

## Premier Jay Weatherill

## Minister Geoff Brock

Minister for Regional Development  
Minister for Local Government

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### 300 jobs created in high-tech Port Augusta expansion

State Government grant funding, a ten-year contract from Coles and investment of more than \$150m - including from global investment firm KKR - has secured a 20 hectare expansion of Sundrop Farms' greenhouse business at Port Augusta creating about 300 jobs.

Premier Jay Weatherill said the State Government had committed \$6m from the Regional Development Fund towards the expansion, which would create at least 100 jobs during construction and about 200 in operation at the plant in around the Upper Spencer Gulf region.

"The partnership between Government, Sundrop Farms, KKR and Coles to deliver this remarkable expansion will provide a significant boost to Port Augusta and the surrounding region," Mr Weatherill said.

"We have identified premium food grown in a clean environment as a key economic priority for South Australia and this project is the perfect example of the benefits that can bring.

"At its heart, our economic strategy is about the creation of jobs and this multi-million dollar expansion will create 300 jobs in regional South Australia.

"Local schools have also begun offering horticulture training to prepare students for potential opportunities that this project will provide.

"This is also a great example of the benefits of attracting inbound foreign investment and the contract from Coles - to purchase Sundrop Farms' truss tomatoes for 10 years and sell them across the country - was vital in securing that financing."

Mr Weatherill, who has met with Sundrop Farms in London, said that the company's breakthrough technology, growing high-quality produce in the desert using solar energy and desalinated seawater, was a flagship model for doing business in South Australia.

"This project is the first in SA to integrate, at a commercial scale, leading technologies across solar thermal energy, solar seawater desalination and freshwater neutrality across 20 hectares of energy efficient greenhouses," Mr Weatherill said.

"Conventional farming practices and climate change are exerting significant pressure on food and water security in many regions of the world.

"Supporting the development of innovative technologies such as these is one way our Government can help deliver solutions."

Regional Development Minister Geoff Brock said it was significant that the commercial expansion of such leading edge practice was located in regional South Australia.

“This project is about testing the limits of sustainable production technologies in arid climates using renewable resources,” Mr Brock said.

“The Government’s support through the Major Projects Program of the Regional Development Fund will assist Sundrop Farms to expand its early test facilities into a fully commercial operation.

“The project will boost regional employment and boost investment in the region.

“It is a tremendous vote of confidence in regional South Australia that global company Sundrop Farms has based its cutting-edge operations here, exploring leading edge future focused technologies for horticulture industries in arid climates.”

For more information about the Premier’s economic priorities, visit

[economic.priorities.sa.gov.au](http://economic.priorities.sa.gov.au).