

## Case Studies

### Yorke Peninsula Produce - Bringing Some Yorke to your Forks

In September 2014, RDAYMN in partnership with Yorke Peninsula Tourism brought together a number of Yorke Peninsula food producers to work towards getting YP branded food 'out there'. Many visitors to the beautiful Yorke Peninsula as well as locals have indicated they would like to be able to purchase locally produced and caught food, however it can prove quite a challenge to find. It is also difficult for local restaurants and eateries to source local produce.

The Barossa, Clare Valley, McLaren Vale, Eyre Peninsula and Adelaide, to name a few examples, all promote their distinct wine and food produce with great success. Yorke Peninsula produces a wide range of fantastic and unique food and dining experiences; however there is room for improvement in the area of marketing and promotion. Increasing availability and awareness of local produce will therefore be a key ingredient moving forward.

Through this process we have identified:

- A number of varied food producers in the local area;
- How producers currently distribute their products and barriers they have / continue to encounter;
- Some of the key target markets – local, regional, state, national and international.

One of the focus issues for producers was the development of a 'standardised' YP food logo in addition to enabling a group approach to getting Yorke food more readily accessible.

To support the further development and progress of YP Food Produce, RDAYMN applied for funding through PIRSA's "Supporting Brand in our Regions" funding. In June 2015 we were advised of our successful application. This will involve Product Development, Producer Workshops, provision of intensive assistance to Producers who are seeking to widen the distribution of their product including onto local / SA plates through to supermarket shelves by linking to outlets, and the development of a Strategic Action Plan detailing the required future activities needed to progress getting YP food branded 'out there', more available to tourists, locals, on supermarket shelves, in restaurants and beyond.

In 2015-16 we will be implementing the YP Food Project, and are very excited about the next phase for our YP Producers.

### Regional Development Fund

In June 2014, the expansion of the State Government Regional Development Fund was announced and Expression of Interest were sought from regional businesses. 22 Yorke and Mid North Expression of Interest (EOIs) were lodged across all three grant programs: Small, Major and Community Infrastructure. Our office worked with 17 of these applicants to turn the EOIs around in 3 weeks. RDAYMN then assisted applicants with their Round Two Applications and those that were successful include:

#### *Small Grant Program*

Paulett Wines received \$115,608 to establish a Bush Devine Café at their Cellar Door. This uses produce from their established Indigenous Australian Bush Food Garden. The grant assisted the 30 year old business to diversify and provides a unique tourism attraction in the Clare Valley.

Wilson Pastoral Saltbush received \$200,000 to develop saltbush pellets and a new dry animal feed processing factory in Clements Gap, south west of Crystal Brook. This innovative is set to commercially produce a high quality stock feed alternative using the organic, natural and nutritious resource of Australian saltbush. The pelletising factory will be able to commercially produce 26,000 tonnes of pellets per year delivering a low cost and sustainable source of nutrients for sheep and other stock animals.

#### *Major Grant Program*

Bowman's Intermodal received \$840,000 to duplication the existing rail line, extend the hardstand and expand infrastructure at the Bowman's facility. This expansion at Australia's largest inland regional port is a \$3.8 million

project which will create new jobs in the Mid North, increase capacity, value-add to activities on site and provide greater efficiencies for exports from South Australia.

South Australia's largest egg producer, Days Eggs received \$500,000 to build a new free range egg production facility on a 324 hectare property at Port Germein. They are anticipating to increase production to 4,000 dozen per day by the middle of 2015. This will boost the regional economy, as well as supplying local free range eggs to South Australian customers.

#### *Community Infrastructure Program*

Clare and Gilbert Council were successful with the Clare Town Centre Cultural Precinct Project. This concept was to create a café in the front of the Clare Town Hall, redevelopment of Ennis Park and linking the Clare Valley Discovery Centre (now Clare Valley Library) and the Clare Courthouse to create a cultural precinct.

It will revitalise the central hub of the Clare Township to attract visitation and consequent economic benefits, as well as provide the community with a focal point for community and cultural activities. After the November Council Elections, the newly elected council withdraw council funding for this project.

Northern Areas Council received \$333,869 for the Laura stormwater mitigation project to reduce the threat of flooding in the Laura Main Street.

In May, RDAYMN Economic Development Officers assisted seven out of ten 2015/2016 Major and Community Fund applications received by PIRSA. We continued to work with 3 businesses that were short listed to Stage Two Applications. The announcement for the successful applications will be known in the new financial year.

#### **Southern Flinders Grass Roots Project**

Following a competitive application process, Regional Development Australia Yorke and Mid North and Southern Flinders Regional Tourism Authority were successful in securing \$80,000 from the State Government to promote and develop the region's food, wine and tourism industry over a two year period.

Whilst the funding will be received and administered by Regional Development Yorke and Mid North, the "Grass Roots" project is aligned with the Southern Flinders Regional Tourism Authority (incorporating Port Pirie Regional Council, Northern Areas Council and District Council of Mount Remarkable) and the core industry group Southern Flinders Tourism and Tastes (SFTnT) to increase networks with associated industries such as hospitality and tourism.

The Southern Flinders Ranges Grass Roots project aims to capturing the essence of Southern Flinders food and wine by raising the region's profile and developing an authentic and positive image.

As part of the project we have completed the following activities:

- Work with over 30 emerging regional producers;
- Connect industry to food groups across the state;
- Develop at least 3 Industry network support programs/initiatives;
- Assist with wholesale and retail development;
- Link producers to retail outlets, both intrastate and interstate;
- Hold 2 Workshops in the region covering Retail, Wholesale, Packaging, Market Management, Merchandising, Paddock to Plate implementation and Pop-up Restaurant concept;
- Organise 3 Road Trips with producers across SA to industry related business to increase skills, knowledge and networks base;
- Mentoring;
- Packaging & Storytelling (TV advertising and Daytrippa Southern Flinders Producers Trail);
- Build on the new Southern Flinders Ranges "Naturally Unexpected" brand;
- Itinerary building;
- Media hosting;
- Event attendance e.g. Tasting Australia, Cellar Door Festival and Clare Valley Gourmet Weekend.

## **Successful Delivery of Skills for Jobs in Regions Employment Programs across the Yorke and Mid North**

The 2014-15 Skills for Jobs in Regions program saw significant changes to the program by the Department of State Development, not least being a reduction in support grants to run the program in the regions and increases in targets to achieve. These changes provided challenges, but an additional change combining funding for the three sub-regions presented an opportunity which was seized upon by Regional Development Australia Yorke and Mid North (RDAYMN) to re-think its approach.

RDAYMN brought the management of all industry-based pre-employment programs in-house under one large Industry-Driven Project (with the exception of Community Services), which allows greatly increased flexibility.

The three Workforce Development Officers, who previously oversaw each sub-region's program, changed roles, and three Industry Skills Manager (ISM) positions were created. The three ISM's now specialise in particular sectors; Agriculture and Viticulture, Retail, Hospitality and Business and Heavy Industry.

They work closely with employers, relevant training providers and job-seekers in each sector across the whole Yorke and Mid North region. RDAYMN is also trialling a comprehensive recruitment support model, which sees ISM's assisting new and expanding businesses with the full applicant selection and recruitment process. The new structure is underpinned by the services of a case manager to support job-seekers with barriers to training or employment, and administrative support. Career Services sits alongside and links with the Industry-Driven Project, with two qualified career practitioners providing full career development services to job-seekers.

The internal delivery of the Industry Driven project required RDAYMN to significantly change the way it planned and delivered training and employment programs within the Yorke and Mid North region. Where previously this program had been largely sub-contracted to other organisations for delivery, the internal delivery meant that a significant change of focus and re-orientation of resources was required by RDAYMN to successfully deliver on objectives. Employing 3 Industry Skills Managers who each had a specific industry sector focus provided us with on-the-ground connections to employers and emerging employment opportunities, and whose cross-regional delivery drove economies of scale and provided broad knowledge and business intelligence. The clear benefit of this model is that it provided consistent, seamless and ongoing services throughout the entire funding period, whereas under the previous model people could only access support if there was a specific project contracted and running at that particular time.

Each individual industry driven training or employment program was partnered with at least one specific employer (often more than 1) and these connections provided a focus on delivering industry specific training, targeted to existing or upcoming employment opportunities, and provided candidates to hiring businesses who were a fit for their desired skill profiles. The industry connections provided valuable input into the design and delivery of training programs, and over the year, built integrity within the training model, which resulted in employers having confidence in RDAYMN candidates for employment, and their trust that referred participants were appropriately informed and skilled for their business.

Wrapping around support for capped qualifications and other training programs resulted in high completion levels and high employment outcomes. The assistance delivered by RDAYMN provided rigor and structure to each RTO's recruitment (eg. pre-selection interview, aptitude testing) which meant that successful candidates were well placed to complete their studies and transition into employment. It has been estimated that general completion rates for full certificates sit at around 65%, so an achievement of more than 90%<sup>1</sup> completions demonstrates the importance of assessing individual participant's capabilities and barriers to completion before commencing their studies. Engagement in recruiting participants for capped qualification training, particularly in conjunction with TAFE SA, has greatly strengthened the relationship between RDAYMN and TAFE SA, and has established a confidence in RDAYMN's ability to provide strategic assistance to the recruitment process, which have resulted in higher outcomes for both participants in the Certificates, as well as the RTO.

Providing Executive Support to the Industry Leaders Groups provides an important connection between RDAYMN's Industry Skills Managers and large regional employers. It is during these meetings that proposed training is outlined and discussed, new business opportunities explored, and opportunities to leverage industry support is approached proactively. Each ILG were consulted and provided valuable direction and input, and in some cases a number of members were engaged through the delivery involved in the development, delivery and support of training programs across the region, and their business and market intelligence directly informs the program planning carried out by the ISM's.

Each of these strengths contributed to the overall results of the program, which saw an additional 97 participants serviced above the target KPI, and an additional 33 employment outcomes over target. This outstanding result is an indication of the appropriateness of this delivery model for employers and job seekers within the Yorke and Mid North region, as well as a demonstration of the need for regional programs such as this, to build and maintain connections between employers and job seekers. It is important to note that the quality of service and placement support offered to participants was not compromised due to the high targets and pressure for delivery, but rather those activities, client contact and program delivery needed to be efficient and effective in order to achieve such high quality results.

### **Career Services Yorke and Mid North**

Career Services gives local people the tools to manage their careers and make informed decisions about career choices and smooth transitions into learning, training and work opportunities. Tailored, face-to-face assistance is provided for people who are experiencing barriers to employment, as well as to those facing redundancy or reduced employment.

This project was rolled over from the 2013-14 project, with the addition of a second Career Practitioner. Because the service had already become known, clients sought out the service from the commencement of the project. This has proved to be an advantage. A pleasing trend is word-of-mouth referrals.

Many clients only seek assistance with resumes, cover letters, and interview skills, and they are then job-ready. For those who need further skill development or more intensive support, the ability to refer them to a broad range of training options and case management, which are part of the RDAYMN program, is working well. However, engaging people in our small communities remains a challenge.

Changing circumstances for some clients helped into employment in the 2013-14 project has seen them return for further assistance. We are also seeing an increase in people returning from mining work, and unfortunately the number of redundancies is increasing. While there are always opportunities, it has become an employer's market with fewer advertised vacancies and increasing competitiveness for all jobs.

There has been a demographic shift in participants from the 2013-14 to 2014-15 program, with an increased proportion of mature-aged people seeking assistance. With the cuts to government funding for many youth engagement programs we are finding it increasingly difficult to engage with young job-seekers, and are seeing a decreased proportion of 16-24 year-olds.

We have not yet seen the full impact of the current period of change to the Commonwealth Job Active program; some experienced case managers have moved into other employment and referrals from employment service providers has slowed significantly. There are new providers across our region with whom to build fresh relationships.

Many unemployed people have not yet registered with the new providers, and we believe that some are unsure of their status and the degree of assistance they will receive. Once this settles, we believe the flow of referrals for assistance will increase.