



Women in Business & Regional Development

‘A TOUCH OF SPRING’— REPORT 2006

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FOREWARD

The concept of a tour of the Tatiara District was instigated to enable us to better familiarise women from the Limestone Coast about our region and to share this knowledge with our counterparts from Victoria and Adelaide.

This followed a similar familiarisation tour of Hamilton and Western Victoria earlier in the year.

It was a great opportunity to build new networks and cement relationships whilst discovering what is right at our own back door.

It is because of their country experience, our city cousins are keen to reciprocate with us in the future.

We appreciate the contribution made by the four businesses and others involved in helping to make this event such a success.

Chris Mackereth
Chairperson
Women in Business & Regional Development



'A Touch of Spring'—tour of the Tatiara Report

OBJECTIVES:

1. *To support at least 30 small businesses to visit four innovative businesses from the Tatiara region of South East South Australia, to build networks and encourage the formation of business relationships across the region and the State.*

OUTCOMES:

- Thirty two women small business operators from around the Limestone Coast region, Victoria and Adelaide participated in the 'A Touch of Spring' tour and forty women small business operators attended the evening conference dinner.
- Participants maximised their opportunities for growth by viewing other successful businesses—Curlew Park, Teatrck Lavender Estate. Blue Lake Milling and the Tatiara Olive Processing Plant
- Valuable information relating to information technology, economic development and tourism growth, marketing and promotion was obtained from guest speakers, John Ross, Chairperson of the Tatiara Distict Council, Michael McGlashan, State Manager of Bigpond, Dean Coclonis, Area Representative from Telstra Country Wide and Lisa Rowntree of Longridge Olives who addressed participants throughout the day's tour.
- A strong partnership link with the Adelaide Women in Business Association was forged by six Committee members attending the tour and evening dinner. This has opened the door for greater networking and excellent connections in the near future.
- All bus participants were provided with showbags containing relevant business and tourist information from various Limestone Coast small business operators. This provides both local and Adelaide small business operators who took up this opportunity with excellent cross marketing opportunities.
- Small business operators who participated have indicated through surveys that this event has strengthened their business knowledge which will in the future, add to growing our economy.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- As a result of this event and from evaluation collated on the day of the event there is a great need to explore further cross marketing and skills training opportunities from other successful businesses both intrastate and interstate.
- Strategic alliances have been built with the Adelaide Women in Business Committee inviting all Limestone Coast Women in Business & Regional Development members to partake in the “Women Making A Difference” conference being held in Adelaide in October 2006.
- Adelaide Women in Business members have also expressed an interest in hosting a group of Limestone Coast Women in Business & Regional Development members in Adelaide to view their businesses also at a later stage in 2007 and wish to re-visit other areas of the Limestone Coast region in the future.
- One hundred per cent of participants surveyed indicated their interest in further group tours *outside* of the region and ninety six per cent of participants surveyed indicated their interest in participating in further group tours *within* the region. These statistics have led the Women in Business & Regional Development Committee to pursue Federal Government funding to provide small business operators with greater skills training and mentoring opportunities.

‘A TOUCH OF SPRING’ - Tour of the Tatiara *Participant survey results*

24/32 surveys returned

Question 1. What sort of business are you involved in?

- *Emu Farm*
- *Accommodation*
- *Wholesaling and retailing*
- *Communications, PR and marketing*
- *Counselling, group facilitation, community development*
- *Farming, vigneron, bed & breakfast*
- *Consultancy, training and coaching*
- *Bookkeeping services and systems*
- *Communications, research and writing*
- *Design, building, construction & drafting*
- *Small seeds production*
- *Beef and lamb production*
- *Agriculture*
- *Agri Finance*
- *Sawmilling and road transport*
- *Rental, herbs, olives, apples*
- *Tourism*
- *Regional Development*
- *Contract harvesting (partner) - administration*
- *Machine quilting*
- *Advertising*
- *Machine embroidery*
- *Supporting husband (accountant) with own private affairs*
- *Farming*

Question 2. How would you rate the overall Touch of Spring tour today?

Poor	-
Adequate	4%
Good	12%
Excellent	84%

Question 3. Do you believe that the bus tour represented value for money?

Yes	100%
No	-

Question 4. Which businesses were of most value to you and why?

Curlew Park Homestay - scored 4 votes

- Function centre for possible future events
- Another successful home business

Blue Lake Milling—scored 4 votes

- Local enterprising business that has high expectations
- Similar business size and processes
- Because we have been a supplier of oats to them for many years.

Tatiara Olive Processing Plant—scored 6 votes

- Local enterprising business that has high expectations
- Similar business size and processes
- Extracting oils, handling of products, value adding
- Tatiara Olives impressed me as a new industry with such growth
- To see what a new business can do

Teatrick Lavender Estate—scored 4 votes

- Business model and possibility of a story
- Extracting oils, handling of products, value adding
- To see a successful home based industry

Other comments:

- All—they offered different ideas that I can utilise in my business
- All interesting
- They were all interesting in their own right
- All (x2)
- All fabulous, especially B & B and lavender. Love food and perfume
- All—every business shared their knowledge. All had something to offer
- All valuable—gave me some new ideas, networking and other girls also very useful
- All of interest
- All offered something different

- All very interesting but possibly not relevant to my business
- All of them—they all had great aspects of what they do and great explanations
- All of the businesses were equally valuable to me as it is important to know about how food products are produced for our consumption and health

Question 5. Which businesses visited today were of least value to you and why?

Blue Lake Milling—scored 3 votes

- Fascinating but not of particular business value
- Value of a general nature for me because I didn't know what they did but not at a personal level

Other comments:

- None—all excellent
- None (x2)
- I couldn't pick any as I enjoyed learning about the background of each business as well as where they're heading

Question 6. Would you be interested in participating in group learning experiences within your region to help support growth in your business?

Yes 96%
No 4%

Question 7. Would you be interested in participating further in group industry tours outside of your region to learn about other like businesses?

Yes 100%
No -

Question 8. What barriers, if any, would prevent you from attending and participating in further learning experiences like today?

Distance to travel	scored 9 votes
Cost	scored 5 votes
Staffing	scored 2 votes
Other	Time scored 4 votes

Question 9. How else could we have improved on today's innovation bus tour?

- Pray for rain
- Fresh juice stop?
- I thought it was excellent
- Esky of water?!
- Nothing—all great—longer!
- Very well organised, everyone is very friendly and willing to share their experiences and knowledge
- Extremely well organised—well done and thank you!
- Itinerary to know what was coming next
- Provide water on the bus when hot weather
- An itinerary for everyone
- Bottle of water in showbag
- Very good as always—no changes needed
- I couldn't fault it—I thoroughly enjoyed it
- Can't
- Thank you for an inspiring day!

Question 10. What topics of training and other learning experiences has today's tour highlighted that you may require in the future?

- Any workshops to build business
- Great opportunity to meet new Women in Business
- Maybe need to develop presentation skills and also consider "Director's Role"
- Resourcing the knowledge—background information for new enterprises. (Legal and funding availability)
- Information technology—would like to follow up on some of the future possibilities Dean (Telstra) introduced to us
- Great to be inspired by what women are doing in business—a wonderful day. Thank you organisers!
- Technology upgrades
- Benefits in training and travel i.e. Lisa Rowntree, telecommunications, Bigpond emailing advances in IT
- IT marketing
- A further data of information of my own district
- Computing—i.e. wireless network etc.
- Communications for supporting business
- Nothing at the moment but that may change as our lives take a different direction