

## **Leah Bramich**

### **Chief Executive Officer, Australian Mushrooms Growers Association, SYDNEY**

Leah Bramich is the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Australian Mushroom Growers Association (AMGA) – a national, non-profit, peak industry body, and member-based organisation, that has represented the interests of the mushroom industry for more than 60 years. AMGA promotes Australian grown, fresh mushrooms for their unique health benefits, and delicious taste.

Leah has provided support and advocacy to Australian mushroom growers since joining AMGA in 2019. Reporting to the AMGA Board, she is charged with leading all facets of the organisation, implementing its strategic plan, driving industry growth, and best representing, and fulfilling her AMGA member needs.



She is the lead for multiple, Hort Innovation Mushroom Fund Research and Development industry projects and marketing initiatives, for which she strives to ensure relevance, and return on investment.

AMGA has been investing heavily into research and development projects in support of the industry for a number of decades. Over the past few years in partnership with FOODiQ Global, AMGA have been really looking at the health and nutritional benefits of mushrooms and their macro and micro nutrient profile. The research found that mushrooms have the unique ability to produce vitamin D by just popping them out in the sunlight for 15 minutes.

“The more you learn about mushrooms, the more mushrooms you will eat!”

“Mushrooms are one of the most sustainable food sources on the planet, as our growers use waste products from other agricultural industries to create the compost,” said Leah.

“Mushrooms grow very quickly (they double in size every day) and utilise little land space and resources.

“At the end of the growing cycle, the compost is returned to the earth, as a growing medium for more food,” Leah said.

“Mushrooms have a unique combination of nutrients not found in ordinary veggies, which makes them a nutrition powerhouse. Aussies spend so much money on vitamin D supplements per year when all they need to do is eat mushrooms.

“Mushrooms represent the future of food, as they are sustainable, nutritious, and fast-growing, and therefore able to support the ongoing expansion of our population,” said Leah.

“Thousands of mushroom varieties grow in Australia, only a handful of which are actually safe to eat.

“Some mushroom varieties that grow in the wild are toxic, but look like ordinary, store-bought mushrooms. Unless you are a trained mycologist, it's very difficult to differentiate between what mushrooms are safe to eat, and what mushrooms are not,” Leah said.

“Foraging is just simply not worth the risk.

“Australian consumers should therefore, be confident in the mushrooms purchased from a local supermarket, because they undergo global standards of food safety certification, are safe to eat, and of the highest quality,” said Leah.

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**To coordinate an interview with Leah Bramich, please contact:**

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