

LODDON
SHIRE

ARTISAN PRODUCTION: SMALL SCALE AGRIBUSINESS AND HORTICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT IN LODDON SHIRE

GUIDE TO INVESTING

MAY 2021

LODDON SHIRE: HOME TO SO MUCH AGRICULTURAL DIVERSITY

Loddon Shire is home to more than 60 types of commercially grown fruit, nut and vegetable products (excluding varietal variations) which are available in fresh, dried, processed, juiced, frozen and/or dried form. There are also many varieties of wine grapes, an increasingly diverse range of grain and legume products, and exotic meats in the region. Loddon Shire has:

- broadacre crops covering more than 215,000 hectares: wheat, barley, oats, maize, canola, and faba beans
- over 30,000 fruit trees producing more than 310,000 kilograms of, mainly, apples, cherries and pears per year
- more than 1 million olive trees, producing 40% of Victoria's olives (25,000 tonnes)
- around 28,000 nut trees – walnuts, chestnuts and pistachios
- almost 150 hectares of vineyards, producing around 600 tonnes of fruit for fine table wines
- almost 200 hectares of vegetables producing over 23,000 tonnes of fruit for fresh and processed products (predominantly tomatoes)
- around 370 farmers producing more than 650,000 sheep and lambs annually
- both meat (116) and dairy (41) cattle producers
- around 100,000 pigs per year and 7,000 breeding sows
- more than 7 million dozen eggs annually, with caged, barn and free range producers
- about ½ million meat chickens per year
- over 3,500 beehives.



CONSIDER BECOMING ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL LODDON SHIRE ARTISANAL PRODUCER!

- Demand for locally produced food and beverages continues to escalate, and it is driven by consumer awareness of health benefits from clean and fresh products created by innovative small producers. Most food industry experts agree that the rising demand for local, healthy foods is not a passing fad. In fact, buying fresh, local foods close to where it is made is something most consumers want but cannot always access.
- Over the past decade, Loddon Shire has encouraged newly emerging innovative small businesses producing local value-added food and beverages. Although not yet at the scale of some regions in Victoria, Loddon Shire has all the attributes needed to host gourmet and value-added businesses.
- The Shire offers secure water, productive soils, proximity to markets, links to suppliers and service providers, and is part of the Bendigo UNESCO Creative City and Region of Gastronomy.



DIVERSE AND EXCITING OPPORTUNITIES

LODDON SHIRE'S NETWORK OF ARTISANAL PRODUCERS ALREADY INCLUDES AROUND 35 PADDOCK-TO-PLATE PRODUCERS OF:

- baked products
- craft beer
- confectionery
- dairy products
- fruit/vegetable products
- nuts
- herbs
- eggs
- grains/cereal/pasta products
- meat: beef, pork, lamb and poultry
- honey
- salt
- olive oil and table olives
- preserves and condiments
- wine



COLLABORATE WITH OTHER ARTISANAL PRODUCERS

- Loddon Shire is the producer heartland to the Bendigo UNESCO Creative City and Region of Gastronomy.

Join the Shire's collaborators to make the region a diverse paddock to plate powerhouse.

- Many of the Shire's artisanal and small food producers have established their businesses by selling products through the farmgate, at farmers markets, and/or to a few specialty stores and supermarkets.
- The Shire and Victorian Government helped to establish an online sales platform (www.theloddonshed.com.au) during the COVID 19 pandemic.

This has become another highly successful sales outlet for the participating businesses.

Until this time, online sales tended to be limited to those customers who had already bought the products 'in-person' through one of the market outlets, rather than 'discovering' them online or as part of an online package (with other products).



COMPELLING FACTORS: ALL POINT TO ESTABLISHING IN LODDON SHIRE

Land cost

Water supply

Support services

Local collaborators

Tourism and events



LODDON
SHIRE

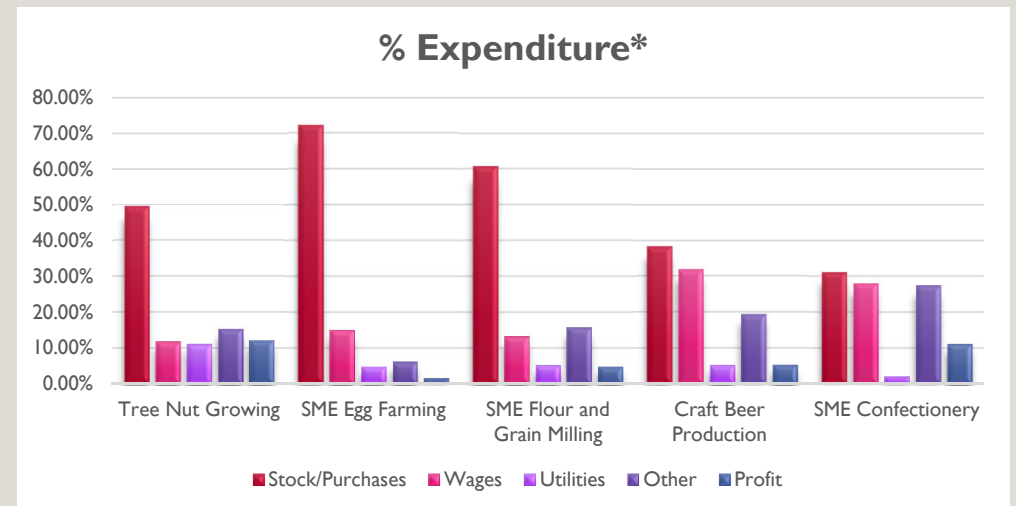
NICHE AND ARTISANAL VIABILITY

Widespread concern for health and wellbeing has altered consumer diets.

Awareness of nutrition and long-term effects of a poor diet have encouraged many consumers to adopt healthier eating habits.

Rising health consciousness is a major opportunity for healthy niche and artisanal food and snack options.

	Average Income* (\$)
Tree Nut Growing	\$620,000
SME Egg Farming	\$380,000
SME Flour and Grain Milling	\$1,190,000
Craft Beer Production	\$1,450,000
SME Confectionery	\$1,810,000



*Sourced from IBISWorld Industry Reports

GET SUPPORT AND MENTORING ASSISTANCE THROUGH OUR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TEAM

Loddon Shire's economic development team may be able to help you with a mentor or advisor to prepare checklists, details of investment and other requirements needed to turn your artisanal food or beverage business idea into reality.

This could involve:

- Food safety plans
- COVID safety plans
- Product trials
- Outsourcing some value adding functions
- Branding and labelling
- Health, functional or other product differentiation claims
- Shelf life and 'best before' testing
- Inner and outer packaging
- Differing pricing strategies
- Websites and social media pages (individual or part of a group)
- Product input sourcing
- New product development or modification to suit the demands of the market segment
- Packaging and marketing products from multiple suppliers



TALK WITH LODDON SHIRE ABOUT YOUR IDEA

- Whether you are an existing Loddon Shire resident or farmer, or you are considering starting a new artisanal business in regional Victoria, Loddon Shire Council would welcome your enquiry. Talk with our economic development team about your ideas.
- Our team can help with:
 - identifying sites
 - meetings with other Loddon Shire artisanal producers
 - supply chain referrals and introductions
 - seeking relevant State or Commonwealth Government assistance
 - information to use in feasibilities or business cases
 - working through planning and building permits
 - mentoring and advisory support services
- Call or email the economic development team:
 - business@loddon.vic.gov.au
 - Phone 03 5494 1251



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