



Government  
of South Australia

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN

# Food Talk



Winter

10

Final Issue



## Maggie's path of perfection

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN

# Food Centre

Food Talk is produced by the  
South Australian Food Centre.

To contact us:

a Regency International Centre TAFE SA  
Days Road, Regency Park SA 5010

p +61 8 8348 4442

f +61 8 8348 2484

e safoodcentre@sa.gov.au

w www.safoodcentre.com.au

All editorial enquiries and story  
submissions should be directed  
to the publisher

South Australian Food Centre

**Nicole Phillips**

t +61 8 8226 0827

e nicole.phillips@sa.gov.au

or

**Sue Rogers**

t +61 8 8226 0468

e sue.rogers@sa.gov.au

Cover photograph

Maggie Beer pondering perfection at  
her Barossa Farm Shop

Writer

Jacquie van Santen

Contributors

Nicole Phillips

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# This Issue

After more than ten years this is the final issue of Food Talk magazine. It is therefore fitting our last Face of food is perfectionist Maggie Beer, who's growth in the last decade epitomises that of the food industry in South Australia.

To reflect on ten years we catch up with a range of leaders and discover their visions and celebrate our achievements. We also meet our new minister Hon Michael O'Brien MP and catch up with our Regional Food Groups and Haigh's Chocolates.

## Highlights

3 Introducing our new food minister

4



### Face of food Maggie's path of perfection

6 The past, present and future of food in SA

10 'South Australian' is king of the menu

11



### Haigh's sweet strategy

12 Are you a food fan or follower?

13 Food groups mapping a new future

14 Good Food and Wine comes to Adelaide

15 Igniting new rural opportunities

16 10 years of Food Talk magazine



# Introducing our new food minister

**Food Talk chats to the new Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries, the Hon Michael O'Brien MP, about his new role and vision for the South Australian food industry.**

Michael O'Brien would like to see South Australia recognised as having the most innovative food sector in the nation – "and up there internationally in terms of product development."

He's quietly confident it is a goal within our reach.

Minister O'Brien, recently appointed Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries, is no stranger to the food sector. As former Convenor of the Premier's Food Council, he played an instrumental role in the establishment and development of the South Australian Food Centre. He's seen first hand the benefits of partnership, and believes together, industry and government can work positively and proactively to achieve shared goals.

"The challenge for government is to make itself relevant. Some businesses are of the view that the role of government is to get out of the way and let business 'get on with it'. [However] I don't think that applies in South Australia, given our relatively small size. I think there is a strong role for heightened government activity to assist business in a very practical and focussed manner."

He said PIRSA's role would be continuing to work with South Australian businesses to alert them to the possibilities – sometimes unrecognised – in further developing products and taking products further along the value chain than is currently the case.

Minister O'Brien says the SA Food Centre also has a key role in ensuring that food businesses are aware of its existence and what it has to offer, "and that the Centre plays its role of being a facilitator of innovation."

However, he said the South Australian agrifood industry wasn't without its challenges – not least of which was increasing our value adding capabilities.

"Rather than just being a producer of commodities for export and seeing them go interstate or overseas to be value added – and this includes the whole spectrum including grains and horticultural products, we have to try and work out ways of increasing the intrinsic value of those products before they leave South Australia," Minister O'Brien said.

He said other challenges were an oversupply of wine grapes, and limits to growth created by natural resources restraints including water, arable land and climate change.

"So we need to look at how we can make our current resources more productive. That will require an increased application of research and development. The level of productivity in Australian agriculture has dropped away and we're going to have to refocus our research and development in this area in both the public and private sector."

Minister O'Brien believes the South Australian Food Strategy 2010 – 2015 will stand the food sector in good stead in coming months and years, and help it achieve its goals.

"The strategy builds very strongly on the work of Thinker in Residence, Professor Andrew Fearn and uses the value chain approach of trying to analyse where the value accrues at each stage of the development of a product, from farm gate to supermarket. I think that's going to be invaluable in terms of increasing the value add of agricultural product in South Australia."

If Minister O'Brien's enthusiasm for the industry is anything to go by, food producers can look forward to a bumper season.

## For more information

Contact

**Hon Michael O'Brien MP (above)**

p +61 8 8226 0322

e [minag@sa.gov.au](mailto:minag@sa.gov.au)

4

Face of food



Welcome to  
Maggie Beer's  
Farm Shop

Please order  
at the counter.

# Maggie's path of perfection



Face of food profiles the doyenne of the South Australian food industry, Maggie Beer, and finds a delightful perfectionist with the industry's reputation and wellbeing close to her heart.

Once upon a time, there was a little girl named Goldilocks. She went for a walk in the forest. Pretty soon, she came upon a house. She knocked and, when no one answered, she walked right in. At the table in the kitchen, there were three bowls of porridge. Goldilocks was hungry. She tasted the porridge from the first bowl.

"This porridge is too hot!" she exclaimed. So, she tasted the porridge from the second bowl.

"This porridge is too cold," she said. So, she tasted the last bowl of porridge.

"Ahhh, this porridge is just right," she said happily and she ate it all up.

The tale of Goldilocks and the Three Bears could be the moral of the story for Maggie Beer's successful food empire. Never content with 'near enough is good enough' Maggie instead has forged an international reputation for food products of the highest quality.

Take her extremely exquisite ice cream range, which includes such delectable varieties as Burnt Fig, Caramel and Honeycomb, and Quince and Bitter Almond. Maggie and her dedicated kitchen team spent nearly five years getting the recipe just right, "so it tastes as if it were made in your own kitchen, and eaten within an hour."

"Continuous improvement is part of my very being. Some people can't cope with that because they think I'm never satisfied, but it's not like that. It's just very important to me to get things right,"

Maggie explains.

She believes "getting it right" is the key to success in the food game – and industry benchmarking is the stepping stone to get there.

"Benchmarking is crucial in my opinion. There are so many food business operators that work really hard and believe in what they are doing, but they are doing it without an innate knowledge of food, or of food culture. For example, if you use olive oil in your products, make sure you use the freshest and the best. That might be the key to your product standing head and shoulders over its competitors."

(left) Maggie Beer



She said it's been her experience that food businesses that are prepared to put in the time and effort to benchmark their product against others in the marketplace tend to run ahead of the pack.

"I might have a good palate, and certainly the passion to succeed, but I learn everyday how to do something better – and I take heed of what I learn. I don't give up until the product is right – and I certainly don't take it to market until I reach that point. It's all about the detail."

She said her new range of winter soups, which were released in early May, are a perfect example.

"They have been two years in development and after some experimentation we decided that the only way we could get the quality we wanted was to personally source our vegetables directly from the grower to confirm ripeness. Because unless you have a beautiful vegetable you can't have a beautiful vegetable soup! Once we did that, we got the product we were after."

She also adheres to strict rules around batch sizes to ensure constancy.

It is this dedication to quality that has seen Maggie at the top of her game... which, incidentally, is where it all started.

Game was the Beer's first foray into food, after husband Colin won a Churchill Fellowship in the mid 1970s to study game bird breeding in Europe and America. Maggie and Colin opened their iconic Farm Shop in the Barossa to sell their home-grown pheasants direct to the public. Within a couple of years the Farm Shop evolved into the world-renowned and multi-award winning Pheasant Farm Restaurant. Maggie ran an impeccable kitchen, perfecting the cooking of a game bird that had stumped many. The restaurant's success culminated in it being named the 1991 Remy Martin Cognac/Australian Gourmet Traveller Restaurant of the Year.

After 15 years, the Pheasant Farm Restaurant closed in 1993 to focus on the production of quality gourmet foods.

In 1996 the Maggie Beer Export Kitchen at Tanunda was opened with a view to establishing export markets for Maggie's famous pate range. In 1999 the business returned to the original site and re-opened as the Farm Shop.

Two years later, the Maggie Beer brand hit the supermarkets. Today, Maggie's flagship Pheasant Farm Pate is as big a seller as it ever was, and sits alongside eight refrigerated and 21 dry goods products including fruits and preserves, nuts and spices, chocolates, oils, sauces, ice cream, verjuice and vinegar in fine food stores and some supermarkets across the nation and beyond.

While cooking has always been her number one passion, Maggie's natural talents and warm personality have also been a natural match for television and the broader media. For a number of years, Maggie was at the helm of the ABC's hugely popular *The Cook and the Chef* with Simon Bryant. The two were enormously watchable and shared an obvious love and passion of sourcing seasonal product and turning it into something special. Maggie only recently opted out of the series, to concentrate on her core business and a raft of new opportunities.

One such new opportunity was being named Australian Senior of the Year, which has kept her busy zig-zagging across the nation in recent months.

In true Maggie fashion, the award has given her new direction and new passion, not license to slow down.

"I don't think I'll ever slow down. I'm having too much fun!" she says.

## Want to know more?

### Contact

#### Maggie Beer

p +61 8 8562 4477

w [www.maggiebeer.com.au](http://www.maggiebeer.com.au)

# The past, present and future of food in SA



**Hon Michael O'Brien MP**  
Current Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries

## What is your future vision for the SA food industry?

My vision is that South Australia will continue to have a strong, vibrant and innovative food sector that will continue to provide the best quality food locally and at the lowest possible cost.

## What is the greatest achievement of the SA Food Plans over the last decade?

The collaboration between government and industry has seen a significant rise in the number of South Australian businesses which are exporting their produce. There were very few exporters in the late 90s.



**Geoff Knight**  
PIRSA Chief Executive

## What is your future vision for the SA food industry?

The SA food industry continues to grow its economic contribution to the state, by increasing the value of production and investing in more value adding and targeted marketing to high yielding domestic and international markets.

## What is the greatest achievement of the SA Food Plans over the last decade?

Developing a more export oriented culture amongst food companies and achieving real collaboration between industry and government in contributing to the sustainable growth of the industry



**Nick Begakis**  
Bellis Fruit Bars and Premier's Food Council member

## What is your future vision for the SA food industry?

My vision is that in the future, it will be more value added, more end consumer focussed and will be using global supply chains more effectively.

## What is the greatest achievement of the SA Food Plans over the last decade?

To have industry come together to collectively deal more effectively with government and its agencies, and as a group to understand where the future challenges lie and how to address these positive and negative challenges.



**Hon Paul Caica MP**  
Current Minister for Environment and Conservation, River Murray, and Water, Former Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries

## What is your future vision for the SA food industry?

My vision is to see South Australia become a global leader in sustainable food production. With South Australia's pristine environment providing clean, green and healthy food teamed with a sharp focus on innovative production and processing practices, our food industry is extremely well placed to become the Nation's Food Capital.

## What is the greatest achievement of the SA Food Plans over the last decade?

The SA food industry's greatest achievement has been to overcome the significant challenges of the past decade including drought, global economic uncertainty, a strong exchange rate and intense competition and yet still become entrenched as a vital part of our State's economy.

The SA Food Plan has helped guide the industry to grow in a way that now employs around 146,000 people and has captured opportunities globally to place our locally-grown food on tables in homes and restaurants all around the world.

It has achieved this through concentrating on every stage of food production, and gaining a greater understanding of consumer needs.



**Hon Paul Holloway MP**  
Current Minister for Mineral Resources Development, Urban Development and Planning, and Small Business, Former Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries

## What is your future vision for the SA food industry?

I believe that South Australia will no doubt establish itself as a world-leading centre for innovation in both food and wine. At the same time, South Australians will continue to enjoy high-quality and low-cost food in their own homes and local restaurants, with much of the ingredients being freshly grown and produced not far from our doorsteps.

## What is the greatest achievement of the SA Food Plans over the last decade?

Since 2002, our food industry has undergone significant expansion and last year contributed a record \$12.4 billion to the State's economy. Our major achievement has been to focus on the benefits of value adding to our home-grown produce at all stages of food production in a way that our local businesses are now working efficiently together to grow both national and overseas markets.

Food Talk catches up with South Australian food industry and government leaders from the past ten years in this final issue. Reflecting on the achievements of the SA Food Plans and where our industry's future direction could be, our leaders provide insight on possible directions and successes.



**Angelo Kotses**

Bickford's Australia and former Premier's Food Council member

**What is your future vision for the SA food industry?**

That South Australia becomes the food bowl to Asia.

**What is the greatest achievement of the SA Food Plans over the last decade?**

Firstly, the SA Food Plan success is a collaboration of the food industry's desire to review its performance on an annualised basis and secondly, I have had the wonderful opportunity of meeting a great group of people who share mutual values.



**Roger Drake**

Drake Supermarkets and former Premier's Food Council member

**What is your future vision for the SA food industry?**

As long as we can get the major chains support in supplying Australian manufactured/grown produce, the industry has never looked so positive. We have a unique opportunity to market quality produce and food manufacturing with the highest safety and food hygiene standards. Nowhere else in the world do you have this guarantee!

**What is the greatest achievement of the SA Food Plans over the last decade?**

To have continued its growth pattern despite competing with products that are manufactured/grown in countries where their food standards are not even comparable to those of SA business'.



**Stephan Knoll**

Barossa Fine Foods and Chair Flavour SA

**What is your future vision for the SA food industry?**

To have a strong, vibrant and significant industry that understands its niches and pursues them successfully.

**What is the greatest achievement of the SA Food Plans over the last decade?**

To have engaged and supported small food business into expanding intrastate, interstate and internationally creating a growing and more significant industry to South Australia.



**Hon Caroline Schaefer MLC**

Member of the Legislative Council, Former Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries

**What is your future vision for the SA food industry?**

My vision for the South Australian food industry remains an integrated and equal partnership between industry and government that leads to long term sustainability and profitability for producers and those who value add within South Australia.

**What is the greatest achievement of the SA Food Plans over the last decade?**

The greatest achievement over the last ten years was expanding the food industry to a stage where South Australia was recognised as THE food state and food production was recognised as an industry in its own right rather than an adjunct. The development of the Score Card and Regional Food Groups were firsts for South Australia, and the fellowships developed have often been of long term benefit to all.



**Tas Mitani**

Mitani Products

**What is your future vision for the SA food industry?**

I am confident that the food industry in South Australia will continue to play a vital role as an important industry sector. This will be achieved by being aware of consumer trends and developing products that meet market expectations. We will continue to benefit from geographical location being a distribution hub for Central, Southern, Western regions of Australia. There is also a trend towards collaboration with strategic alliances being established between manufacturers. The discussions and collective thinking between manufacturers can only strengthen our market position in Australia and globally.

**What is the greatest achievement of the SA Food Plans over the last decade?**

There have been a number of achievements; the most significant from our perspective has been the energising focus on new product development as a critical cornerstone to future success. The relationship built between food manufacturers large and small are now a lot stronger in part to the efforts of industry support affiliations like Flavour SA and the SA Food Centre. There is now greater collaboration, empowering micro, small, medium and large businesses.

# The past, present and future of food in SA



**Mary Ferguson**  
Consultant and former Premier's Food Council member

## What is your future vision for the SA food industry?

I see a thriving, competitive industry, producing sustainable quality products that consistently meet market needs.

## What is the greatest achievement of the SA Food Plans over the last decade?

The development of a strong government/industry partnership that has fostered creative business that produces an enormous range of primary and value added products enjoyed and respected not only locally but throughout the world.



**Des King**  
Former Director Food Adelaide

## What is your future vision for the SA food industry?

Consumers will be able to identify South Australian sourced food and beverage products as a direct result of promotions and clear labelling highlighting the source, quality and sustainability of those products available for purchase at retail or food service outlets.

## What is the greatest achievement of the SA Food Plans over the last decade?

The government's leveraging of industry funds, through the industry/government partnership with Food Adelaide, created a unique model for implementing initiatives of value to the industry while, at the same time meeting Government objectives.



**Ian Young**  
Mexican Express and Vice Chair Flavour SA

## What is your future vision for the SA food industry?

Onward and upwards! Get smart, look for the holes in the market and service the market with a consistent and dependable product.

## What is the greatest achievement of the SA Food Plans over the last decade?

Ten years ago South Australia food businesses saw each other as competition, today we see ourselves as potential allies to market.

I believe the best thing the South Australia Food Plan has done! It has made us talk to each other.



**Jan Angas**  
Farm Follies and Chair Regional Food Groups

## What is your future vision for the SA food industry?

For the state of South Australia to have the richest food offer in this country with balance and diversity, from agriculture to finished product, with our foundation in cultural traditions and our growth in transitions to a contemporary food offer. All the time respecting the environment, maintaining GM free, and encouraging the smallest of unique artisan producers to commodity exporters.

## What is the greatest achievement of the SA Food Plans over the last decade?

Increasing visibility and recognising the existence of small producers who are connected to their land and quality of product they produce while opening up the valuable opportunity we have for the future journey. Continued investment in the last decade 'seeding', could place the state as one of the world leaders in quality wine, food, and tourism. An established culinary destination, with premium recognition for our food products.



**Susan Nelle**  
Former Executive Director Food South Australia

## What is your future vision for the SA food industry?

To support innovation across the sector. Innovation flourishes best where a 'collaborative infrastructure' exists to stimulate and support it which requires an sustained commitment from industry and government.

## What is the greatest achievement of the SA Food Plans over the last decade?

To realise the potential that existed. From large to very small businesses. South Australian icons like San Remo and Coopers became global businesses. And small, family owned and often regional businesses realised that they had terrific products with potential in Australia and even overseas. The Regional Food Groups supported each other and stimulated the development of a food culture and collaboration with each other and wine and tourism in their communities.



**Simon Bryant**  
Chef

**What is your future vision for the SA food industry?**

That South Australia will cement a position as world leaders in ethical, sustainable, renewable food production. That we will have a reputation for product that commands a premium price for farmers and producers, to remunerate them fairly for the passionate and dedicated work they do behind the scenes in this state.

**What is the greatest achievement of the SA Food Plans over the last decade?**

While the plans do focus largely on (and have achieved in many areas) growth indicators and market share what pleases me most is the expansion of premium free range and ethically produced product. The growth in interest, supply and awareness of grass fed beef, free range chooks/eggs/pigs, sustainable/renewable aquaculture and wild catch seafood to name a few makes me proud to be a chef in South Australia.



**Don Plowman**  
PIRSA Deputy Chief Executive, Agriculture Food and Wine

**What is your future vision for the SA food industry?**

The medium sized food industries will continue to compete globally with innovation as a core capability of all their business activities. Small (and often regional) food businesses will compete in the domestic market place with new and innovative products to replace imports and establish themselves as producers of quality produce that will establish presence in the eastern states market. These businesses will develop to the stage that they are competitive on the global scene.

**What is the greatest achievement of the SA Food Plans over the last decade?**

The partnership between small and medium sized business to assist them to become nationally and globally competitive. The food industry is essentially exposed to global pressures and the overall performance of our food businesses is directly related to their understanding of the global pressures and capacity and capability to respond. This has been the key pillar of the food program since its inception.



**Keith Smith**  
Former Premier's Food Council member

**What is your future vision for the SA food industry?**

South Australia's food industry will continue to evolve towards an emphasis on regional produce, simply presented as representing the qualities of the landscape.

**What is the greatest achievement of the SA Food Plans over the last decade?**

The greatest achievements have been to reward excellence and entrepreneurial spirit while remaining aware of the need for economic viability.



**Rob Kerin**  
Consultant and former Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries

**What is your future vision for the SA food industry?**

My vision remains that we have an industry who work as a team to have a sustainable, ever growing industry, where our growers and processors receive adequate returns to allow re-investment and prosperity.

**What is the greatest achievement of the SA Food Plans over the last decade?**

To me the highlight was the way in which industry, under strong self leadership, came together to not just own the SA Food Plan, but drive implementation and growth.



**Catherine Barnett**  
Executive Officer, Flavour SA

**What is your future vision for the SA food industry?**

My vision for the South Australian food industry to have a 'well oiled' machine with everyone working together to achieve significant results.

**What is the greatest achievement of the SA Food Plans over the last decade?**

The Market Development program has provided great results in increasing domestic exports and market access for those who have participated. It was pitched at all levels of business which meant there was something for everyone in the program.



## 'South Australian' is king of the menu



**South Australian produce is increasingly the 'star of the show' on SA menus.**

Imagine a menu bursting with South Australia's best... char-grilled Spencer Gulf baby octopus, a salad of Kangaroo Island haloumi cheese nestled atop local rocket leaves and a tartlet filled with Maggie Beer's ice cream.

General Manager of The King's Hotel in the heart of Adelaide, Gareth Lewis not only imagined such a menu, but has brought it to life.

In fact, the whole pub is proudly South Australian, from key produce on the menu through to the wines on offer and the beer on tap and in bottles.

"Within the borders of South Australia we rear and grow some of the world's finest produce, brew the freshest beers and unquestionably crush the best wines, not just Australia, but the world, has to offer. At The Kings we have adopted the philosophy of 'why bother selling anything else then?'"

Gareth said.

The Kings officially re-launched in February 2009 with its SA only branding, and Gareth says the moved has paid off.

He said their South Australian producers bent over backwards to supply the hotel's eateries throughout the year with the finest produce. However, seasonal limitations sometimes meant having to take things off the menu or offer a close alternative.

However, he said the pub's loyal punters didn't mind a bit. "[The SA only concept] has been received really well. What we offer seems to tick the box for many of our customers."

He said people were also prepared to pay a bit more for quality produce.

"We have pride in our state and we showcase the things that have made it great over the past 150 years. Be that a house made pie floater, Fruchocs ice cream, a Farmers Union Iced Coffee or Beerenberg chutney we aim to deliver a unique experience."

### What to know more?

#### Contact

**Gareth Lewis**  
**The Kings**

p +61 8 8212 6657

w [www.thekingsbardining.com](http://www.thekingsbardining.com)



## Haigh's sweet strategy

**South Australian food industry icon, Haigh's Chocolates, has forged a reputation for quality – from its exquisite hand made products, to its retail strategy and the skills training it offers staff.**

Haigh's walks the talk when it comes to living out the business' vision and values.

Just as the vision says, Haigh's has directed its efforts towards becoming the 'national retailer of choice' of its premium hand made chocolates. And care and consideration of employees, customers, suppliers, shareholders, the community and the environment really are central to all that the business does – just as Haigh's values dictate.

In an industry that often has export as the golden egg to aim for, the strategic direction taken by Haigh's is unique, but it is a strategy that works for them – and their product.

"We made a strategic decision about five years ago to focus on selling our chocolates in our own retail outlets, and not through a wholesaling model. We wanted total control of our product,"

Alister Haigh, Chief Executive said.

"Export doesn't suit this model because it [is effectively wholesaling]. We did export for about three years, but we found it didn't fit with our business and culture."

Instead, Haigh's has concentrated on selling its exquisite hand made chocolate range through 12 Haigh's retail stores across the nation – six in Adelaide, five in Melbourne and one in Sydney.

Alister says this strategy suits their hand made product well.

"We can react quickly on feedback we receive, which means we can bring a new product on line in a short period of time, or vary the formula [of existing products] slightly depending on what time of the year it is." (For example, the process to create Haigh's hard centres changes in line with the seasons to ensure a consistently hard centre.)

Staff are also a key focus for Haigh's. The business offers a comprehensive skills acquisition training program that runs alongside a national industry based food processing (confectionery) training program. The vast majority of the business' 300 plus employees take part in the program.

For example, of the 70 staff members who work in the Adelaide production facility, 85% of them are participating in the ongoing training program. Staff receive financial incentives and career progression opportunities for their efforts.

Alister says the Haigh's investment in workforce development has been good for the business and its product.

"It's important for our output, reputation and quality. Because our products are all hand made it ensures quality and volume."

And that has been the key to Haigh's enduring success: customers know that each tablet of pure chocolate, every hand dipped truffle and every sweet little chocolate-covered apricot fruit from the South Australian Riverland will have that distinctive, blissful Haigh's taste and texture.

### For more details

Contact

**Alister Haigh**

**Haigh's Chocolates**

p +61 8 8372 7000

w [www.haighschocolates.com.au](http://www.haighschocolates.com.au)

# Are you a food 'fan' or 'follower'?

Winner



Three Finalists T-Shirt Designs  
I Don't Share - Caitlin Milne  
RBN MENZ licence plate -  
Daniel Purvis  
Panda design - Eden Todd

**South Australia's Food Industry Awards have joined the world of web 2.0 with Facebook and Twitter sites just recently activated.**

You can join us as a Facebook 'fan' or Twitter 'follower' to share in all things unique to South Australia's food industry.

Jump online and tweet us your favourite product or business, share a recipe using only local produce or tell us about your new regional food discovery. You can also nominate a business who you think should enter the Awards and find out what past winners and finalists are doing.

If you're not yet using social media personally or professionally consider this...over nine million Australians are interacting on social media sites (Nielsen, 2010), along with over 400 million users worldwide (Facebook, 2010)... and counting.

Social media is irrevocably altering the way we communicate, share information and interact with brands and government. We can now make instantaneous connections and access unparalleled amounts of information. And because of the speed in which social media enables communication, word of mouth is now world of mouth.

'Foodies' are amongst the most enthusiastic users of social media and here in South Australia many businesses are already on board with the likes of Robern Menz, Coopers, Feast Fine Foods and La Casa Del Formaggio just a few who have mastered the world of social media.

For Robern Menz establishing social media sites around their iconic brand Fruchocs has quickly seen them connect with around 14,000 Facebook fans... so far. According to CEO Phil Sims, social media is a powerful marketing tool.

"It has tremendous value from a research point of view. If we have a concept we're thinking about we can put it out there and get some instantaneous feedback. We find that those fans that are passionate about our products will really get involved and let us know their thoughts. That's very valuable," said Phil.

"Recently we initiated a Fruchocs T-Shirt design competition asking fans to design a unique and imaginative image showcasing Fruchocs as an iconic South Australian product."

"Through Facebook we have had over 70 incredible entries. Designs were posted during the process, allowing fans to comment on their favourite designs. You can't get better direct interaction with your customers than that and now these fans will hopefully proudly wear the winning T-Shirt design."

Phil said social media also allowed Robern Menz to get news and updates out quickly, and to establish a direct relationship with customers.

"The majority of our product is sold through retailers, so in the past it has been the retailers that have had the benefit of communicating directly with our customers – not us. So social media has been very important to us in that respect, because we now enjoy a direct relationship with those who buy our products – the end consumer."

Phil said it was important for food business to understand that social media could generate both positive and negative feedback. "Facebook is essentially an open forum, and that means you have to expect both negative and positive feedback." He said the key was to address any negative feedback quickly – and not to ignore it or try to stem it. "Negative feedback can be used to positive effect – it's just about how you handle it."

## Join us!

Become a fan or follower of the SA Food Industry Awards today  
[twitter.com/safoodawards](https://twitter.com/safoodawards)  
[facebook.com/safoodawards](https://facebook.com/safoodawards)  
and join Fruchocs too  
[facebook.com/menzfruchoc](https://facebook.com/menzfruchoc)



# Food groups mapping a new future

**South Australia's Regional Food Groups have gone from strength to strength since their inception in 2001.**

South Australia's Regional Food Groups are as unique as the regions they represent.

Over on the Limestone Coast the food group is promoting an innovative and burgeoning boutique industry. Food Barossa is proud of its cultural heritage and strong wine and food link. And Good Food Kangaroo Island is focused on its environmental sustainability and its 'pure' island status.

Regional Food Groups have been part of the South Australian food industry landscape since 2001, when Food Barossa was established. Its aim – like the food groups that have since followed – is to promote and strengthen not only its regional profile, but also individual food businesses within its region.

Chair of the Regional Food Groups, Jan Angas (above), said one of the strengths of the food group model has been South Australia's strong regional differentiation.

"While we work as a collective, each Regional Food Group has a slightly different profile which reflects where we come from. This regional diversity has stood us in good stead because it allowed us to celebrate our diversity and work harmoniously with each other – rather than against each other."

Jan said this regional diversity was well supported by having 9 individual Regional Food Groups.

"Having so many food groups has allowed us to properly support and promote the diversity across South Australia from paddock to plate. It tells the world that as a food growing state we're not just one homogenous product."

The Regional Food Groups have achieved much in the past nine years, and according to Jan the journey is far from over.

"We've achieved much of what we set out to do, and now we're re-setting our goals for the future."

"One thing we're very proud of is the fact that we've positioned our regions and their offerings very well. People now seek out regions for their particular products; they identify food products with where they are produced. Once upon a time punters would stumble across something very unique in a region, but it was more by chance than by purpose.

"We're also proud of the role we've played in promoting regional tourism – particularly South Australia's unique brand of culinary tourism."

Jan said this was an area Regional Food Groups would continue to focus on in the future.

"I think South Australia has huge potential in terms of world culinary tourism. We have an unbelievable advantage over so many places in being a culinary destination in itself. Not only do we have so many unique food offerings, but we also have wonderful wine offerings. And each region of South Australia is quite unique from each other. Added to this is the fact that each region is easily accessible and not a huge distance in terms of traveling. So tourists can have a wide ranging culinary experience with the greatest of ease."

"In many ways, the work of Regional Food Groups is just beginning. The first stage was really a developmental stage, where we got our message across and educated people about what's on offer in South Australia in terms of food and wine. Now we can concentrate on spreading our message to the wider community; and focusing on individual food regions becoming economic multipliers for their region as a whole."

Discover the Regional Food Groups:

**Adelaide Hills Food**

[www.adelaidehillsfood.com.au](http://www.adelaidehillsfood.com.au)

**Food Barossa**

[www.foodbarossa.com](http://www.foodbarossa.com)

**Clare Valley Cuisine**

[www.clarevalleycuisine.com.au](http://www.clarevalleycuisine.com.au)

**Fleurieu Food**

[www.fleurieufood.com.au](http://www.fleurieufood.com.au)

**Good Food Kangaroo Island**

[www.goodfoodkangarooisland.com](http://www.goodfoodkangarooisland.com)

**Limestone Coast Food**

[www.limestonecoastfood.com.au](http://www.limestonecoastfood.com.au)

**Food Riverland**

David Benda +61 488 060 424

**Taste of the Southern Flinders Ranges**

Jackie O'Reilly +61 407 790 131

**Yorke Peninsula**

Justin Murdock  
[greatbeer@yorkebrewing.com.au](mailto:greatbeer@yorkebrewing.com.au)

## For further details

Contact

**Jan Angas**

**Chair, Regional Food Groups**

p +61 414 639 088

e [jan@huttonvale.com](mailto:jan@huttonvale.com)



# Good Food and Wine comes to Adelaide

**The Good Food & Wine Show will be held for the first time in Adelaide from 8 to 10 October 2010.**

Australia's 'biggest gourmet deli' is heading to Adelaide.

The Good Food and Wine Show, a regular fixture across the rest of the country, will make its long-awaited Adelaide debut in October.

Thousands of people are expected to converge on the Adelaide Showground, Adelaide Event and Exhibition Centre at Wayville to discover new tastes and flavours, products and techniques from hundreds of exhibitors.

Adelaide's own celebrity chef, Simon Bryant will be centre stage in the popular Celebrity Theatre along with George Calombaris, Gary Mehigan (both above), Matt Moran and Tobie Puttock who will all be sharing their favourite culinary creations.

"We are extremely excited to bring The Good Food & Wine Show to Adelaide, where South Australia's reputation for outstanding food and wine aligns closely with the features of our show," says Diversified Exhibitions Australia Show Director, James Laing.

"With the show already established and successful in other Australian states, it was time to grow into another market where good food and wine is appreciated."

Show features include:

- A dedicated South Australian area showcasing the best of our food and wine.
- Celebrity chefs appearing live in the Celebrity Theatre with entertaining and insightful demonstrations and practical tips for home kitchens as well as book signing.
- Cheese Matters Masterclasses where participants can learn and enjoy different variety cheeses paired with the perfect accompaniments and wine.
- Reidel Wine Theatre where participants can put their palates to the test and sample some of South Australia's and Australia's top wines.

The Riedel Decanter Bar is the place to be seen offering participants tutored wine sessions by a panel of experts, including wine guru Matt Skinner.

Visit the South Australian area, proudly sponsored by PIRSA, where food producers such as Barossa Fine Foods, Charlesworth Nuts, Haighs Chocolates, Lucia's Fine Foods, Robern Menz and Spring Gully will be on show.

The Taste SA area is another must-see experience and represents some of the state's smaller producers such as Aunty Joan's Gourmet Toffee, Bush Tucker Icecream and Sweet n Spicy.

It's then a short stroll through to the regions with wines from Bird in Hand from the Adelaide Hills, Rolf Binder from the Barossa, Shingleback from McLaren Vale and Cleggett Wines from Langhorne Creek.

Keryn Gorman (left), Manager from Illalangi is another local business who will be showcasing her food products and wine at Adelaide's Good Food and Wine Show, after their success at the Melbourne Show in June.

"The consumers were food and wine savvy and enjoyed talking directly to the producer," says Keryn.

"We also had strong interest from trade, both domestic and international and now we have a lot of following up to do."

Visit [www.goodfoodshow.com.au](http://www.goodfoodshow.com.au)

## Special offer

Book now and save 20% on adult entry tickets to the Good Food & Wine Show Adelaide.

Call Ticketek on 13 28 49 or book online at [www.goodfoodshow.com.au](http://www.goodfoodshow.com.au) quoting 'Food Talk' to receive the discount. This offer is only valid until Tuesday 31 August 2010.



## Creating a culinary tourism destination

Culinary tourism is well and truly on the international tourism map – and South Australia is leading the way in the destination stakes.

South Australia's Food and Wine Strategy makes a bold vision, 'by 2020, South Australia will be recognised as the world's leading food and wine destination.'

The vision is not something that was pulled from a hat, but follows two years of intense work and campaigning by food and wine industry representatives and the South Australian Tourism Commission.

The Strategy and the delivery of its objectives now sits with the Food and Wine Tourism Working Group, a working party of the South Australian Tourism Industry Council (SATIC).

Karen Ronning, Chair of the Food and Wine Tourism Working Group, says there has been much activity in the Food and Wine Tourism sector in recent times, including:

- A South Australian Tourism Commission marketing campaign, focused on the wine industry, specifically, the close proximity of our wine regions and cellar doors to Adelaide (around 200 within an hour's drive from Adelaide).
- A new Wine and Food Guide, the first for 5 years. The guide is available on [www.southaustralia.com](http://www.southaustralia.com) where you can order a copy online.
- A Food and Wine Tourism Coordinator appointed by SATIC, Pip Forrester, foodie and ex-restaurateur, who is a long-time food and wine tourism operator and advocate.



Karen said one of the objectives of the Food and Wine Strategy is the creation of opportunities for industry to engage in cooperative marketing of food and wine tourism with the Tourism Commission.

"After our co-op marketing meeting last year, SA Tourism Commission distributed a Food and Wine Tourism Co-operative marketing prospectus to industry and the same is planned for this year."

She said the document will outline proposed marketing activities, target markets, when events will occur, how much it will cost to get involved and who to contact if interested.

The prospectus will be distributed to all food, wine and tourism organisations in South Australia over the next couple of months.

## For further details

Contact  
**Pip Forrester, South Australian Tourism Industry Council**  
 p +61 414 530 386  
 e [pipforrester@westnet.com.au](mailto:pipforrester@westnet.com.au)

(above)  
 Photography by Jacqui Way  
 Photo courtesy of South Australian Tourism Commission

# Igniting new rural opportunities

**A program matching young farmers with experienced mentors has broadened horizons and ignited new agribusiness opportunities.**

Forty young, enterprising rural producers have widened their horizons through the PIRSA and the Office for Youth Ignite program.

The inaugural scheme, launched last year, wound up in May with a graduation and networking workshop and lecture to coincide with Tasting Australia.

The program provided a series of networking opportunities and one-on-one work with experienced mentors to develop skills to establish commercially environmentally sustainable and innovative agrifood businesses.

Participants were matched with 30 professionals from the agribusiness sector, including last year's Rural Woman of the Year Susi Tegan, Bush Tucker Icecream director Ian Pickett and Carol Schofield AM, from the Fleurieu Peninsula.

Twenty nine-year-old Bordertown farmer Matt Neumann, who runs a 320-hectare property with wife Janine, says he benefited greatly from his mentoring relationship with Ken Solly.

While Matt has a pretty clear picture of the road ahead - he wants to maintain his yields in potatoes, onions and Lucerne hay while reducing water usage, and diversify into new crops - he says Ken's input has helped him view his goals with new insight.

"The Ignite program [allowed me] to gain exposure to some great teaching and information, from financial planning, to industry benchmarking and sound business principles that I wouldn't have gained any where else. Also the ability to network with likeminded individuals such as Ken has been great."

Ken's mentoring initiatives have included a tour of Matt's property, training days, the development of decision-support spreadsheets, telephone support, and property visits to three leading farms. Matt said through Ken's mentoring, he has been able to determine ways to improve his business in the future.

The mentoring relationship has been equally satisfying for Ken.

"It has been a challenging, rewarding and motivating experience for me. It's enabled me as an older person to look at things through younger eyes... I think Matt and I will stay in contact and bounce ideas off each other for many years to come."

The Ignite project was a joint initiative between PIRSA and the Office for Youth, with funding through the Commonwealth Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations.

## Want to know more?

Contact  
**Sam LeRay**  
 Ignite  
 p +61 434 654 916  
 e [sam.leray@sa.gov.au](mailto:sam.leray@sa.gov.au)



# A decade of Food Talk

