



Media Release

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For immediate release

Cream of the crop announced at 2021 Vegetable Industry Awards for Excellence

South Australia's leading growers, researchers and industry members have been recognised at the 2021 AUSVEG SA and William Buck Vegetable Industry Awards for Excellence, showcasing the exemplary contribution of leading growers companies and researchers to support South Australia's \$2 billion vegetable sector.

More than 280 growers and industry members gathered at the Arkaba Hotel on Wednesday 19 May to celebrate the important contributions of members of the state's vegetable and wider horticulture industry, and showcase their leadership, dedication and innovation.

The awards were attended by a number of leading industry and political figures including the Hon David Basham MP, Minister for Primary Industries and Regions, Clare Scriven MLC, Shadow Minister for Primary Industries and Regions, The Hon David Ridgway MLC, The Hon Zoe Bettison MLC and SA Best's Frank Pangallo MLC who all turned out to see the announcement of this year's winners.

The winners of the 2021 Vegetable Industry Awards for Excellence are as follows:

- **Doug Nicol, BD and MC Nicol and Son** – Grower of the Year (proudly sponsored by Peats Soil).
- **Anthony De Ieso, Thorndon Park Produce** – Young Grower of the Year (proudly sponsored by the South Australian Produce Market).
- **Jon Ferguson, Viscon Australia** – Industry Impact (proudly sponsored by William Buck).
- **Maria Colangelo, Rainbow Fresh** – Women in Horticulture (proudly sponsored by the Department of Primary Industries and Regions South Australia).
- **Greg Baker, South Australia Research and Development Institute (SARDI)** – Researcher of the Year (proudly sponsored by Rabobank).
- **The South Australian Produce Market** – Biosecurity Award (proudly sponsored by The Department of Primary Industries and Regions South Australia).

"After a tough year of challenges brought on by COVID-19, the AUSVEG SA Vegetable Industry Awards for Excellence are a fantastic opportunity for industry to come together and celebrate the people who make our industry great," said AUSVEG SA CEO Jordan Brooke-Barnett.

"In the past year our South Australian growers have worked harder than ever to keep fresh produce on tables throughout Australia and it is great to see so many of our leaders get recognised at these important awards for industry."

"I'd like to congratulate every individual and business who was nominated and recognised at the awards and thank them for their continued dedication to our industry."

The winners will be nominated as the AUSVEG SA state-endorsed nominees for their respective categories at the National Awards for Excellence, to be held during the Hort Connections 2021 conference at the Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre from 7-9 June 2021.

In previous years a number of AUSVEG SA state award winners have gone on to win a number of key national awards, showing the quality and capability of growers in the state.

The Hon. David Basham MP, Minister for Primary Industries and Regions was on-hand to present a number of key awards on the night including the Grower of the Year Award, Young Grower of the Year Award, Women in Horticulture Award and Biosecurity Award.

The Minister congratulated this year's winners and said that the South Australian vegetable industry was an agricultural success story in the face of unprecedented challenges over the past year.

"COVID-19 has seen wide sweeping constraints and volatility, but the response by our horticulture producers is a testament to the strength of our industry," said Minister Basham.

"This sector has continued to provide premium food for consumers locally, nationally and internationally despite the challenges posed by both the pandemic and other issues such as fruit fly.

"Resilience shown in the sector as a whole is reflected in the fact that these awards could not be held in 2020, but this year AusVeg SA held its first ever Hort SA conference on Tuesday 18 May with more than 300 people registered to attend and that nearly the same number of the industry's leading figures gathered for the gala awards event."

AUSVEG SA is the leading horticulture industry body representing the interests of vegetable producers in South Australia and provides growers with a united voice and strong representation with all levels of government.

For photographs of the awards ceremony or to request more information or an interview with award winners, please contact AUSVEG SA using the details below.

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MEDIA CONTACT: Jordan Brooke-Barnett, AUSVEG SA CEO Mobile: 0404 772 308, Email: jordan.brooke-barnett@ausveg.com.au