



triggerhappy™

≡ LEETON SHIRE ≡  
IS THE  
*heart of  
opportunity*



*Leeton*  
NEW SOUTH WALES, AUSTRALIA

Your future is here





LEETON  
SHIRE COUNCIL

Leeton  
NSW, AUSTRALIA

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT TO COUNTRY

*Leeton Shire acknowledges the Wiradjuri people, the Traditional Custodians of this Land. As a community, we pay our respects to elders past and present and to future generations. We also acknowledge and recognise the strength, resilience and capacity of all Aboriginal people of this Land.*

## MAYOR'S NOTE

**I**nspired by a legacy of industrial growth, the level of diversity in the local economy, and our ability to connect globally— we are excited for Leeton's future. As a Council with a strong leadership agenda, we are committed to remaining proactive about growing and nurturing business opportunity and job creation in our Shire.

Council is pleased to present this prospectus so that you have the opportunity to discover how Leeton is the heart of opportunity. Council has worked closely with the Shire's business, residential and industrial sector to capture the supportive nature of our thriving community.

The document also showcases Leeton as a vibrant place to live, work and play.

Be sure to investigate fully what Leeton has to offer.

— Cr Paul Maytom, Mayor





# Introducing LEETON

For more than a century, Leeton has been known as the **Heart of Australia's Food Bowl**. It is a title we are proud of and one we strive to continue to work hard to maintain.

We are also proud that our Shire is much more than that. It is a hub for innovative growers and manufacturers, an incubator for small business, a provider of quality education, and a new home for migrants and refugees. Most of all, **we are a forward thinking community that embraces opportunity.**



*Your industry. Your innovation. Your future.*  
≡ What will you bring to Leeton? ≡



# Leeton is the HEART OF THE STATE



Leeton Shire is well connected. Our core industries deliver produce all over the world. By road, Leeton is 6 hours' to Sydney, 5 hours' to Melbourne, 4 hours' to Canberra, only 40 minutes' to Griffith and 1 hour 20 minutes' to Wagga Wagga.

Flight destinations available from city/town	
Leeton/ Narrandera	Sydney
Griffith	Sydney
Wagga Wagga	Sydney, Melbourne
Canberra	<b>DOMESTIC</b> Sydney Dubbo Newcastle Melbourne Adelaide Gold Coast Brisbane Perth <b>INTERNATIONAL</b> Wellington Singapore
Sydney	Domestic and International Airports
Melbourne	Domestic and International Airports

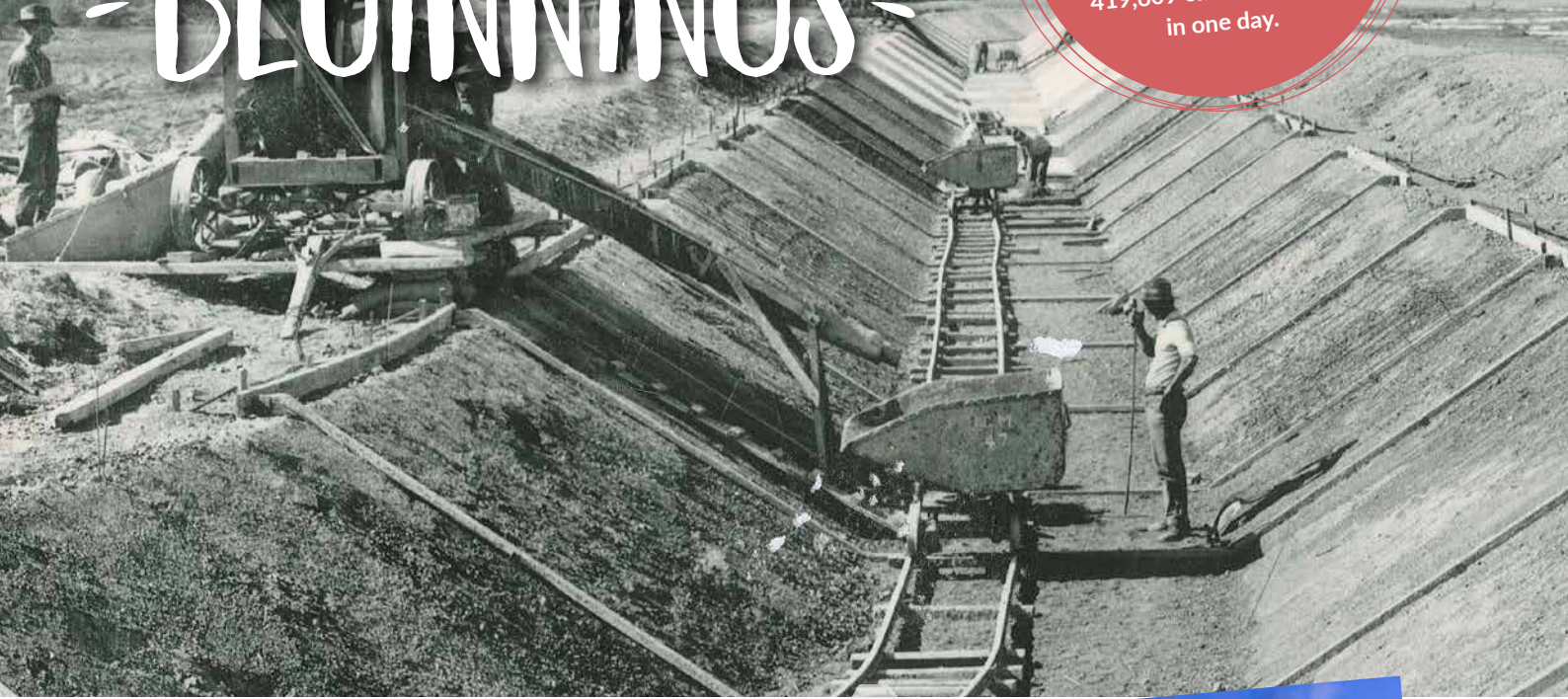


**≡ DID YOU KNOW ≡**  
Leeton Shire is easily accessible by road, air, bus and rail from regional centres and capital cities.

# Humble BEGINNINGS

≡ DID YOU KNOW ≡

The former Leetona Cannery established a British Empire record in 1940 by canning 419,609 cans of peaches in one day.



Leeton, unlike most country towns, did not develop around a local pub, supply store or railway station. It was purposely built as part of the Murrumbidgee Irrigation Area and the first buildings were erected to support the scheme in 1911. During the 1920s and 1930s businesses were built, leaving a legacy of beautiful **Art Deco** buildings.

After World War II there was an increase in Italian immigration to Australia with many experienced farmers drawn to the Leeton area, which today is still rich with Italian heritage and culture.

Older still is the town of **YANCO**, located five kilometers from the Leeton CBD, which came into being when the railway line was extended from Narrandera to Hay in 1881.

Yanco is the home of the “Father of Irrigation”, Sir Samuel McCaughey, who on his ‘North Yanko’ farm, developed around 320 kilometers of channels drawing from the Murrumbidgee River with steam driven pumps. This ultimately showcased the viability of irrigation in the region.

The Yanco Experiment farm, now called The Yanco Agricultural Institute, was developed in 1908 to show settlers what could be grown in the area.



*Leeton has many Art Deco buildings, with the Roxy Theatre the most cherished.*

The oldest town of all is the historic township of **WHITTON**, located 24 kilometers west of Leeton, and connected Narrandera to Hay via the South West Railway opening valuable Riverina trade to Sydney.

The irrigation scheme created a rich environment – perfect for producing food for our country. Through smart business initiatives, growers then gave the world access to our high quality, homegrown produce.





The Letona cannery opened at Leeton in 1914.



You can visit Henry Lawson's restored cottage at Farm 418, Naalbata Road Leeton NSW.



"Turning on the tap" at the Murrumbidgee Irrigation Settlement in the Riverina in 1912.

### District News.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

### NORTH YANKO.

Your correspondent who has a desire to hover in the vicinity of the river in times of depression and drought, was induced to take a drive towards the Collieroobie ranges the other day.

After passing the luxuriant crops of amber cane in the vicinity of the North Yanko homestead, and noting the phenomenal result of irrigation, we passed the railway line at the Siding, and for dust, either in bulk or migrating particles, this particular crossing takes the bun on a windy day. Nine years have elapsed since we passed along this road, during which period many changes have occurred. The most noticeable feature in the altered aspect of the landscape is perhaps that of the miles of irrigation channels, some of which are completed, and others again in the course of construction.

"After passing the luxuriant crops of amber cane in the vicinity of the North Yanko homestead, and noting the phenomenal result of irrigation, we passed the railway line at the Siding, and for dust, either in bulk or migrating particles, this particular crossing takes the bun on a windy day. Nine years have elapsed since we passed along this road, during which period many changes have occurred. The most noticeable feature in the altered aspect of the landscape is perhaps that of the miles of irrigation channels, some of which are completed, and others again in the course of construction."

*Narrandera Argus and Riverina Advertiser - January 30, 1900.*



# Living life ≡ IN LEETON ≡



## ≡ DID YOU KNOW ≡

Winter is Murray crayfish season and a great time to head to the Murrumbidgee river. Come Summer, it's perfect for a swim!



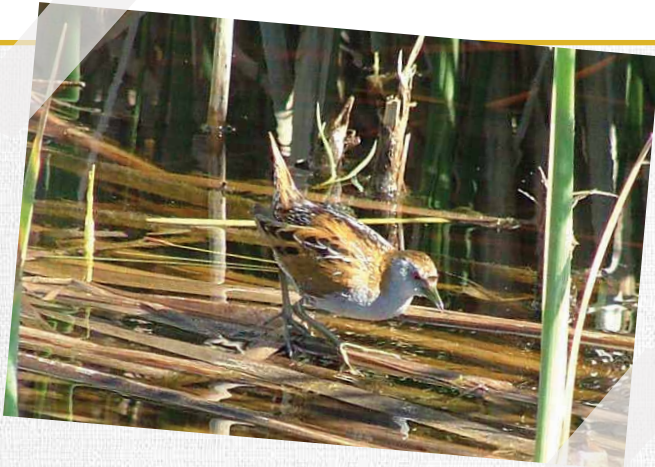
When talking to the Leeton Shire residents, the conversation that continues to pop up is how great the lifestyle is.

Surrounded by the natural wonder of RAMSAR listed wetlands, Fivebough and Tuckerbil, the Murrumbidgee National Park and the magnificent Murrumbidgee River, outdoor adventures are at their finest. On the weekends, the Shire is abuzz with camping, cycling, hiking, fishing, canoeing and kayaking.



*The paddock to plate attitude increases productivity and decreases the cost of doing business.*

Embracing the paddock to plate movement is a highlight of the Leeton community. Local growers, restaurants, cafes and farmers markets collaborate to bring the freshest local produce to the community.



*Our wetlands have approximately 86 identified species of waterbirds, including some of Australia's rare and endangered species, such as the Brolga.*







# What Leeton has to offer you, and your family

## A DREAM HOUSE YOU CAN AFFORD

Leeton has seen a recent boom with house prices increasing 13.33% over the last twelve months (as reported in August 2017). Looking at the five-year average, this has given property investors potential capital growth of 25.77% in each of those years. (<http://www.yourinvestmentpropertymag.com.au/top-suburbs/nsw-2705-leeton.aspx>)

Despite this impressive result, houses are still very affordable in Leeton. The Shire offers families so much more than larger cities. Imagine being able to live in a house with a big yard, a short walk to work and schools, and friends living just around the corner? It is the lifestyle most young families dream of.

Metrics	HOUSE
Median price	\$255,000
Quarterly growth	6.92%
12-month growth	13.33%
Average annual growth	3.50%
Weekly median advertised rent	\$260
Number of sales	153
Gross rental yield	5.30%





## REBECCA VAUGHAN

**R**ebecca Vaughan (Bec) grew up on Sydney's North Shore. She studied physiotherapy at the University of Sydney and went to the beach in her spare time. In 2014 she was offered a five-week placement at Leeton Physiotherapy Centre. Bec says, "I had to Google Leeton, I had never heard of it before".

After the placement she returned to Sydney, working in the mornings and swimming at the beach every afternoon. It wasn't the last time she would take the drive to Leeton though. Six months later, Leeton Physiotherapy Centre offered Bec a position. She says it was such a really good environment to work and learn in and they were very supportive of her professional development that she thought "why not? If I don't like it, I can just come back home". Turns out, Bec loves the job and the town and has been here for close to three years already.

Bec loves many things about living in Leeton Shire. She reflects the sentiment of most people when talking about the town. "It's a lot different [to Sydney] in a really good way. You get to meet people from all different walks of life. The age of my friends have changed a bit. They are all in different places in their life."

Bec has replaced swimming with golf and happily declares she is probably the worst golf player in Leeton. She loves playing a round of golf on the weekends and footy in the winter".

"One of the best parts is that everyone is so close, you can just message and say what are you doing? And then go and hang out, rather than being 45mins away." Bec says it is a nice change from Sydney where "by the time you get there after being stuck in traffic you are irritated."

Another big win for living away from the city is being able to go home for lunch. For Bec, there is no such thing as a commute to work anymore.

Bec says that the town has some great wineries, restaurants, pubs and The Roxy Theatre – the icon of Leeton. There are lots of events and the community always gets involved. "Light up Leeton at Christmas is pretty cool. I had never experienced this sense of community before. Everyone puts up lights and then tours about the town."

For anyone moving to Leeton Shire, Bec has some sage advice. "Firstly, I'd definitely recommend it. It's a very nice town and the community is excellent. Everything is nearby. Secondly, definitely get involved with a sporting club, the golf club or a footy club and immerse yourself into the community so you can get to know people. It's those social circles that keep the town running. That's the best thing about Leeton. The social circle. People say 'what do you do' but it doesn't matter what you do when you are hanging out with your friends."

☀️ *The river is definitely the best spot to be in summer* ☀️





# Education

Leeton Shire is renowned for quality education facilities with six primary schools, and three high schools that attract students from all across the state.

## PRIMARY SCHOOLS

1. Leeton Public School
2. Parkview Public School
3. St Joseph's Primary School
4. Wamoon Public School
5. Yanco Public School
6. Whittton Public School

## SECONDARY SCHOOLS

### 7. Leeton High School

This well-established high school offers a comprehensive curriculum for its 440 students. The school has strong traditions in academic, cultural and sporting endeavours with particular strength in art and drama.

### 8. Yanco Agricultural High School

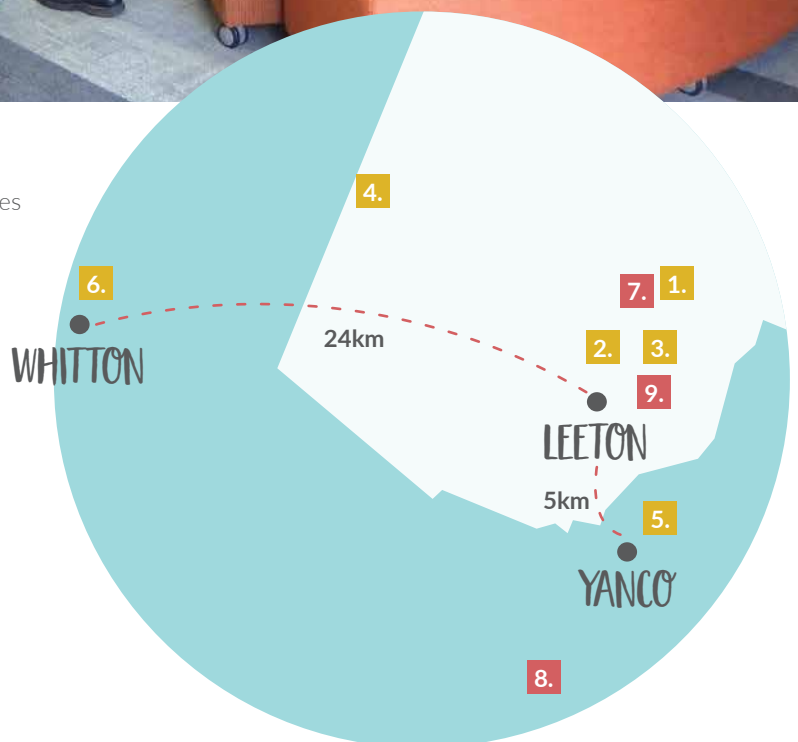
This selective government school is co-educational and fully residential. Set on 280 hectares, including 180 hectares of intensive irrigation and dry land agriculture, as well as 60 hectares of natural bushland bordered by the Murrumbidgee River. The 330 students have access to tennis courts, a

gymnasium, swimming pool, 10ha of sporting ovals and after-hours library and resource centre. In addition to this, the school offers courses in Equine Studies, an Olympic standard indoor arena, and students are able to stable their own horse at the school.

### 9. St Francis de Sales Regional College

A Catholic co-educational day and weekly Boarding School with just under 700 current students. The college offers places to students from Leeton and the wider Riverina. Based on a large campus in the heart of Leeton, St Francis de Sales Regional College offers a wide variety of subjects to students and students have the opportunity to be involved in a number of additional activities throughout the year.

Students have the opportunity to represent the school in teams selected in many different sporting areas.





## SEAN AND TESSA



**2**8-year-old Sean grew up in Hobart and came to Leeton at 22 on a six-month contract to play AFL with the Crows. He had followed a couple of his mates that had come the year before.

Sean says he thought the town had a bit of character and a really good feel about it. “The first thing that drew me in was the people. They were very welcoming and made it their business to get to know me and to help out wherever they could.” This explains why he is still here six years later.

Tessa was born in Leeton living here until she began to study teaching in Wagga Wagga. Even then she still worked in Leeton and travelled between the two cities until she finished her degree and made Leeton her permanent home. “I liked the idea of teaching in the town I grew up in and making connections with everyone. It’s good to have most of my family around here too.”

Tessa is a year 5/6 teacher at Leeton Public School. “It’s a great school,” Tessa says. “You get to know most people

and the parent community is quite good as well.”

The two agree that Leeton has a lot to offer. “There is a lot of work available for skilled workers,” says Sean, a qualified carpenter, and adds that the local TAFE offers many courses to learn a trade or up skill.

Taking advantage of every opening, the couple have combined business with passion and recently purchased a successful crossfit and training gym, Strength2Strength Leeton. “There is opportunity here,” Sean says.

Sean and Tessa love living in Leeton. They say it is a close-knit community, very open minded and welcoming. “We can walk to work if we want to and there are plenty of excellent options for schooling, plus sport is a big part of the culture. If you walk down the street you’ll see at least one person that you know. Usually more,” says Tessa.

**There is opportunity here**





*Sport is a community spirited highlight of the weekends.*

**S**port is not only a hobby but also a community spirited highlight of the weekends. Take your choice – soccer, netball, league, union, AFL, cricket, volleyball, tennis, squash, basketball, swimming, cycling... the list goes on!

No matter who you talk to in the Shire, it is clear that sport is at the core of our community. The benefits are easily seen with families spending quality time in the stands, cheering each other along. Friends and memories are made here.

## COUNTRY ROAD TO GLOBAL STAGE

Leeton has a proud history of producing sporting professionals.

- Olympian Cyclist, Robert McLachlan
- Cricketer, Mark Taylor
- AFL players, Craig Nettelbeck and Jacob Hopper
- NRL players, Rod Maybon, Peter Peters, Jeff Robson, Clint Halden, Jody Rudd and Mark Nicholls
- Australian Rugby Union Sevens, Dylan Pietsch





The future is  
NOW



*Leeton Shire residents want faster broadband and are embracing new technology.*

## SOLAR POWER

**W**ith an average of 288 sunny days a year and an appetite from business to decrease utilities costs, Leeton Shire Council is very supportive of renewable energy initiatives.

Testament to this is the new 99 kilowatt (kW) Solar PV Plant at the Leeton Waste Water Treatment Plant launched in April 2017. This system will produce annual energy of 166,599kWh, annual return on investment of 9.1%, an annual carbon offset of 145 tonnes of carbon dioxide and reduce electricity costs by 50%.

A 25MW solar power plant, which will save over 43,000 tonnes of carbon emission with an annual production of 42.05 GWh. The project itself is a huge win for Leeton.

## NBN WIN

**L**eeton Shire Council understands regional business needs, and with industries within its Shire exporting to the world, the need for the latest technology available to optimise opportunities and grow.

With the take-up of fixed-wireless broadband in Leeton Shire at around 33%, (currently higher than the nationwide average of 25%), Leeton Shire residents want faster broadband and are embracing new technology.

In a combined call to action by the Leeton Shire Council and the local federal member, the NBN Review Board approved to extend the fixed NBN roll out to include Vance Industrial Estate, previously excluded in the plan.

*An Innovative and Sustainable Community*



Country life with  
global opportunity



Leeton is not just another rural town; it is an impressive manufacturing hub adding enormous value to the agricultural sector. Leeton continues to push ahead, welcoming technological advances and supporting initiatives for competitive advantage. We have excellent education and research facilities, and provide varied career opportunities including growing, processing, manufacturing, infrastructure, servicing, health and education, retail, and affordable environments for startups.

## LET'S GET DOWN TO BUSINESS

Leeton Shire may be small, but it certainly makes a large impression. It contributes to 38% of New South Wales' vegetable production and each MIA farmer is estimated to feed 600 people, or 450 people through exports.

Leeton Shire encourages new industry to the Shire. We have the land, the transport, the services and some of Australia's most successful companies here. Our local economy is ripe for value-adding or stand alone sectors to make the most of the world-class research, development and technology already in the Shire.



# RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT



≡ DID YOU KNOW ≡  
One in every four glasses of Australian wine comes out of the Western Riverina.

## THE YANCO AGRICULTURAL INSTITUTE (YAI)

**Y**AI has been the major research institute supporting the development of irrigated agriculture within the MIA for over 100 years. Development of profitable and sustainable irrigated farming systems remains a key focus. Research teams actively collaborate with local farming systems groups and industry partners, as well as with national and international research collaborators. Broadacre irrigated crop and horticulture research and development teams from both DPI Agriculture and DPI Biosecurity are co-located at the YAI along with the Tocal College Yanco Campus, NSW DPI Regulatory Officers, and the Office of Environment and Heritage's Natural Resource Laboratory.



## TOCAL COLLEGE, YANCO CAMPUS

**T**his college provides a wide range of short training courses for primary producers, owners of small farms, new entrants to agriculture and horticulture, and to those thinking of investing in a rural enterprise. The accredited training provided is based on the most up-to-date information and stems from the relationship between Tocal College and NSW DPI research, extension staff and the expansive resources and sites available for training purposes. The focus is to service the training needs of the primary producer, small farm owner and industry in a fast-paced, technological and legislative age.







## NATIONAL BROADBAND NETWORK (NBN)

With wireless broadband take-up 8% higher than the national average, Leeton Shire embraces new technology. The rollout of fixed wire broadband in the town of Leeton has served to strengthen these opportunities. Large industry relies on connectivity and the NBN will bring even more advances to the industry leading manufacturing and processing plants. It will also provide more options for industry wanting to improve productivity and reduce costs by moving away from expensive capital cities.



*Leeton Shire embraces new technology.*

*Leading the way with world-class technology*



# Industry HUBS



*WRIFT is the only site in Australia that allows loading of both containers and bulk freight, resulting in increased flexibility, reliability and volume for producers/processors and end users.*



## VANCE INDUSTRIAL ESTATE

**T**his purpose built industrial estate is testament to the Shire's commitment when it comes to investing in the local economy. It is home to large and small industry alike with Leeton Shire Council ready to assist new industry to join the estate.

Some highlights of Vance Estate include excellent transport access as well as fixed wire NBN. Council is ready to assist new industry to join the estate.

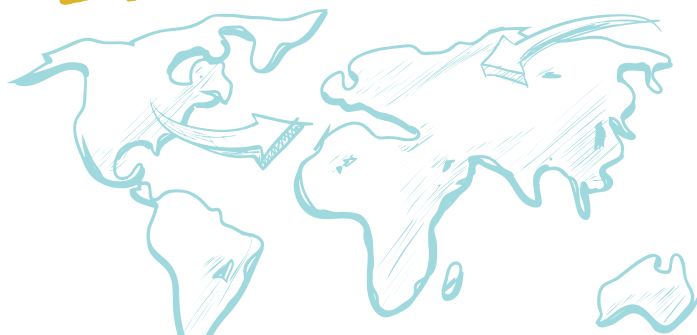
There are a number of lots still available ranging from 3,000 m<sup>2</sup> up to 5,000 m<sup>2</sup>.

## WRIFT – WESTERN RIVERINA INTERMODAL FREIGHT TERMINAL

**W**RIFT is the newest and largest logistics hub for the Western Riverina region located northwest of Leeton. It provides the least cost pathway to domestic and export markets, and a transport efficient logistics hub via rail and effective road networks. It provides our agricultural producers with world-competitive export industries through connectivity of road and rail.



# Leeton Shire's EXPORT MARKET



GROSS REGIONAL PRODUCT VALUED AT  
**\$527 MILLION** (2016)

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EACH YEAR MIA FARMER FEEDS  
**600 PEOPLE**  
 (450 THROUGH EXPORTS)

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CONTRIBUTES TO  
**38% OF NSW'S**  
**VEGETABLE PRODUCTION**



- Riverina produces **300,000 tonnes** of grapes.
- **40 different varieties.** Chardonnay, Semillon and Shiraz account for over 50%.



- **8,500 hectares** of citrus farm.
- **180,000 tonnes** of citrus produce each year.
- **30%** of Australia's total citrus production.



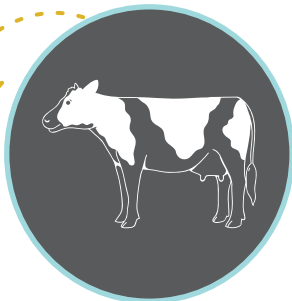
- Australia exports over **90%** of its cotton crop every year.
- The MIA produces roughly **20%** of Australia's cotton.
- Australia's cotton growers produce enough cotton to clothe **500 million people** each year.



- **240,000 walnut trees** in Leeton district, covering **765 hectares**.
- Walnut trees can grow to **25 metres** in height and can live as long as **200 years**.
- Responsible for producing about **90%** of the Australian walnut crop.



- SunRice headquarters.
- Rice contributes **\$150 million** to the local economy.
- **Fifth largest** rice food company in the world.
- Australia's largest exporter of processed food products with **80%** of its product exported to more than **60 countries**.



- **53,333 head of cattle** capacity JBS Riverina Feedlot.
- **400** local employees.
- **Award winning beef** in multiple categories.
- Export to **46 countries**.





# Growing businesses IN THE SHIRE

**A**t the heart of Australia's food bowl is Leeton growers, but they are not alone. Our Shire's strong economy boasted Gross Regional Product valued at \$527 million in 2016. In fact, the large industries in the processing and valued-added sectors now employ more people than the agricultural sector. This is supported by the retail trade and construction.

In 2014 rice contributed **\$148 MILLION** to the regional economy.

In 2015, there were **4,000 TONNES OF WALNUTS** processed in Leeton.

In 2017, around **500 HEAD OF CATTLE** were processed a day at JBS Riverina Feedlot.

In 2017, after just six seasons, Southern Cotton ginned its **1 MILLIONTH COTTON BALE**.



Businesses in the Leeton Shire took part in a survey with results highlighting the strength of our economy.

**69%** have increased employee levels over the past 12 months

**63%** have been in business for over 15 years

**48%** intend on expanding their business within the next two years

**45%** planning to diversify their core business

**29%** will be incorporating exportation of goods.



# SUNRICE LEETON



PHOTO: SunRice

Local focus,  
≡ GLOBAL  
REACH ≡

**SunRice is a true regional success story, demonstrating that geography doesn't need to be a barrier to business development.**

**O**ur proud history dates back to the establishment of a single rice mill in Leeton in 1950. Today, SunRice is a \$1.25 billion global food business, delivering healthy, nutritional and quality rice products from the paddy to the plates of consumers in almost 50 countries around the world.

While our business has global reach, our headquarters remain firmly in Leeton in the New South Wales Riverina, which is the heart of Australia's rice growing region. This area is renowned for producing clean, green, healthy and GMO-free rice that is demanded by premium domestic and international markets and is core to our business's ongoing success.





*The Leeton SunRice Festival celebrates the important role the rice industry plays in the region.*

SunRice remains one of the largest employers in the Riverina, with around 570 people (which swells to more than 760 during harvest) employed across the region, including almost 500 in Leeton where the company has a corporate office, rice mill, stockfeed plant, AGS rice storage facilities and value-add plants. This variety of operations enables Leeton locals the opportunity to work in a range of rewarding roles for a major Australian company without sacrificing the ease and enjoyment of the country lifestyle. A testament to this is our low turnover rate, where the average employee tenure in Australia is 7.6 years.



PHOTOS: SunRice



**≡ DID YOU KNOW ≡**  
 In a good crop year,  
 SunRice feeds 20 million  
 people a day.



PHOTO: SunRice.com.au

Given our strong presence in and around Leeton for almost 70 years, we proudly continue to play an active role in supporting the community that supports us. A key example of this is the Leeton SunRice Festival, a biennial event that celebrates the important role the rice industry plays in the region and brings colour, vibrancy and thousands of tourists to the town, helping to boost the local economy and raise much-needed funds for local charities.

Reflecting our commitment to the local region, we have invested around \$90 million in our Riverina region assets over the past four years, including a \$7.6 million processing equipment upgrade at the Leeton Mill. Such investments position both the company and the region for a strong and sustainable future.

SunRice has successfully transitioned from a production-led processor to a market-driven food company over the past decade. Our Group Strategy has ensured we can navigate dynamic global markets and continue our focus on future growth opportunities that benefit our growers and investors alike.



WEBSTER



Growing new  
industry in  
LEETON

The name says it all. Webster Australian Walnuts (WAW) provides approximately 90% of the nation's walnuts and exports to a global network, which includes markets in Europe, Asia and the Middle East. It is the Southern Hemisphere's largest walnut orchard owner and marketer of walnuts.

**W**AW established its first commercial-scale walnut orchard in 1996 in Tasmania before expanding its orchard footprint into the NSW Riverina region in 2004. The business is truly vertically integrated, from nursery through to market, where they offer both in-shell and walnut kernel products locally and globally, supplying fresh walnuts in the counter-season to the Northern Hemisphere.





*Webster produces a number of different varieties aimed at maximising yield and quality.*

Vertical integration begins at Leeton's walnut nursery, which is the largest in Australia. The nursery produces vigorous, high yielding cultivars (Chandler, Howard, Vina, Lara, Ashley, Tulare and Serr) and pollinisers (Fernette and Cisco). These varieties need to be capable of higher yields, produce good light colour quality kernels and mature over a period of time in order to spread the harvest period.



**≡ DID YOU KNOW ≡**

that the Riverina produces a quarter of the Australia's wine grapes, a third of the nations citrus and is gearing up to be the largest supplier of Australia's Murray cod?



WAW maximises the unique attributes of operating in Leeton and purpose built a 5,000m<sup>2</sup> state of the art cracking facility in 2014. This completed WAW's vertical integration allowing full traceability and product control. The facility is fitted with new technology to minimise

production efficiencies. These include laser colour sorters and the first commissioned three-way free fall walnut laser in the world, to minimize handling for improved kernel quality.

The company also expanded packing capabilities, with onsite automatic blending stations creating flexibility to size and set quality specifications to deliver the needs of the customer. It has also increased storage capacity with five purpose built silos that allow greater control and management of inventory, whilst reducing waste through handling from orchard to processing.





## SOUTHERN COTTON

# A Business Community LIKE NO OTHER

One of the key themes lauded by local industry is the supportive nature intrinsic to the Leeton community. Economic prosperity is a collective objective and ideas and innovations are shared, embraced and celebrated.

The Southern Cotton story began in 2011 with six grower friends, a Mother's Day lunch and a crazy idea. Tired of carting their cotton 400 kilometres to get ginned and spending a fortune in doing so, the group brainstormed a solution – they would build their own gin.

With up to 100 local growers also eager to use the facility, the group (now Southern Cotton directors), took up the challenge to build an operational \$25 million gin on a greenfield site in under 12 months. Not without significant risk, the group was initially turned away by merchants and banks that didn't think the idea was feasible. They were undeterred, seeing the profitable efficiencies that





*The \$25 million Southern Cotton gin was built in under 12 months.*

*“We tried to do everything local where we could, and we did get great support from businesses in the community.*

*The local painters and welders and cement people, and machinery people in town were very supportive, especially earlier when cash flow wasn't great.”*

— Southern Cotton’s General Manager, Kate O’Callaghan.

localising the ginning process would bring to their cotton business and the community. They put their farms on the line for this dream.

The directors' hands-on approach paid off. They met with other gin owners and operators to fully understand processes, secured international suppliers of equipment, and engaged and coordinated local tradespeople and physically constructed the gin.

Southern Cotton’s General Manager, Kate O’Callaghan also attributes the progressive approach of Leeton Shire Council to Southern Cotton’s breakthrough in building their highly regarded ginning facilities. “We’re lucky to be in Leeton Shire. The Shire employees at the time were so supportive.



There were so many hurdles, but they helped us through that. The local WorkCover came out every week to help us through the safety process and make sure we were compliant. They were really good to work with.”

In June 2012, the first Southern Cotton bale was ginned. This major accomplishment was outdone when they broke a record for a first-year gin, processing over 166,000 bales. In 2017, they are on track to reach the milestone of one million bales processed in six seasons.

Leeton’s infrastructure and services enabled Southern Cotton to locally source much of what they needed to expand their business. Kate explains they were able to derive benefits from the synergies generated by being within the greater MIA.

“We’ve got all those add-on industries that are there if you need them,” Kate says. “This includes welding, other specialist trades and casual staff. Many of the 40 seasonal people that we put on each year, come to us after working the grape season. You can do the whole cycle of cotton to grain, grain to grapes, grapes back to us.”

**≡ DID YOU KNOW ≡**  
 Southern Cotton is on track to reach the milestone of one million bales processed in six seasons!





# WESTON & WESTON



*George and Lionel Weston have found the Leeton community to be welcoming and inclusive.*

**B**rothers George and Lionel Weston established their refrigeration and air conditioning business in Leeton 40 years' ago. Moving from Sydney to Leeton they found the community to be welcoming and inclusive. "We were embraced by Leeton," says George. "The people here are friendlier. Your reputation goes a lot further".

They have found both Leeton Shire Council and the community complement their strong work ethic, fostering Weston and Weston's successful expansion where they now have multiple businesses across the Riverina.

George has immersed himself in the community, joining Rotary and the local council. He encourages his employees to do the same. He finds that the sense of community they experience is also good for business; employees take pride in their work and are a part of the community they serve.

"When they go out, they're representing Weston & Weston but also they represent themselves. And if someone's got a problem with their air conditioner, we go out of our way to try and get it up and running. And those values have helped us," George says.

≡ *It's clean and green. It's a good life here.* ≡

— George Weston



# SPORTSPOWER LEETON

Janet and Mark have lived in Leeton all their lives and were both in long-term jobs, Janet in real estate for 24 years and Mark as a tyre fitter for 23 years, before taking the leap into business ownership. Janet says it was mainly looking for something for Mark rather than both of them, but their purchase of the Leeton SportsPower franchise in 2014 quickly grew, and Janet was soon full-time as well.

Being new to retail they applied the principles they appreciate as consumers to their store. The formula is working for them, with the contemporary look, genuine customer service and their hard work paying off.

As members of Leeton Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Janet and Mark have experienced the advantages of the community drive to shop local. The Chamber encourages locals to shop in Leeton and is currently making use of a government grant to further promote local business. Community support for local business is a priority, and the Chamber and locals embrace growth. "The Chamber are always asking 'what other businesses do we need, or would be supported?'" says Janet.



*Janet and Mark Pete.*



The community support of local business is reciprocated. Alongside employment opportunities and boosting the local economy, businesses like SportsPower Leeton are often involved in sponsorship or helping community groups. And while sport itself is a huge part of Leeton's culture ("we've got everything, we've got soccer, we've got rugby union, we've got league, got AFL, yes every sport is played here," says Janet) there are many other permanent and seasonal fixtures in and around Leeton to bring in visitors and stimulate the economy. "It's a good little community and there are often different things on," says Janet.

"Tours...come through [for things like] the rice ... and the cotton gin, and the Fivebough Wetlands. There [are] lots of different things all the time and lots of sporting events too, so you get different people visiting Leeton." Additionally with two local boarding schools, Leeton often hosts out-of-town parents who enjoy local restaurants, cafes and shops.

With so much on, Janet and Mark are always on the go but they don't seem to mind, "It's a great little town, we're very happy with it," Janet concludes.



# JBS RIVERINA

Our employees make us  
the **undeniable leader**  
in our industry.

The story of JBS begins in 1953 in Brazil, when Jose Batista Sobrinho (whose initials now name our organization) started out processing just five head of cattle per day. Through business smarts, intelligent decision making, acquisition and a lot of hard work, the Batista family has taken our company from a small, home grown, family-owned operation to the world's largest meat protein producer.

Growing from a five-head-per-day company to an organisation with more than 140 production facilities worldwide wasn't easy, but JBS has always had the power of its people behind it to help pave the way.

Located 75km south east of Griffith, in the heart of the Murrumbidgee irrigation district, our Riverina beef is an integrated grain fed beef feedlot and processing facility that was the most recent major acquisition by JBS purchased in 2010. Riverina Beef has a feedlot added a 600 per day processing capacity that is fed purely by the adjoining feedlot that has a carrying capacity of 53,333 head.

JBS has thrived as a result of the determination, innovation and hard work of its employees. We recognise that the ability to meet and exceed our goals comes from the people who really drive the business: from the employees who help produce a quality product on the front lines of our production facilities to those in the Corporate Headquarters making strategic business decisions. Our employees drive and foster our culture of excellence.

The global demand for protein is expected to grow exponentially in the coming decades. The role of JBS and Riverina Beef will become even more important as people around the world have an increased ability to put meat on the table for their families.

Through the continued pursuit of excellence – driven by our determination to recruit, develop and retain the best talent – JBS plans to remain at the forefront of this growing global need, solidifying our place as the undeniable leader in our industry.







# SAUCE COMMUNICATIONS

**A** true believer in the power of a tree change, Liane Sayer-Roberts relocated from Sydney to Leeton in 2004 and initially wondered what opportunities she would be able to find as a communications professional in a small country town. She initially started to freelance and it was at this stage she realised that having a rural connection had huge potential.

Fourteen years since that move and dozens of awards later, Liane has transformed her freelancing business to a thriving PR firm, Sauce Communications, which now has offices in Sydney, Canberra and Melbourne but its headquarters remain squarely in Leeton.

Being recognised as the Best Medium Sized PR Agency in Australia and NSW six times over, Sauce delivers services including events management, communications strategy and stakeholder engagement to a slew of government agencies and agribusinesses including SunRice, Australia Post, De Bortoli Wines, Australian Pork, and the Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation.

“A lot of people might not think thriving professional

services businesses can succeed in rural Australia, but my experience is that they certainly can,” Liane said. “Not only do country towns offer opportunities for business, it also provides advantages on a personal level. Leeton offers the perfect lifestyle for me to raise my two little boys in a supportive, community-centric environment.”

Originally a nod to her tomato-farming parents, the Sauce red building that sits proudly in the main street of Leeton and the bright, plump tomato logo acknowledge the importance of putting down strong roots, with the company’s largest selling point being its connection to rural and regional Australia.

“I have embraced our unique niche here in the bush,” says Liane. “Our clients come to us because of our strong rural connection and I still get a real thrill when a new client asks me to explain ‘so, where is Leeton?’”

“We’ve built our reputation as a rural business that helps other regional and rural businesses tell their stories, as well as one that connects organisations with rural markets – it’s one of our biggest strengths.”





≡ DID YOU KNOW ≡  
 Leeton Shire is so accessible, you can be in Sydney for a 10am meeting, work there for the day and then be home in time for dinner!

# Leeton Chamber of Commerce and Industry

**L**eeton Chamber of Commerce and Industry is proactive within the community, and over 100 businesses are members. This provides a fantastic networking opportunity, particularly within the business-to-business environment.

The community gets behind new businesses and their owners, and this is particularly true for new business and industry that comes to town. An example of this is Webster, where in 2004 it expanded its base from Tasmania.

The Chamber says that unlike many towns of similar size, Leeton Shire has a really good cross-section of industry, providing excellent career opportunities. "For a small town, we've certainly got a lot going on!" Geographically, the Shire is also easily accessible. "We are midway between Sydney and Melbourne, close to Australia's largest regional centres, and the airport is ten minutes drive away. You can be in Sydney for a 10am meeting, work there for the day and then be home in time for dinner."

With Yanco Agricultural College and St Francis being boarding schools, we see a lot of benefit to the community through visiting families. With Leeton's full calendar of events such as the Bidgee Classic, SunRice Festival, Leeton Farmers Market, Riverina Skate Championships and Light Up Leeton there are some big weekends in the town to strongly support the great range of cafés, restaurants, accommodation and retail providers.





*Leeton Chill and Grill is just one of the many great events held in the region.*



## SHOP LOCAL

The Chamber encourages people to shop locally. With ease of access to larger towns and online shopping, the Chamber encourages the local retail industry. Their Shop Local campaign is promoting the one thing that larger towns and online shopping can't compete with – true customer service.

“We’re really wanting locals to look in the Leeton Shire first and approach the shop owners. They’re all very approachable. When you look at the whole equation, the money spent in Leeton stays in Leeton and strengthens the economy.”

Aware of the benefits to the business community through new ideas and innovations, Leeton’s Chamber monitors trends through a well-developed relationship with the wider NSW Chamber of Commerce, and tests ideas within



the community. An example of this is potentially setting up a coworking space, with interest expressed from industry professionals visiting the area. It would also serve as a way to bring the town’s home based businesses and freelancers together regularly in an environment where ideas and innovations can be shared.

*If you're looking for **customer service**, I don't think you'll **beat what you get** in Leeton.*





So what are you  
waiting for?

Interested in joining some of **AUSTRALIA'S FINEST PEOPLE?**

How about spending a few days in Leeton Shire  
to experience the past, present and future of this  
dynamic business community?

This prospectus is just a small taste of Leeton's  
economic prowess and potential.





Leeton would be *delighted* to welcome you.  
For more information, contact:

**LEETON SHIRE COUNCIL**  
 (02) 6953 0911  
 23-25 Chelmsford Place, Leeton, NSW 2705  
[www.leeton.nsw.gov.au](http://www.leeton.nsw.gov.au)

**LEETON VISITORS INFORMATION CENTRE**  
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 10 Yanco Avenue, Leeton, NSW 2705  
[www.leetontourism.com.au](http://www.leetontourism.com.au)

**LEETON CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY**  
[www.leetonchamber.com](http://www.leetonchamber.com)



Join some of Australia's finest companies  
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Leeton Shire is the  
heart of opportunity

Leeton  
NSW, AUSTRALIA

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