



By Chris Komorek

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Vanstone Produce strengthens supply



Lockyer Valley based producer receives funding from Queensland government's Rural Economic Development Grant programme

Fourth generation vegetable producer, Vanstone Produce, is set to receive up to A\$250,000 from the Queensland government's Rural Economic Development (RED) Grant programme, in order to help expand the business.

The Lockyer Valley based company will improve packing temperatures to be able to supply products all year round. This process will facilitate up to 25 new regional jobs, including forklift drivers, farm hands, office staff and picking and packing roles.

Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries, Mark Furner, said Vanstone Produce was one of the 14 businesses in Queensland to receive the funding.

"Vanstone Produce supplies directly and indirectly with all central markets in the eastern states of Australia including major retailers," said Furner.

"The company is a leader in the field, with more than 100 years of vegetable expertise."

Vanstone Produce grows a salad bowl of small crops, but specialises in spring onions, silverbeet, broccolini, broccoli and pumpkins.

Furner said the grant would allow for the increase of the packing window for temperature sensitive products all year round and help to improve the working conditions of existing staff.

"We know the Covid-19 pandemic has made it tough for a lot of businesses and communities, so these additional jobs will be most welcome," noted Furner.

Managing director Justin Vanstone said the project would allow for the increase of staff facilities and a larger workforce.

"The project and investment we are looking to make is a proven improvement to the packing process of the produce we grow," commented Vanstone.

"The project includes a climate-controlled packing area, an undercover concreted area for storage and new staff facilities.

"The completion of the project will allow us to pack produce in a climate-controlled environment all year round giving us the ability to maintain cold chain, as well as provide our staff with a more comfortable and safe working environment.

The RED grants programme offers emerging projects up to A\$250,000 in co-contributions to build industry and grow employment opportunities across the agricultural sector in Regional Queensland.

A total of 14 businesses have received A\$3.34m under the second round of funding. The third round of funding of the RED grants programme will be announced later this year.

<http://www.fruitnet.com/americafruit/article/1474/parts-of-san-diego-quarantined-as-psyllid-count-mounts>

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