

ripe & ready

MANGOES in August. That's right it's not a misprint. "Can you believe it? I have honestly never seen mangoes in the first few weeks of August," says Peter Kedwell of Pershouse Produce, overjoyed last week as the first mangoes arrived at the Brisbane market.

The mangoes are from the Northern Territory and Kedwell is quick to point out their early arrival is highly unusual and unlikely to indicate the beginning of the season.

"They are fairly expensive too — around \$70 for a box but they are the Kensington Pride variety and they are good quality."

Kedwell says they are probably the

result of a certain crop receiving a good dose of unseasonably warm weather. The official mango season begins when the hot weather does — around October or November. Summer stone fruits will also become available at this time. Between late September and the end of November we should see a flush of peaches, nectarines, plums and cherries.

The organic market will be slightly behind. Ross Cowling of United Organics, who scored second place in the Ekka's Industry Stand competition, says organic foodies can expect their first mangoes in late September, and the rest of the stone fruit should arrive in late November,

early December. But organic pineapples are already on the shelves and are delicious. Organic avocados are also strong and good quality. Cowling says they are slightly expensive but are really in their prime and worth enjoying before they slow down around Christmas time.

New Zealand kiwifruit are due to arrive on the organic market in about two weeks, says Cowling, and organic bananas are starting to pick up but are still highly priced.

Those who have had to skimp on their vegies due to increasing costs will be pleased to know that after months of sky-high prices, broccoli

and cauliflower have come back and are the cheapest they have been since April.

Kedwell says warmer weather coupled with the recent full moons have encouraged growth, resulting in lower prices.

Other green vegetables have followed, though leafy greens are likely to remain up there for the next few weeks.

Green beans are still expensive, as are organic greens. Cowling says lettuce and broccoli are particularly short but good crops of zucchini, squash and eggplants are arriving and should hit the market in a few weeks.

