

Gourmet food for tots spreads around globe

AUSTRALIA'S first gourmet baby food company, Brisbane-based Boost Foods, is set to launch into the United Kingdom.

Director Julie van Eps said seven lines would be in ASDA supermarkets from September 24, coinciding with an expansion of the Australian range.

The move into exporting caps off an impressive year for Boost Foods, a fledgling company that has taken on some of the largest food manufacturers in Australia by focussing on the niche of fresh pre-packed baby food.

The strategy has worked, with the business tripling turnover in the past year and tracking for a \$15 million turnover in 2008.

The range is now stocked nationally in Coles, BI-LO, Woolworths and IGA.

Late last year, Boost Foods took part in an Austrade trade show and made contact with international buyers from

ASDA, the Wal-Mart-owned retailer.

"Our biggest issue has been securing the manufacturer to do the products. But they were very, very open (to the idea) once I found them," Mrs van Eps said.

This contrasts dramatically with the challenges the business faced finding a local contract manufacturer.

"Nobody wanted to know. It wasn't as simple as mashing up purees and packaging and sending off," she said.

"We had to look at food science, maintaining shelf life and maintaining nutrition.

"It's very expensive when you're using only fresh product, especially in a drought.

"But we found a manufacturer in South Australia, and we buy in bulk."

Boost Foods is holding a baby competition to find the "Fresh Face of Baby Boost".

www.babyboost.com.au
Lisa Toia



Two faces ... Baby Boost director Julie van Eps and son Cooper, 20 months.