

# Regional Development Australia Limestone Coast

## RDA LIMESTONE COAST VISITS CAPE JAFFA WINES

Regional Development Australia Limestone Coast Board members recently visited the Cape Jaffa winery, owned and operated by Derek and Anna Hooper.

They were keen to see how the Hoopers had managed to carve a unique niche in the super-competitive business of family winemaking. Their uniqueness stems from the fact that they produce a range of certified biodynamic wines, and that where possible they follow sustainable practices in their business and their lifestyle.

The winery building for example is made from paddock stone and recycled timber, while their barrel room is dug into the side of a limestone hill in order to keep the wine at a near constant temperature. The cellar door and winery are partly powered by solar and wind energy, but they still need a diesel generator to operate the heavier winery machinery. Derek is keen to look at options for replacing that generator, including a bio energy plant and batteries. At this stage, the economics do not add up, but as these technologies develop he hopes they'll become affordable. A couple of the RDALC Board members were able to offer some advice to Derek on how to progress this goal.

The Hoopers are strong advocates for boosting tourism through the Limestone Coast. Through their winery and their sustainable off-grid home they regularly host a number of unique wine and lifestyle experiences for visitors. They are keen to see the development of a series of themed trails through the region, supplemented by high-quality experiences and accommodation.

According to Derek Hooper, the Limestone Coast has a wonderful range of attractions for tourists, many of whom pass through our region on their way to Adelaide or Melbourne. We need to persuade them to stay here for a few days by offering quality packages which showcase our world class food, wine and experiences.

“We need to pull together as a region to offer packages which tourist operators can sell. It’s important we market ourselves as a serious food & wine destination, not just a place to visit on the way to somewhere else” says Derek. He sees Robe as leading the way in developing a premium food & wine culture, and says the Limestone Coast Collaborative has a key role to play in building our reputation as a “must see” destination.

ENDS.



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## **List of RDALC Board Members**

Mr Richard Vickery, Chair

Mr Alan Richardson, Deputy Chair

Ms Ann Aldersey – Community representative

Mr Lew Parsons – Community representative

Mr Mark Edwards – Community representative

Mr Scott Whicker – Community representative

Assoc Professor Judy Nagy – Community representative

Mayor Erika Vickery – LCLGA representative

Mayor Andrew Lee – LCLGA representative

Mayor Richard Sage – LCLGA representative



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