

Great Southern continues to move forward

GSDC takes supportive role across many areas

The Great Southern Development Commission (GSDC) is continuing to address its core activity of supporting economic development across a broad front.

One of the major projects being developed in the region, Plantation Energy's biomass pelletising plant, moves closer to completion and is due for commissioning early this year. This plant will bring employment and export benefits to the region.

Natural Resource Management (NRM), a foundation stone for the GSDC, has seen a range of activities. The inaugural Jack Family Trust/GSDC scholarship holders in Restoration Ecology at the University of Western Australia Albany Centre have completed their first year of study and reflections from some of these students are in this Bulletin.

GSDC joined with a number of government agencies to present the Stirling Range Symposium: Natural Resource Management

and Cultural Heritage, and also supported the Western Australian State Coastal Conference in Denmark. Both of these conferences addressed NRM related issues.

NRM and ecological sustainability also informed the Forum Advocating Cultural and Ecotourism (FACET) conference held in Albany. The FACET conference received support from the GSDC and we took the opportunity to outline our role in supporting heritage and Indigenous tourism in the Great Southern.

The GSDC's support of philanthropy through the Western Australian Community Foundation (WACF) continues to reap benefits. Two more proponents, Fellowship House and the Denmark Community Future Fund, have established donation accounts with support from the State Government and WACF.

The region was fortunate to receive a visit from Professor David Hughes, a world renowned

food specialist, who brought both erudition and entertainment to a discussion on world food trends. Another visitor, Martin Walsh, Austrade's Senior Trade Commissioner in Seoul, provided valuable insight into trading with North East Asia.

The Great Southern Region Marketing Association (GSRMA) attracted a lot of attention in Perth with two major functions and did the same in the region when the organisation presented its annual Taste Great Southern series of events.

Taste Great Southern is part of the Perth International Arts Festival (PIAF) Great Southern program. Strong support from the GSDC and the regional public brought even more of what's on in Perth - and some specific Great Southern attractions - to the area for the pleasure of both locals and tourists.

North East Asian trade possibilities outlined

Senior Austrade representative brings his expertise to the region



Deborah Oberon outlines her export experiences

Great Southern business leaders had the opportunity to meet Mr Martin Walsh, Austrade's Senior Trade Commissioner based in Seoul, during his visit to the region in December.

Mr Walsh discussed potential markets for a range of products in South Korea and other North East Asian countries at a forum in Albany.

South Korea is Australia's - and Western Australia's - third largest export market. Mr Walsh characterised South Korea's market as 'sophisticated' and one which imported a variety of goods and services, including timber, health care equipment, meat, racehorses and beauty products.

He said the key to marketing into Asian markets was to research the viability of your products in the market. "There's a lot you can do to define your place in the market without getting on the plane," he said.

The forum was also addressed by Frankland Estate general manager Hunter Smith, who has established a wine export market in South Korea. He noted that a desire to find a single large volume market in the area may lead to

Continued on page 2

inside this issue:

Great Southern moves forward.....	1
North East Asian trade possibilities outlined	1
Restoration Ecology scholarships	2
PIAF celebrates long term commitment.....	3
Sense of place in Stirling Range.....	4
Woodanilling heritage tourism.....	4
Great Southern produce goes to town.....	5
Value adding to timber industry	5
GSRMA & FACET share tourism outlook.....	6
Local philanthropic organisations move to self reliance.....	7
Maynard Rye looks to retirement	7
Global food expert gives local insight.....	8

Restoration Ecology Scholarship provides opportunity in the region

Inaugural GSDC/Jack Family Trust scholarship holders reflect on ecology and tertiary education



Scholarship holders (L-R) Fiona Gerard, Rosanna Margetts, Daniel Debunnetat, Kylie Sadgrove and Ashleigh McMillan

Winners of the Jack Family Trust/Great Southern Development Commission Scholarships in Restoration Ecology have completed their first year of full time study and report demanding but exciting times, with the expectation of more to come during 2008.

The scholarship holders are studying towards a Bachelor of Science (Restoration Ecology) degree which is only offered at the UWA Albany Centre and has been designed with specific reference to the South Coast's unique and fragile ecology.

Restoration ecology involves the renewal of degraded, damaged, or destroyed ecosystems through active human intervention. Employment prospects for graduates cover a wide range of areas including erosion control, reforestation, removal of non-native species and weeds, the rehabilitation of waterways and mine sites, the reintroduction of plants and animals and habitat improvement.

The scholarships provide over \$11,000 for each student over the three year degree course and can be used to cover upfront HECS fees or taken as a cash payment. Scholarship holders come from varying backgrounds, but they share a love for the outdoor life and a desire to be involved in the professional management of the environment.

Fiona Gerard is a mature age student who has always been interested in the environment. She grew up near Point Peron so has seen first hand how heavy industry doesn't necessarily get on with the environment. Fiona's love of the outdoors was enhanced by spending 21 years of her life in New Zealand where she enjoyed tramping and climbing in the mountainous terrain.

Fiona works as a registered nurse and is pleased that the scholarship allows her the chance to reduce her paid work hours in favour of study.

Kylie Sadgrove moved to Albany from Perth especially to do the Restoration Ecology degree. Kylie already holds a Certificate IV in horticulture from TAFE,

so she has some complementary skills to support her study.

She's taken time off from paid work during the year and has put plenty of time into studying. "Maths and chemistry challenged me," she said, "but I needed to do them."

Kylie is looking forward to joining the workforce and is currently attracted to minesite rehabilitation. She enjoys the small classes and the supportive nature of her class mates.

Albany resident Ashleigh McMillan fits study into a busy life which also involves part time work and representing Albany in volleyball. She loves the outdoor life and spends what little recreational time she has these days on a long list of outdoor pursuits including camping, snorkelling, fishing, bushwalking, canoeing, cycling, and 4X4 driving!

A stint as a volunteer in a remote village in Nepal last year may inspire her to look for a job in restoration ecology at an overseas location when she has completed her degree.

Rosanna Margetts comes from Denmark and studied tourism at the Great Southern College of TAFE before enrolling at UWA. She's always had an interest in Environmental Science. "A career advisor at school once told me that I needed to study chemistry" she said, "I wish I'd listened to him! I'm doing it now, and while it's really quite interesting, I could use the background."

Rosanna is enjoying the fieldwork component of the course and finds the students like-minded and interested. The scholarship allows her to concentrate on full time studies.

Daniel Debunnetat comes from a small farming community near Esperance. The only male scholarship holder and a country boy at heart, his hobbies include roo shooting, football and boxing. He also finds time to play soccer for Polonia and cricket for Many Peaks.

Daniel hopes to leave his mark on the environment by using the skills and competencies that he will learn through completion of the Restoration Ecology degree.

Bruce Manning, CEO of the GSDC said, "We are particularly pleased to be involved with the development of this course in Albany. The GSDC has a firm commitment to developing sustainable practices in NRM for the betterment of the region and these scholarships signify that."

Contact: Bruce Manning 9842 4888

Continued from page 1

disappointment. His experience was that amalgamation of a number of small contracts can lead to "quite big business".

Elemental Skin Care director Deborah Oberon is currently negotiating to export her range of organic skin care products into the region. She urged business owners to "do their homework" and praised the role of Austrade, "It's a fantastic resource to have these people on the ground to meet with the people you are negotiating with," she said.

Mr Walsh's visit was managed by Austrade's local TradeStart Export Advisor Kate McKenzie. The Great Southern Development Commission (GSDC) delivers the TradeStart program in the Great Southern region in partnership with Austrade.

Contact: Kate McKenzie: 9842 4888.

PIAF celebrates its long term commitment with an expanded program

Local artists and artisans engage through an enhanced regional focus

Arts and cultural activity in the Great Southern received a major boost with the news that the Perth International Arts Festival (PIAF) will maintain its programming in the area until at least 2011.

This is the result of a collaborative partnership negotiated between the Great Southern Development Commission (GSDC) and then PIAF Director Sean Doran in 2003.

PIAF has been presenting international-standard film, music and drama to the region's audiences since then.

General Manager of PIAF, Julian Donaldson, said, "This year's Great Southern Program builds on an already well-established relationship.

"The Great Southern community is a special part of PIAF's extended family and we look forward to further sustaining this relationship with programs of unique quality and diversity," he said.

Bruce Manning, GSDC Chief Executive Officer, described the GSDC's relationship with PIAF as a 'win-win situation' for the region. "Local artists and residents benefit from access to world-class cultural events and entertainment whilst the festival raises the profile of the region and acts as a catalyst for tourism and investment," he said.

The internationally acclaimed Brodsky Quartet and traditional Irish music maestros Martin Hayes and Danny Cahill headlined this year's PIAF Great Southern Program which ran from 2 February until 4 March.

Renowned Australian-born guitarist Craig Ogden joined the Brodsky Quartet to present a program of exquisite miniatures and great masterpieces, whilst Hayes and Cahill's slow building performance left the audience spellbound.

The program offered them plenty of musical support. 'Queen of Soul' Sharon Jones and her band the Dap-Kings,

brought their funky brand of old-school soul and rhythm and blues roots to the Vancouver Arts Centre, whilst jazz singer Gretchen Parlato, winner of the 2004 Thelonius Monk International Jazz Vocals Competition, presented a moody and sophisticated set at the historic Albany Town Hall.

On a less conventional level, That 1Guy, aka musician Mark Silverman, 'played' a collage of galvanised steel, duct tape and electronic gadgetry to create a mix of blues, funk and psychedelic beats for an appreciative audience in Denmark.

In drama, Trad examined the relationship between a one hundred year old Irishman and his son, and gave us a comic and surreal look at the values of tradition, myth, family and heritage along the way.

The highly successful film season featured ten films in a number of genres including French farce, harrowing thriller and documentary, which touch on the themes of food and love, globalisation, national identity, age, courage and perseverance.

Travel writer Colin Thubron guided us along the Silk Road, food writers Clotilde Dusoulier, Stephen Downes and Pauline Nguyen talked about food, and comedian Lawrence Leung took us into the hysterical world of hip as we followed him in his quest for coolness.

Events specific to the Great Southern also raised the profile of the region. Sonic Seeding presented sampled and combined vision and sound collected by local MIX artists working under the direction of Brisbane artist Tom Hall.

The popular Taste Great Southern event highlighted the region's superb 'clean and green' produce. Guest chefs, writers and artists provided a banquet of events ranging from black tie breakfasts, through long table lunches and high teas to the Porongurup Wine Festival family day.

Inspired by the relatively recent rediscovery of the Carrolup paintings and their



Mike Compton an international Playmaker. He lives in Nashville, USA and is one of America's most respected mandolinists. He is also a self confessed hillbilly as you can probably tell!

successful exhibition at PIAF 2006, Spirit of Carrolup presented a contemporary Noongar art exhibition to enthusiastic crowds in Albany and Katanning.

Each exhibition opening was supported by full house screenings of Koorah Colingah, a documentary film telling the story of the Carrolup child artists, the discovery of the lost collection in New York, its return to Katanning and the vital legacy the works left behind.

Playmakers presented a series of workshops and events that were 'home grown' in the Great Southern. Featuring the mandolin, the events highlighted the works of instrument makers and the process involved in turning form and function into music.

Visiting international playmakers Mike Compton (pictured above) and Mike Silverman (That 1Guy) joined Scott Wise, Paul Duff and other Australian playmakers in an enlightening, exhilarating and sometimes eccentric event.

Contact: Rod Vervest, PIAF, 9841 5756

Sense of place addressed at Stirling Range conference



A wide cross section of participants at the Stirling Range Symposium

Relationships between NRM, tourism, heritage and ecology discussed

The Stirling Range National Park is recognised as a place of great heritage significance and a biodiversity hotspot. These qualities made it an excellent venue for a recent symposium addressing heritage and natural resource management in the area.

The symposium comprised a series of talks about the restoration ecology work being undertaken in the area, guided bush tucker walks, and traditional Noongar stories about places in and around the Stirling Range.

The speakers, including representatives from government agencies, local landowners and Noongar custodians, addressed the importance of restoring connections and going beyond current boundaries to preserve the area's unique heritage, cultural values

and biodiversity.

The symposium also aimed to identify ways of conserving the sense of place which makes the Stirling Range National Park one of the region's major tourism attractions.

Ways of connecting the area to a broader landscape through articulating the Gondwana Link vision, which combines Indigenous, local and scientific knowledges to restore fundamental ecological processes, were also explored.

Dr Graham Townley, Aboriginal Economic Development Officer at the Great Southern Development Commission (GSDC), said that the cultural mapping research recently conducted by the University of Western

Australia (UWA) and Department of Indigenous Affairs (DIA) had reinforced the need to build partnerships to promote the area's heritage and conservation values.

"We think of mountains in different ways but we need to highlight the common ground and the significance of the National Park in bringing people together," Dr Townley said.

The Symposium was presented by the GSDC in association with South Coast NRM, DIA, UWA and other agencies and groups including the Shire of Gnowangerup, Lotterywest and the Department of Environment and Conservation.

Contact: Graham Townley 9842 4888

Heritage tourism comes to Woodanilling

Great Southern town mines the past to assure future development

A walk around Woodanilling is shaping up to become a very interesting activity as the town becomes the latest Great Southern community to seize the opportunities offered by heritage tourism.

Woodanilling Heritage and Tourism (WHAT) has been successful in attracting funds from Lotterywest and the Regional Development Scheme, administered by the Great Southern Development Commission (GSDC), to erect interpretive signage and to plan the conversion of the local railway station building into a Visitor Interpretation Centre.

Fifteen etched and anodised aluminium panels will provide visual and written information along a heritage walk trail which begins at the old Richardson's Store, then loops around the town and comes to an end outside – or inside - the Woodanilling Tavern. Much of the written information presented

on the panels is drawn from John Bird's comprehensive history *Round Pool to Woodanilling*, and photographs are reproduced from an excellent album of 1920's photographs held in the Shire's archives.

The renovation and conversion of the disused railway station will involve a heritage architect visiting the town to inspect the building and consult with the community before drawing plans for the Visitor Interpretation Centre.

Annabel Paulley, chairwoman of WHAT, said that Woodanilling was keen to join other Western Australian towns which were benefiting from providing tourists with something to do and something to look at. "We want to draw money into Woodanilling so we are not so reliant on agriculture, can keep our town's businesses, such as the Woodanilling Tavern, open and make them

more viable," said Ms Paulley.

GSDC Acting Deputy Chief Executive Officer Russell Pritchard said that the initiative shown by WHAT was a demonstration of the depth of local commitment and the capacity to plan for the long term.

"This current project is a direct result of independent research carried out in 2006 and an earlier study which was commissioned by the GSDC. The Heritage of Endeavour report was completed in 1998 and the analysis has been a point of reference for a range of heritage-related tourism initiatives," he said.

The walk trail will be officially opened in March and will be a feature of the Woodanilling on Display festival in April.

Contact: Russell Pritchard 9842 4888

Great Southern produce goes to town

GSRMA highlights regional produce at two important metropolitan functions



(L-R) John Swarbrick, Elise van Gorp, GSRMA Coordinator, His Excellency, Dr Ken Michael AC, Governor of Western Australia, Ms Marina Valmadre, Oakview Communication Group, Mr Tim Shanahan, Chairman of the Australia Day Council of WA

The clean and green status – and magnificent flavours – of Great Southern produce was celebrated in auspicious company at two major events held in Perth late last year.

The first saw the Great Southern's wine and food showcased at a prestigious function, which was hosted by the Australia Day Council, to present the West

Australian of the Year Awards at Government House Ballroom.

The Great Southern Region Marketing Association (GSRMA), supported by the Great Southern Wine Producers' Association, provided the Governor of Western Australia, Dr Ken Michael and over 250 distinguished guests with fine food and wine from the region.

The second event launched the delights of Taste Great Southern 2008, which is an increasingly significant element of the PIAF Great Southern Program.

Taste Great Southern 2008, which is coordinated by the GSRMA, features cooking master classes, degustation dinners, slow food long table lunches, a wine festival, a black tie breakfast aboard the Brig Amity and other gastronomic events spread throughout the region.

The Taste Great Southern 2008 program was launched by the Minister for the Great Southern, Hon Kim Chance MLC, at the Parmelia Hilton.

"Visitors are drawn to the region due to its natural attractions, its pristine coastline and its clean and green status. The Taste 2008 is a showcase of the very best of the Great Southern.

"Taste 2008 will allow people to enjoy and learn about the taste sensations and fresh produce of the region as well as its diverse range of value-added products. Blueberries, asparagus, new season lamb, olives, oils and premium wines are just a sample of what will be tasted during the event." He said.

The full Taste Great Southern 2008 program is available now.

Contact: Elise van Gorp, GSRMA, ph: 0412 041 625

Value adding to plantation timber industry in the region

Plantation Energy moves closer to operational status

Plantation Energy Ltd (PEL) is on schedule to commence operations at its timber-processing plant in Albany mid-year. PEL will be establishing Australia's first industrial timber fuel pellet plant at the Mirambeena industrial park.

The operation has been assured after PEL signed a major contract in November 2007. The Forest Products Commission (FPC) agreed to a \$12 million contract to supply low-grade plantation pine logs to PEL. The logs are a by-product from existing FPC operations.

PEL will produce a processed natural biofuel through a densification process which involves drying, size reduction and the formation of fuel pellets under high pressure.

The process is carbon neutral as it generates no greenhouse gases from combustion and extremely low levels of emissions from harvesting, processing and transportation.

PEL's operations will relieve problems

associated with the cost efficient disposal of the residues from harvesting timber plantations in the Great Southern region. The project will also ameliorate the fire and the, occupational health and safety hazards associated with these residues.

This renewable energy business will build on and complements the established blue gum timber industry, which is focused on providing high-quality wood chips for the paper industry.

Duane Schouten, Senior Development Officer at the Great Southern Development Commission (GSDC), said that the GSDC has a long term commitment to the project and is pleased to see it moving towards the commissioning stage.

"The GSDC supports enterprise and



Pelletised biofuel product

industries which diversify and strengthen the regional economy. PEL's project does this and also supports the timber industry by using harvest residues which previously had no financial value," Mr Schouten said.

Local contractors will construct the factory from pre-fabricated modules which are currently being shipped from Europe. The plant will provide between 12 and 15 permanent jobs in Albany.

Contact: Duane Schouten 9842 4888

GSDC and FACET share commitment to innovation and cooperation



An appropriately dressed John Watson describes the delights and challenges of walking in the Stirling Range and Porongurups

Albany conference signposts the way to sustainability through innovative heritage and cultural tourism projects

As their sponsorship of the recent Forum Advocating Cultural and Ecotourism (FACET) conference held in Albany attests, the Great Southern Development Commission (GSDC) views tourism development as one way to support an economically sustainable and vibrant region.

In fact the conference agenda, "addressing regional tourism: innovative partnerships, a great adventure", closely aligns with the GSDC's own motto, "partnerships for regional prosperity".

The FACET conference, based at the historic Albany Town Hall, used a series of presentations, workshops and field trips to highlight the need for collaboration in sustainable tourism development.

Tourism plays a key role in the regional economy of the Great Southern, generating approximately \$200 million, or 11 per cent, of the region's economic activity and provides important opportunities for diversification of income for rural communities.

Russell Pritchard, Acting Deputy Chief Executive Officer of the GSDC, said that the GSDC is an active partner in projects which aim to celebrate our diverse heritage and to enhance the tourism potential of the Great Southern as a whole.

"These partnerships with local communities

involve support in the planning stages, infrastructure development and putting together funding applications for projects," he said.

The Denmark Nornalup Heritage Rail Trail, for example, is bringing life back to a transport route which carried its last paying passengers fifty years ago.

When it opened in 1929, the Denmark Nornalup Railway played a pivotal role in the lives of 900 people living in fifteen group settlements. Two trains a week carried passengers, collected farm produce and delivered supplies.

The redeveloped fifty-nine kilometres of old railway reserve is now a scenic coastal trail with forest, farmland and coastal heathland views.

The Heritage Rail Trail caters for walkers, cyclists and horse riders. The development adds another recreational opportunity to an already diverse Denmark tourism economy which includes scenic flights, bike, eco-adventure and winery tours, boat charters and Inlet cruises.

Turning inland to the Hidden Treasures region of the Great Southern, the newly restored Jones Building in Broomehill is the result of the hard work of dedicated proponents who have had some strategic support from the GSDC.

Assistance in project planning and grant

applications has helped the owners bring local heritage back to life. The restoration has created a new tourism precinct which will include a licensed cafe, cellar sales and a community meeting place to service Broomehill and the surrounding districts.

In nearby Gnowangerup, one of the town's oldest houses, a pioneer cottage built in 1912, is being renovated for cultural and tourism use.

Used by the Noongar community since the seventies, it is envisaged that the cottage will operate as a Heritage Museum and Keeping Place for the community's stock of cultural materials and artworks.

A range of interpretive displays will present information about the town's former United Aborigines Mission, local indigenous family histories and evidence of traditional links to the area.

The Mungart Boodja Art Centre in Katanning also celebrates indigenous heritage in the Great Southern. In 2006 the Perth International Arts Festival (PIAF) focused international attention on the Centre and on Noongar art through the exhibition of rediscovered works by the Carrolup child artists.

Contact: Nicola Hemmings ph: 9842 4888

Local organisations move to self reliance

GSDC's partnership with WACF is providing tangible benefits for philanthropic organisations in the region



Hon Jon Ford, Minister for Regional Development, with Denmark Community Futures Fund chair Dr Gill Sellar

The partnership between the Great Southern Development Commission (GSDC) and the Western Australia Community Foundation (WACF) is already paying handsome dividends in a move to encourage philanthropy in the region.

The latest organisation to benefit from the partnership was Fellowship House Albany and Districts Inc. Fellowship House received \$10,000 as part of the Challenge Grant Program which is funded by the State Government and administered by the WACF and the GSDC.

The \$10,000 matched donations raised by Fellowship House through its annual street appeal, raffles and personal donations. The Challenge Grant Program will help them boost the organisation's capital and to

establish a Donation Account in WACF's Deductible Gift Recipient Trust.

Mr Peter Watson MLA presented the cheque at Fellowship House's annual Christmas party in December.

Janelle Spinks, manager of Fellowship House said that the donation provided the community group with a great base upon which to build a systematic approach to supporting their clients.

Fellowship House provides support for people with mental illness and for their families and this assists all participants to maintain a good quality of life.

Another recent recipient, the Denmark Community Future Fund, doubled its bank account in early November when the Minister for Regional Development, John Ford MLC, presented a cheque for \$16,000 to the Shire President, Mr Kim Barrow.

Denmark Community Future Fund chair, Dr Gill Sellar, said "the fund gives local people a chance to contribute to the social, cultural, and economic well-being of our community now and into the future."

GSDC CEO Bruce Manning noted that

the Denmark community had a generous spirit that had enabled the Future Fund to quickly reach its target.

"This is a great example of a practical partnership with a community," he said.

The Albany Lions Community Care was the first organisation in the Great Southern to establish a Donation Account. The group has been building on its grant of \$10,500 to help improve respite facilities and services for carers.

The Albany Lions members also got an instant boost when they won the \$5,000 door prize at the September WACF summit in Perth. The prize was donated by the Royal Automobile Club (RAC).

"The RAC's donation is a much needed boost to the start of our fundraising efforts for the construction and maintenance of a new state-of-the-art respite care facility for the Albany community," said Ron Brown of the Albany Lions Community Care Centre.

"From a very small beginning 20 years ago, we are now providing a service to over 600 centre clients. We are very grateful to the RAC for making this contribution to our WACF donation account which will assist us in reaching our goal of opening the new centre in 2008," he said.

Contact: Nicola Hemmings ph: 9842 4888

GSDC stalwart retires.

Maynard Rye goes to town after 18 years service

Former Great Southern Development Commission (GSDC) Deputy Chief Executive Officer Maynard Rye ended a personal eighteen year partnership with the GSDC last year when he announced his move to Perth and to part time employment as a bridge to retirement.

Maynard commenced at the GSDC in 1989 and performed the roles of Human Services Manager and Economic Development Officer before being appointed Deputy Chief Executive Officer in 1996.

He has been the right hand man to three CEOs; Stephen Yule, Peter Cook and the current incumbent, Bruce Manning.

"The GSDC has always been fortunate in having the right leadership for the time," Maynard said.

Maynard identified the highlights of his career at the GSDC as being involved in coordinating government services for Indigenous people across the Great Southern and South West during the 1990s, and being part of the Timber

Industry Road Evaluation Strategy (TIRES) process. TIRES is still active in ensuring that the local roads are capable of meeting the demands of timber transport.

"I'm also very pleased to see the Foreshore and Entertainment Centre developments in Albany finally go ahead," he said.

Maynard is employed at the Disability Services Commission. His role at the GSDC is currently filled by Russell Pritchard.

Global food expert gives local insight



(L-R) Kate McKenzie, GSDC Tradestart Officer, Professor David Hughes, Andrea Berteit, Food Industry Association of WA, and Steve Porritt, Department of Agriculture and Food

Regional producers get a taste of world food markets

Professor David Hughes, a high profile food and beverage marketing expert with a constantly evolving and informed view on global food industry developments, visited Albany in early November.

His visit involved a presentation and group and individual sessions, which were sponsored by the Department of Agriculture

and Food and the Great Southern Development Commission (GSDC).

Professor Hughes is Emeritus Professor of Food Marketing at Imperial College London, and Visiting Professor at the University of Kent Business School and at the Royal Agricultural College UK.

He is a much sought-after speaker at international conferences and seminars on global food industry issues, particularly consumer trends. His presentations are very entertaining, engaging and animated which tend to make the content extremely easy to understand.

The Albany presentation covered trends in the food industry and identified the polarities of the marketplace. The discussions covered ideas about uniqueness and competitiveness in the industry through understanding the coexistence of polarities in the market. Such polarities tend to pit the regional, the organic and the handmade against the supermarket of cheap, global, mass-produced goods.

Kate McKenzie, Tradestart Development Officer at the GSDC, described the visit as an outstanding learning opportunity for regional producers. "To interact with a person with Dr Hughes' breadth of knowledge, experience and humour was an enlightening and entertaining experience," she said.

Contact: Kate McKenzie 9842 4888

