we heard about Coles' free Christmas reindeer carrot initiative we were happy to help by donating some of the wonky and out of spec carrots which we normally feed to cattle. We think it's important that Rudolph and his friends have carroty sustenance so they can make it around the world. Our carrots will also help them see in the dark as they travel from the North Pole to Brisbane."

In South Australia, Mercorella Group managing director Mick Mercorella says he is delighted to be supporting the Coles initiative.

"We want to ensure that Rudolph and his friends are well fed as they make their Christmas Eve journey. Whilst these carrots are a little wonky we are sure that Santa's reindeers will love them and we were keen to share some goodwill this Christmas after what has been a tough year through COVID," Mick said.

In Western Australia, Pennie Patane said:

"Patane Produce is happy to be a part of the team that is making sure that everyone has enough carrots to keep all the Reindeer well fed on their big night!!"

The complimentary reindeer carrots are available in all Coles stores across the country from Monday, 20 December to Friday, 24 December while stocks last.

Info on growers across Australia supplying carrots for Rudolph:

- **NSW, VIC and TAS: Lamattina**: Lamattina: Rocky Lamattina & Sons is a generational family business, and wholly Australian owned and operated company. It's 6,000 acre home base property is situated in Wemen, some 75 km south- east of Mildura.
- **QLD: Kalfresh**: Kalfresh is a team of generational farmers, established in 1992 by father and son, Barry & Robert Hinrichsen. Their vision was to unite local growers under one brand, market the Fassifern Valley's produce collectively, and provide customers with a one-stop shop for their produce needs. Kalfresh is now one of Queensland's leading vegetable production companies.
- **SA: Carrot Co:** Carrot Co is a division of the Mercorella Group, which was established in 1967 by Luciano (Loui) and Maria Grazia (Grace) Mercorella. With 54 years' experience in the farming industry, Carrot Co are experts in their field.
- **WA: Patane Produce:** The Patane family have been growing and harvesting fresh produce in the South West of WA for over 70 years with three generations working within the business.
- **WA: Sumich**: Sumich had simple beginnings half a century ago when it started its first market garden in 1944 in Spearwood, Western Australia. Sumich's farms are based in various strategic geographical areas across Western Australia and Tasmania. The Western Australian farming operations are located in Myalup, Kwinana, Gingin and Lancelin.

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