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## **MEDIA RELEASE**

# **PINNAROO CELEBRATES AFTER BEING NAMED 2020 SA AGRICULTURAL TOWN OF THE YEAR**

The Mallee town of Pinnaroo is celebrating after being named the *2020 South Australian Agricultural Town of the Year* at the State Government and Solstice Media's Regional Showcase Awards in Clare on 26 February.

Pinnaroo was selected by judges for the top title ahead of four other finalists – Woodside, Kapunda, Kimba and Parndana – with 70 towns nominated in this year's contest.

Pinnaroo boasts a thriving and diverse farming sector with broadacre farming, pistachio, olive, turf, honey, meat, potato and other vegetable production.

Local business owner and resident Andrea Sparnon nominated Pinnaroo, and says the win is well-deserved for this proud and energetic farming community.

"Pinnaroo has a proud history of agricultural excellence and continues to grow and nurture many innovative businesses in this sector," Ms Sparnon says.

"As a community, we're thrilled and so proud to have been chosen as the 2020 SA Agricultural Town of the Year. It's recognition of our producers' commitment to agriculture particularly through their passion for their industry, their resilience and their adaptability.

"It also recognises our closely connected community – not only do we actively support our local farmers and associated businesses, but we support each other. We see that our prosperity as a town and a region is dependent on looking out for each other, especially in times of drought or isolation such as the recent border closures during the COVID-19 pandemic."

Southern Mallee District Council Mayor Jeff Nickolls said the win was an honour for Pinnaroo.

"Since its settlement, Pinnaroo's success has relied on a thriving agricultural sector that has been built and nurtured by generations of farming families in what can be at times a challenging and isolated environment," Mayor Nickolls says.

"One of the greatest factors in the success of our farmers across diverse fields from broadacre farming to potato growing, turf production and more is their commitment to innovation.



“This region has faced challenges with limited water supply and, in recent years, drought and frost – but many of our producers have found ways to adapt. Our farmers and supporting industries continue to embrace the latest in science, technology and innovation, as well as generously sharing their knowledge with others in their respective industries on a local, state and national level.”

As the district’s farmers look to new land management practices, other industries have responded such as 100-year-old engineering firm Hanton and Sharrad, which has developed a new deep ripping machine to deliver improved soil conditions and increased productivity.

Local farmers are also continually looking for new ways to value add to their premium produce – such as family farming operation The Pinnaroo Farmer, which has diversified to develop a red lentil flour product it now sells locally, in Adelaide and online.

Pinnaroo is one of the largest potato growing areas in Australia and this sector continues to thrive and expand - with a new \$35 million potato packing facility now being construction in the district.

Southern Mallee District Council is also working with local community to support the primary industry sector, recognising that its continued success depends on a healthy and thriving community.

“Council is continually looking for ways to support and build on the success of our agricultural industries,” Mayor Nickolls says.

“To do this we are delivering projects and policies that revitalise our town centres like the Pinnaroo Village Green project, increase recreation, tourism and vibrancy, attract new businesses to the area, support the growing workforce by establishing childcare centres and create strategies to increase local housing supply.”

Pinnaroo’s connected, resilient community also contributes to the success of its primary industry sector through events such as the Pinnaroo Show and Field Day. The wetlands development, Pinnaroo Community Gym and the Pinnaroo Project – an arts and health initiative are all examples of the Pinnaroo community supporting lifestyle initiatives.

In mid-2021 the Pinnaroo community will also supporting primary producers in a new way – through an inaugural Mental Health Week featuring a program of workshops and events for men, women and children to increase connectedness and build awareness of mental health and wellbeing.

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