

Soup deal a winner



Ken Borg of Barker Boy Fresh said supplying vegetables for a new soup range was helping his business grow and providing more employment opportunities for locals.

By Natalie Koufos

Local food wholesaler Barker Boy Fresh has won a contract to supply 100 tonnes of SA grown vegetables each year for a new soup range.

The Mt Barker company will sanitise, peel, cut and dice vegetables for a new range of soups produced by the South Australian Gourmet Food Company.

Barker Boy Fresh has employed three extra staff to help with the increased work and co-owner Ken Borg said winning the contract was positive for business growth.

"We are proud of the fact that we can employ 53 people here," he said.

"In a nutshell, we like to keep things local and we don't want to import other products - we want to keep local jobs."

Mr Borg said the company was one of the few in Australia which processed bulk vegetables

and he was proud that the company bought SA produce to help keep local growers more viable. "It's a good feeling for someone that's selling SA grown products," he said.

The soup vegetables include potato, celery, carrots and onions which are grown in Virginia, the Mallee and on the Adelaide plains.

Mr Borg said if the soup range was successful and resulted in an increased demand for vegetables more employment opportunities were likely.

"It's a positive for our business ... we pride ourselves on doing our best," he said.

Barker Boy Fresh has been operating for 28 years and supplies processed vegetables to bakeries and the hospitality industry.

The South Australian Gourmet Food Company has been operating for 20 years, producing soup using Australian grown produce.

The new soup is called Souperb and is available in Foodland stores.



Music festival feedback falls on deaf ears

Oakbank residents met with organisers of the Groovin the Moo music festival last week to share their feedback and concerns about the Anzac Day event at the Oakbank Racecourse.

Local man Graham Bettany, one of over 40 people who attended the meeting, said the major issues raised were traffic management, drunken behavior of attendees and noise levels.

He said organisers were aware of traffic and

behavior issues and were prepared to address them for future events, but he was disappointed with the response to noise concerns.

"I was pleased that they were prepared to address those other issues, but they weren't prepared to address the noise issue which was a major concern from most residents," he said.

"A number of people said they had to leave their houses because it was intolerable.

"I had no problems with the mid to high frequencies, but the bottom end was rattling

our windows." Mr Bettany said he did not mind the festival returning, as long as all issues were addressed.

"There were some comments in favor ... that it was good to see young people enjoying themselves and that the racecourse was being used," he said.

Organisers must now lodge a development application with the Adelaide Hills Council to hold the event annually.

A spokesperson for the promoter said they were working with stakeholders and the Oakbank community.

'Last chance' to secure town square

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It proposes retaining an historic cottage on the corner, which could be used to house a visitor information centre.

Mr McCarty said the group had approached Woolworths with the concept.

The association believes the retail giant could add a storey to its proposed shopping centre to make up for the loss of one-third of the block.

Mr McCarty acknowledged that the idea was bold, but said a growing regional centre such as Mt Barker needed such a facility.

"We are a small town of 14,000 people now but we have boldly been told that we are going to grow to 40,000 and we need a bold initiative

to give us a centre for those people who are coming in now and for future generations," he said.

A Woolworths spokesperson said the company's local development manager met with the association earlier this year.

"At this stage Woolworths is considering its options for the site in Mt Barker and will update the local community on its plans at the appropriate time," she said.

"We welcome all feedback from the local community on proposed developments."

To comment on the proposal, visit the association's Facebook page: www.facebook.com/MtBarkerandDistrictResidentsAssoc.

Farmer faces 'unfair' costs to cut down gums

By Genevieve Cooper

The Native Vegetation Council (NVC) has signalled a \$12,000 charge to a Hills cherry farmer to remove two gum trees when a residential household making the same request would be charged \$500, the Adelaide Hills Council has been told.

The discrepancy was raised by Marble Hill Ward Councillor Ian Bailey during a recent meeting.

Cr Bailey said he was approached by a cherry grower whose last crop was decimated by birds so he wanted to install permanent netting over his orchard.

In order to build the structure, the grower needed to remove two gum trees in the middle of the orchard.

Cr Bailey said the farmer was told by the NVC that he could take out the trees but he would have to pay \$12,000 in compensation or plant out 1ha of native vegetation on his property.

"He can't do either," Cr Bailey said. "It seems very unfair to just impose these sorts of costs on a cherry grower who is trying to promote agriculture."

Planning director Marc Salver told the meeting that a similar development lodged by a residential applicant would probably incur a NVC fee of \$500.

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