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## Riverina businesses feature in MDB Economic Diversification program

RDA-Riverina welcomes the announcement this morning of projects to be funded under the Murray Darling Basin Regional Economic Diversification program. Almost \$18 million is to be provided to 21 projects in the Murray Riverina region. The Chair of RDA-Riverina, Ms Diana Gibbs, said "we welcome the provision of these Government funds to assist with regional economic development. Our focus, in the work of the RDA, is to create new jobs, diversify our regional economy, and increase local production and economic output for the Riverina.

The projects funded under this Program are entirely consistent with the RDA goals of stimulating economic growth and expanding employment in our region. "Ms Gibbs added that she wished to congratulate the successful applicants, and said that in her opinion, the fact that all the successful projects were from the Riverina-Murray was a credit to our community. She said "these are all good applications, for good projects, which will deliver good outcomes for our region." She encouraged all eligible groups to be prepared for a possible Round 2 of this program, and to read the application form carefully to ensure that all criteria are addressed. Some businesses that were successful in the RDA Riverina region include:-

- **Coolamon Cheese Company** who will restore the original Coolamon Co-operative building (built in the early 1920s) to house a boutique cheese making facility utilising Riverina milk.
- **Compost Carbon Fertiliser**, has been awarded funding to build a composting and dispatch facility to treat extensive waste from large wine producers.
- **Fresh Technique**, Griffith will invest in new technologies to diversify from wine grape growing to hydroponic farming of leafy salad greens, a move set to up to 16 new jobs for the company.
- **Riverina Aquaculture**, has been awarded funding to diversify from broad acre farming and lift Murray cod production from 18 tonnes a year to 72 tonnes.
- **Rivcott** will invest in a power infrastructure upgrade at the Carrathool substation, to support its new cotton gin at Rudd's Point.
- **AgriAustralis'** new hazelnut cracking plant at Sandigo to upgrade power and bring forward the establishment of the drying and cracking facility.

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