

## Hon Geoff Brock MP

Minister for Regional Development

Saturday, 7 October 2017

### **Regional showcase winners celebrated**

A motorsport event, a high-tech greenhouse and an underground outback bakery are the winners of the 2017 South Australian Regional Showcase.

The Keith Diesel and Dirt Derby, Port Augusta's Sundrop Farms and the Farina Restoration Group bakery were presented with the top awards at the showcase dinner in Whyalla last night.

Primary Industries and Regions SA (PIRSA) – major partner of the event – providing \$50,000 in sponsorship to support a team of journalists scouring South Australia for regional success stories.

The winners were decided through a voting system, with the general public casting more than 3000 votes for the People's Choice Award. Meanwhile, the Business and Community awards were decided by votes from sponsors, councils and Regional Development Australia (RDA) associations.

- **Sundrop Farms, Business Award winner**

A \$200 million greenhouse facility just outside of Port Augusta which includes four five-hectare climate-controlled greenhouses, a desalination plant and a concentrated solar power system made up of a 127m high tower and more than 23,000 solar mirrors. Sundrop Farms produces more than 15,000 tonnes of fruit each year, and it has secured a 10-year deal with Coles to provide truss tomatoes. The State Government supported the project through a \$6 million Regional Development Fund (RDF) grant.

- **Diesel and Dirt Derby, Community Award winner**

The Diesel and Dirt Derby began as a fundraiser for the Keith and Tintinara District Show, and is gradually becoming one of the biggest annual events in regional South Australia. More than 10,000 people attended in 2017 to see country motorsport events such as tractor pulls, buggy racing, a demolition derby and – for the first time – a round of the 2017 Australian Jet Spring Championship.

- **Farina Restoration Group, People's Choice Award winner**

Ten years ago caravanners discovered an underground bakery amidst the ruins of the ghost town of Farina, 55km south of the Oodnadatta Track – and today, the

aroma of freshly baked bread fills the air as bakery volunteers and tourists alike flock to the ruined town. The redevelopment of the bakery was supported by grant of \$63,000 from the State Government's Upper Spencer Gulf and Outback Futures Program.

## Background

The South Australian Regional Showcase – formerly the South Australian Regional Awards – is delivered by Brand South Australia and celebrates the achievements of individuals, groups and businesses that have made significant contributions to regional South Australia.

Regional success stories uncovered by a team of journalists and by public nominations were published on the state's news site [www.insidesouthaustralia.com.au](http://www.insidesouthaustralia.com.au) and were narrowed down to the 30 most popular stories by page views.

South Australians were invited to vote for the People's Choice Award, with 3178 votes cast on the top 30 most-viewed stories.

Regional Showcase sponsors, councils and RDAs rated stories for the Business and Community Awards based on how well the nominee contributed to the region economically and helped develop professional skills (Business Award) or contributed to the region's community and culture (Community Award).

The full list of finalists includes:

- [Almondco Australia](#)
- [Braden Stockham](#)
- [Princess Royal Station](#)
- [Diesel and Dirt Derby](#) – **Winner, Community Award**
- [Farina Restoration Group](#) – **Winner, People's Choice Award**
- [Frankie & Dandelion](#)
- [Handpicked Festival](#)
- [Hip Hop Bounce](#)
- [Leigh Creek Outback Resort](#)
- [Prancing Pony Brewery](#)
- [Robe Tourism Association](#)
- [2016 South Australian Rural Women's Gathering – Riverland](#)
- [Sundrop Farms](#) – **Winner, Business Award**
- [The Oyster Farm Shop, Kangaroo Island Shellfish](#)
- [Woodside Cheese Wrights](#)

Media Contact: Pamela Perre 0481 918 491

## **Quotes attributable to Regional Development Minister Geoff Brock**

The South Australian Regional Showcase is a fantastic opportunity to highlight some of the amazing success stories of our regions.

In particular, I am proud that two of the award winners – Sundrop Farms and the Farina Restoration Group – have been supported through State Government grants.

Our regions are integral to the success of South Australia, contributing \$25 billion to our economy annually and producing half our merchandise exports, with just 29 per cent of the state's population.

It is vital that we continue to shine a light on the wealth of activity happening across the state and recognise the spirit of innovation, hard work and community that is thriving in our regional communities.

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