



Western Murray Land Improvement Group

Striking a Balance

M E D I A R E L E A S E

Friday, 12 February 2021

COMMUNITY GATHERS FOR INNOVATION, DIVERSIFICATION AND VALUE-ADDING DISCUSSIONS

30 community members attended two workshops held last week by Western Murray Land Improvement Group (WMLIG) with the themes of innovation, diversification, and value adding. The first of the two was a food network group held at the Barham RSL. The second a Community Strategic Workshop held at the Wakool Club. Both sessions were facilitated by *Regionality*, who specialise in facilitating strategic projects, collaboration and driving innovation throughout regional Australia.

The purpose of the food network group was to bring together food producers in the Wakool area and surrounds to form a collaborative group. The group resolved to form a paddock-to-plate cluster under the auspice of WMLIG. They will be looking at opportunities for collaboration over the next six months. Hayley Pattison who has recently launched *Pattison Pastoral* attended the meeting and was “excited by the collaboration opportunities that could arise”. The group will be seeking further community interest to join. Food producers who are interested in joining the paddock-to-plate food cluster are encouraged to contact WMLIG.

The Community Strategic Workshop was an opportunity to hear from landholders and producers in the Wakool region and present some recent work undertaken by WMLIG. WMLIG’s Kate O’Neill presented some preliminary scoping work supported by Murray River Council (MRC) for an Agri-Innovation Precinct. The precinct aligns with MRC’s primary strategic planning priority to “grow, strengthen and sustain agriculture” within the region. Working collaboratively was identified as a key ingredient in diversifying or value adding at a large scale, with many finding it challenging to find the time to scope ideas individually. This session was the start of some engagement with the community with a follow up survey to follow to collate and collect further ideas. A copy of the Agri-Innovation Precinct scoping document is available at the WMLIG offices.

Both of last weeks sessions were funded by the Australia Government under the Murray–Darling Basin Economic Development Program.

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For more information, please contact WMLIG’s Media Marketing & Brand Officer - leona.chan@wmlig.org