

## TURKEY GROWERS REINVEST: STILL IN POULTRY

**The suitability of north central Victoria as a location for poultry industry investment has been further confirmed by new supply contracts for many of the region's turkey growers.**

Following the winding down of Goldfields Turkeys processing plant in St Arnaud, NPC has been active in supporting regional turkey growers to re-invest in poultry production with new supply arrangements. We are pleased to be able to advise that several growers have upgraded their farm infrastructure, sheds and external areas in order to produce free range eggs or free range broilers.

Most of the growers are also broadacre grain farmers, and their involvement in the poultry industry gives them a much more diversified business base, and greater security. The recent Wimmera Mallee and East Loddon pipeline projects have added water security to the region's other poultry industry strengths (such as bio-security, access to feed supplies and regional supply chain linkages).



Photo: Converting turkey rearing sheds to cater for free range layers, with raised flooring and layer boxes.

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## MACSNACKS MAKE THEIR MARK

Moira Mac's Poultry and Fine Foods has continued to show innovation in its focus on preservative free, chemical free, cooked, value added poultry products. Since the company invested in High Pressure Processing technology it has rapidly expanded its range in Australian full service supermarkets. With some support from NPC, the company has further invested in integrated cooked meat forming and packaging equipment, and has launched a snack range, 'MacSnacks'.

Moira Mac has begun using the new equipment for the manufacture of its new branded snack range and for contract manufacturing. MacSnacks are cooked, heat-and-eat nutritious snacks such as bite sized portions, meat skewers and meat balls.



Photo: Moira Mac's High Pressure Processing System

## NEW ROLE FOR NPC CHAIRMAN

NPC's Chairman, Dr Greg Underwood has moved on to a new role after completing his tenure with Hy-Line (Australia) Pty Ltd, during which the company experienced rapid growth and consolidated its position as Australia's largest genetically elite stock supplier to the table egg industry.

Greg is now working as Group Research and Development Manager with Bioproperties Pty Ltd, a leading Australian novel vaccine research company, manufacturer and global supplier of live vaccines to the poultry industry and other intensive livestock sectors. Greg is also able to assist regional and other Australian poultry businesses with technical and business development advice, and we hope to continue his involvement with NPC and specific projects.

## SOCIALLY ENGAGING ASIA

NPC was one of 27 member-based business organisations awarded financial support to help expand its networks in Asia under the Australian Government's 'Asian Business Engagement' plan.

The project was designed to build on the successful Champions Fare Regional Food initiative, by extending the concept to select Asian markets. After discussions with the export consolidator (Bemco Australia) and retail supermarkets in China, Singapore and Hong Kong, the feedback suggested that a selection of new products in a retail environment was not of interest. However, there was enthusiasm for a social media, digital marketing program in China, using China's equivalent to Facebook, called Weibo.

The project is creating a digital marketing offer which meets slightly premium price points, includes value-adds (such as product/supplier stories, recipes, and video clips which link the product to giveaways and points of difference), and encompasses elements of well-being and other health attributes. Some of the businesses involved in Champions Fare are participating as well as a few other regional suppliers with export experience.

To contact NPC:

Phone Wayne Street on 03 5428 1488

Email: [northern.poultry@streetryan.com.au](mailto:northern.poultry@streetryan.com.au)

Web: [www.northernpoultry.com.au](http://www.northernpoultry.com.au)

## RETIREMENT FOR OUTSTANDING REGIONAL POULTRY INDUSTRY CONTRIBUTORS

After owning and operating Glenloth Game and Glenloth Free Range for around 25 years, Ian and Ronda Milburn have decided to begin their (long overdue) retirement in nearby Wycheproof.

Glenloth Free Range established its reputation as a supplier of gourmet poultry products to the food service industry from the late 1980s. Celebrity chefs in Melbourne and other major cities, such as Stephanie Alexander and Jacques Reymond, have been great advocates for Glenloth products over many years. Ian's commitment to free range principles and a meticulous grains based feed regime helped the company to differentiate its products for quality conscious customers.

Glenloth Game began as a small processing and marketing business for squab, and expanded, at various times, to process free range chicken, ducks, emu, venison, and pheasant. At one stage, Glenloth was the largest private sector employer in Buloke Shire, and was an award winning business with frequent positive attention from the media.

The Glenloth business has been sold to a new operator; more on this development in future news updates.

Congratulations to Ian and Ronda on their many achievements. We look forward to keeping in contact during your retirement.