



MEDIA RELEASE

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Yass Valley agri-business export potential off back of direct international access to Canberra

Several businesses in Yass Valley are feeling the positive effects of direct international access to Canberra, particularly when it comes to exporting.

“Export businesses in Yass Valley are reaping the benefits of direct international flights to the Canberra region. Several major agri-businesses are attracting high end inbound tourism or export,” said Sean Haylan, Economic Development & Tourism Manager at Yass Valley Council.

“Agri-business is Yass Valley’s’ highest single economic driver and since the international flights opened last month between Canberra and South East Asia, many new opportunities exist for our local businesses due to access to the markets with Singapore being a hub for China, Korea and Indonesia.

“In addition it’s about the quality of what’s produced here and the opportunities that this access opens up. Yass Valley businesses are producing many high quality Australian products which are highly sought after in Asian countries, and those Asian countries are prepared to pay a premium price.

“There are definitely opportunities for Yass Valley suppliers to look past their traditional markets of Canberra and Sydney to international markets,” Mr Haylan continued.

Sean Haylan says a strong local business, Shaw Vineyard Estate in Murrumbateman, was honoured last month at the ACT Chief Minister’s Export Awards. Each of the finalists in the awards achieved outstanding growth in international markets over the past year. The vineyard collected the award for ‘Regional Exporter’ and currently has international distribution for its wines to China, Singapore, Thailand and the Philippines.

Yass Valley Beef & Lamb is one local agri-business also looking at future export potential. All their cattle and sheep are raised in a natural, free range environment, bred and raised with the animals’ welfare in mind and free roam on a property in Yass Valley, an area known for the quality of lambs and wool produced. The business has sold live sheep to China for breeding purposes this year with the assistance of Elders Yass. Owner Landon Hodgkinson says it’s only early days, but within the next few years there will be export opportunities without question.

Yass Valley Beef & Lamb is currently working with Lewis Jones from Orient Partners, a business which aims to set up trade opportunities between the Canberra region and China – specifically for high end produce and ideally inbound tourism of high yielding markets.

“Tourism is key to raising awareness of the region in China. It’s a two-way street – the more people we can get to visit here, the more export opportunities will become available to the region, whether that’s small consumer goods being sold out of Canberra airport, or big exports of high quality produce that the region is renowned for such as beef and lamb,” said Lewis Jones, Director of Orient Partners.

On beef and lamb, Yass Valley's addition of the South Eastern Livestock Exchange (SELX), Australia's newest livestock selling centre which is a \$15 million 16 hectare world-class, regional livestock selling centre with the capacity to sell 3,800 cattle and 30,000 sheep on any given sale day, may see its users have flow on effects from international flights.

"SELX won't have any direct export opportunities, but our vendors, buyers and agents may see these opportunities, which will have positive flow-on effects for the region's agricultural industry," said Brendan Abbey, Director of South Eastern Livestock Exchange.

For more information on Yass Valley visit www.yassvalley.com.au

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