

The Diversity of Farming in our Region

It is exciting to get a handle on farm production in Bendigo and Region of Gastronomy. There is an interesting diversity in livestock, crop production and niche commodities. Some base commodities such as wheat or barley are exported, some to be processed here in our region or elsewhere in Australia. Those processed within the region are packaged, branded and distributed widely. Some unique commodities are processed on farm and locally to meet the needs of cafes, restaurants, farmers markets and the development of artisanal products. In addition, we have a vibrant wine industry which includes growing grapes, wine making, branding and selling through multiple channels.

Understanding the value of food production in our region is essential for robust strategic planning and knowing the production of key commodities will simplify sourcing farm products and adding value to them on a local basis.

The value of farm production in the City of Bendigo and eight Gastronomy Shires was region was \$1.5 billion as per the ABS Agricultural Census in 2016 and is now approaching \$2 billion. Figure 1 shows the value of production by LGA within the region.

In Summary: The top four LGAs have 79% of the total Value of Production, they also happen to be the four most northerly shires within the region;

- Campaspe has the highest value of production at \$534 million (35% of the Region);
- Loddon has the second highest value at \$308 million (20%);
- Gannawarra has the third highest value at \$214 million (14%);
- Buloke has the fourth highest value at \$149 million (10%); and
- The City of Greater Bendigo is the fifth highest at \$124 million (8%).

Figure 1. Value of Farm Production by LGA \$ million (farmgate)

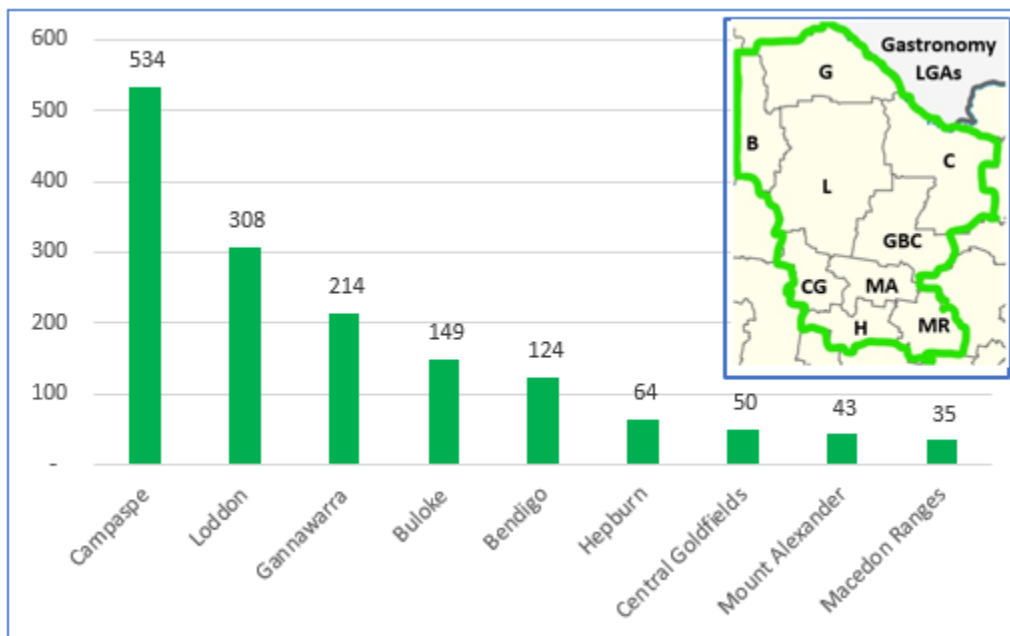


Figure 2 has been prepared to show the distribution of farm production by LGAs within our Region of Gastronomy. It also shows the production by value for the top five commodities in each LGA.

Figure 2 Top five commodities by Value of Production by LGA

Campaspe	Gannawarra	Buloke	Loddon	Bendigo
Milk Cattle & calves Pigs Tomatoes, Hay, lucerne	Milk Cattle & calves Pigs Wheat Hay, pasture	Barley Wheat Sheep & lambs Eggs Wool	Sheep & lambs Pigs Wool Milk Poultry	Poultry Pigs Sheep & lambs Wool Hay, cereal

Mount Alexander	Central Goldfields	Hepburn	Macedon Ranges	Gastronomy Region
Sheep & lambs Wool Cattle & calves Apples Hay, cereal	Sheep & lambs Goats Wool Hay, cereal Barley	Sheep & lambs Cattle & calves Potatoes Pigs Wool	Sheep & lambs Cattle & calves Wool Poultry Nurseries	Milk Sheep, lambs, wool Cattle & calves Pigs Hay

Discussion:

1. The top commodities in the Region of Gastronomy are, with the exception of pig farming, linked to the broadacre production of milk, sales of sheep, lambs and wool, sales for cattle and calves, barley, wheat and hay production.
2. Of interest is the diverse mix of commodities within each LGA. Hay for the domestic and export markets is a key commodity. Other important commodities include: tomatoes, poultry (meat and eggs), nurseries, goats, apples, potatoes and wool.

These insights can be used to generate further discussion on growing the food value chain within our Region of Gastronomy. We have an abundance of locally grown commodities and must encourage more food processing and beverage production for our supermarkets, shop keepers, restauraners and farmers markets. The aim of this presentation is to provide essential statistics for Bendigo and Region of Gastronomy. They provide a simple overview of regional farmgate dollar production by LGA. Whilst the initial Gastronomy project does not focus on large scale production, these findings will prompt further discussion in the future when value increased adding opportunities will need to be explored.

Data has been sourced from ABS Agricultural Census in 2016 and this report has been prepared by Neil Clark Consulting. It is recognised that ABS statistics will never be up to date. However, they are an excellent proxy of business activity and often it is the relativity of one industry or region to another that is more important than the ‘hard’ facts.

As interest grows on the scale and importance of farm production, it will be necessary to update these finding.

Disclaimer: While we have made every effort to ensure the accuracy of the information presented in this research, we cannot be held liable for any errors, omissions or inconsistencies.