



We're happy little VEGEMITES – 100 Mitey Years

VEGEMITE, an Australian icon with a 99 year history, returned to Australian ownership when Bega Cheese Limited acquired it in 2017. In February 1923, Fred Walker from the Fred Walker Company, hires a young chemist named Dr. Cyril P Callister to develop a remarkable new spread from brewer's yeast. Fred Walker runs a competition, inviting the Australian public to create a name for the new product. The winning entrant of the competition is lost in the mists of time except for one thing, the name that was selected: VEGEMITE.

Some early competition from Marmite led to a brief rebranding as 'Parwill' in 1928. In 1940, VEGEMITE gains official product endorsement from the British Medical Association. This endorsement feat allows the VEGEMITE brand to be advertised in the British Medical Journal and became an Armed Forces ration during WWII.

The iconic catchy jingle 'Happy Little VEGEMITES' debuted in 1954, solidifying its place in Australian culture.

VEGEMITE is more than a spread; it embodies the essence of Australia, loved by generations, and continues to be a cherished part of Australian culture.

This exhibition was made possible with thanks to Bega Cheese Limited.

Learn more about the VEGEMITE story here: www.vegemite.com.au





An old packaging tin of VEGEMITE is seen during a press call to celebrate the VEGEMITE brand's 90th year at the VEGEMITE factory on October 24, 2013 in Melbourne, Australia.

(Photo by Graham Denholm/Getty Images)



Published Australian Women's Weekly August 26, 1953 / National Library of Australia.



During World War II, VEGEMITE was rationed domestically so that it could be included in Australian soldiers' field rations. Even when it was not available on store shelves, American advertising giant J. Walter Thompson ensured that VEGEMITE remained on the public's mind linking VEGEMITE to patriotism and national identity.

One WWII VEGEMITE ad featured a cherubic child who's "doing his bit for his Dad" and the war effort.

Published Australian Women's Weekly June 13, 1942 / National Library of Australia.



Published Australian Women's Weekly August 1, 1962 / National Library of Australia.



Courtesy of Bega Cheese Limited



Published Australian Women's Weekly August 1, 1962 / National Library of Australia.



Published Australian Women's Weekly July 1974 / National Library of Australia.



Courtesy of Bega Cheese Limited

Disclaimer: The imagery and claims pictured are part of VEGEMITE's history and may not be representative of VEGEMITE and its claims today. The Bega Group and Maitland City Council will not be liable for any claims associated with the historical text, health claims and statements depicted in the imagery. The retrospective advertisings / articles have been sourced from the National Library of Australia archives.

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