



SIMPLY
tomatoes

Local talent exporting to the world



Simply Tomatoes has won the 2006 Premier's Food Victoria Award for Innovation by using a combination of canny business development and outstanding packaging design for its Simply Green Tomatoes antipasto.

Originally conceived as a value-adding product for Terralea Farms' tomato crop at Leaghur in the Boort area of central Victoria, the Lanyon family began Simply Tomatoes on the family farm in 2002.

"We were responding to the rationalisation of the major tomato processing companies in northern Victoria and the insecurity of contract growing. After intensive market research and a study trip to South-East Asia, we decided to develop this new aspect to our business," says Manager Marilyn Lanyon.

With help from the First Step Exporter Program, delivered through Regional Development Victoria, the packaging was designed to be cost-effective, attractive, easy-to-ship, tamper-proof and able to carry a list of ingredients in the 11 languages needed for export to Europe. The resulting distinctive, award-winning flat-pack design is marketed from the farm gate and shipped through the local post office.

The business has expanded to include Simply Dressing, which is produced from the by-product of the original green tomato antipasto. This has provided a new income stream and made the process almost completely waste-free.

"With minimal resources, we were completely reliant on local talent and it's wonderful to be able to share this success with the team that made it possible," Marilyn says. "Innovation can't happen without that team."

Understanding the importance of access to information for a small rural business, Marilyn regularly speaks with industry and community groups, and the farm caters for tourists. Coaches and school and TAFE groups make regular trips to see the process and sample products.

"This award is invaluable for our products' branding and gives us a level of community and industry recognition that a company of our size couldn't possibly generate on its own," she says.

Growth has exceeded 200% in the past year and 12 local staff are employed to make the products. Simply Green Tomatoes and Simply Dressing are available at 330 outlets around Australia and in 21 other countries.

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Marilyn Lanyon from Simply Tomatoes, winner of the Premier's Food Victoria Award for Innovation.