

News Release **Minister Geoff Brock**

Minister for Regional Development
Minister for Local Government

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Regional seed potato packing facility upgrade for Limestone Coast

Regional Development Minister, Geoff Brock today announced a \$200,000 grant to Limestone Coast potato supplier – Dowling Potatoes – towards further boosting the company’s export potential.

“The grant has been made possible through the Regional Development Fund which has been significantly increased from \$1.6 million annually up to \$15 million a year as part of my agreement with the Premier,” Mr Brock said.

“The main purpose of the fund is to boost economic activity and generate jobs growth in the regions.

“This grant will go towards supporting the company’s plans to increase it’s seed potato export capacity at its Tarpeena facility.

“Dowling Potatoes supplies seed potato markets in South East Asia, Queensland, Victoria, New South Wales and South Australia, with its product used by commercial farmers to grow crops for the crisping, french fry and fresh market sectors,” Mr Brock said.

“This project will centralise the company’s activities in South Australia by increasing on-site capacity and lifting the facility to export standard.

“The facility will produce a high quality product which will enhance South Australia’s reputation for seed potatoes.

“It will also increase the export volume capability of Dowling Potatoes and increase diversity for local potato growers, providing another market for their produce.

“Two new jobs will be created over the next three years and local businesses across the supply chain will benefit from the increased export volume including growers, local contractors and freight companies, and rural supply companies,” Mr Brock said.

Director of Dowling Potatoes, Ben Dowling said the seed potato packing facility upgrade would allow the company to cool store and package seed potatoes in Tarpeena for the export market, increasing production capability.

“Our investment in new infrastructure will include seed handling equipment and an increase to our shed and cool room capacity, and will give us more scope to target developing markets, including export,” Mr Dowling said.

“This will enhance the quality of our product by reducing its physiological age due to less handling and allowing for quicker packaging and export of a perishable product.

“Given last year’s closure of the McCain Foods Safries processing plant, this is an important investment in terms of sourcing alternative markets for Limestone Coast potato growers, “ Mr Dowling said.”

“The grant is one of six projects across the State to receive grants totalling more than \$1.1 million through the latest round of the State Government’s Regional Development Fund Stream 2 allocation,” Mr Brock said.