



SAM BIRRELL MP

Federal Member for Nicholls

Media Release

Politicians get a taste of the Murray-Darling Basin

Federal Member for Nicholls, Sam Birrell MP, says a showcase of food and fibre from across the Murray Darling Basin has helped inform parliamentarians about the economic and social value of the nation's food bowl.

SPC (Shepparton), Fonterra (Stanhope), HW Greenham & Sons (Tongala) and Fowles Wines (Avenel) were amongst producers from across the Murray-Darling Basin who showcased their products during the Taste of the Basin event at Parliament House.

“At a time when the Australian Parliament is considering a new basin plan that has enormous ramifications for producers and communities in the Basin, it was important to highlight the farmers, companies and workers who are so passionate about what they produce for Australian consumers,” Mr Birrell said.

The event was a joint initiative of MP's including Mr Birrell (Nicholls), Deputy Liberal Leader Susan Ley (Farrer, NSW), Tony Pasin (Barker, SA), Dr Anne Webster (Mallee, Vic), Michael McCormack (Riverina, NSW), Mark Coulton (Parkes, NSW), Nationals Leader David Littleproud (Maranoa, QLD) and Senator Perin Davey (NSW).

More than 300 people, including MPs and Senators from all sides of politics attended the event and sampled the fine produce drawn from four Basin states.

“To her credit Water Minister, Tanya Plibersek, came to the event and spoke with a number of producers including SPC and Fonterra,” Mr Birrell said.

“What the event achieved was helping politicians to connect familiar products like SPC snack packs and Perfect Italiano cheese to the place they are made and the people who proudly make them,” Mr Birrell said.

“As well direct factory employees Fonterra supports 100 dairy farmers, who in turn employ their own farm workers.

The factory and farmers and their workers also support other businesses locally, it is the strength that underpins our economic prosperity,” Mr Birrell said.



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“Any risk to primary production and food processing will have flow on consequences for regional communities which is why Basin MPs are fighting for changes to water legislation that threatens to take large volumes of water out of the productive pool through uncapped and open tender water buybacks.”

The water legislation is still before the Senate.

“I would like to publicly thank the producers from Nicholls who gave up their time to represent the region so well at the event,” Mr Birrell said.

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