

Loan guarantee helps Riverina business expand and grow

Based midway between Sydney and Melbourne, Gundagai has long been a favourite rest stop for travellers. The town's strategic location and access to key agricultural inputs has positioned it as both a major food production supplier and in turn, a strong area for job creation.

Gundagai's largest employer, Gundagai Meat Processors (GMP), secured a [Gazelle Loan Guarantee](#) from Jobs for NSW to set the business up for future expansion. GMP currently employs 180 workers, most of whom are local residents. The Barton family has worked within the meat industry of Gundagai for nearly 100 years, the last 40 of which have been spent operating GMP.

The need for investment: GMP meets Jobs for NSW

The growing demand for lamb meat from existing and prospective clients means GMP needed to increase its production capacity to service new clients and access export markets.

The facility's present processing capacity also means that export opportunities are limited with countries such as Asia and the USA, as GMP is not currently eligible for a full export permit (AQIS Tier 2 certification).

To overcome this hurdle, Jobs for NSW provided a financial guarantee of up to \$4 million to Commonwealth Bank Australia (CBA) to support the upgrade and expansion of GMP's facility.

The loan guarantee enabled GMP to secure a loan with CBA to cover the further costs of \$30.5 million to upgrade its facility.



Will Barton, CEO GMP

The upgrade, including the introduction of innovative automation and robotics technology, will increase the processing capacity from 2,300 to 3,300 units per day, satisfying all AQIS Tier 2 requirements for export.

'GMP is embarking on a \$30 million expansion project that will lead to a 40% increase in annual production capacity and help to create 76 new full-time jobs.

'This will allow us to service additional customers while maintaining our long-term relationship with Coles Supermarkets. A project of this scale would not have been possible without the support of Jobs for NSW,' says GMP CEO Will Barton.



‘Our expansion project will also generate a number of flow-on economic benefits to the local community including a \$3 million boost to local spending during the construction phase and ongoing stimulus to the local economy, estimated to be in excess of \$150 million per year.

‘Businesses like ours need initiatives like Jobs for NSW to enable us to expand our operations, increase our capacity and generate new job opportunities for people living in regional areas.’

Growth and export opportunities

Often referred to as the ‘food bowl of Australia’, the Riverina region of NSW is home to approximately 150,000 people, many of whom rely on agriculture for their livelihood.



As the backbone of the region, the food production sector stretches 500 km east to west across south-central NSW, with meat, fruit and vegetable products, winemaking and rice products at the core of the region’s economic prosperity.

Originally processing 10–15 cattle and 100 lambs per week, today, GMP processes in excess of 625,000 lambs per year and for more than 35 years, has processed beef and/or lamb on a weekly basis for Coles Supermarkets.

Will Barton, CEO of GMP, says the growth of the company can be attributed to the foundation of a safe, healthy and engaged workforce.

‘Our success in the meat industry stems from our focus on client service, safety and quality, and investment in our operations and staff.

‘We respond quickly to changing market demands and have expanded and adapted our operations over time to meet the needs of key clients.’

Once a full export permit is in place, GMP will be able to access major lamb export markets in Asia and the USA, helping to satisfy demand for Australian lamb products.

A significant transformation in the facility’s service offerings will enable GMP to increase its client exports to new international markets.

Most importantly, the opportunity for growth will allow GMP to create up to 198 new skilled jobs over five years, including 76 in the facility and 122 from associated business activities.

Jobs for NSW is proud to support this project that will allow GMP to scale up its business, compete as an Australian leader in meat processing and create resilient job growth in Gundagai and the wider region.

Jobs for NSW supports startups, small to medium enterprises and regional business to build momentum and grow jobs in NSW.

Find out how Jobs for NSW can help your business.