



Rabobank

*Media release
October 31, 2014*

Rabobank Port Lincoln's landmark occasion

It was a joyful celebration for Rabobank Port Lincoln branch last night to honour its 10-year anniversary.

Spilling out onto the balcony at the Port Lincoln Hotel, more than 150 local farmers, friends and agribusiness professionals gathered to celebrate the landmark occasion.

Speaking at the event was Rabobank Australia chief executive officer Thos Gieskes, who proudly acknowledged the success of the Port Lincoln branch on reaching this milestone and cementing a firm presence on the Eyre Peninsula.

Mr Gieskes said the strong growth that Rabobank had achieved in the past decade in Port Lincoln was testament to the strength and quality of the local agricultural sector.

“As well as being Australia’s unofficial ‘seafood capital’ with its strong fishing and aquaculture industries, Port Lincoln services the large and diverse Eyre Peninsula agricultural region, which is a very important area for Australian primary production,” he said.

Mr Gieskes said, as the world’s leading food and agribusiness bank beginning as a farmers’ credit cooperative in the Netherlands in 1898, Rabobank had a very optimistic outlook for Australian agriculture.

“Food and farming are in the global spotlight – and this is because collectively the world needs to produce more with less natural resources. If we don’t lift food production, there simply won’t be enough to feed the growing population,” he said.

“And of course Asia is driving much of this rising food demand. For a country like Australia, and a region like this one in South Australia, this presents enormous potential given the core competitive advantages of the agricultural sector here.”

Mr Gieskes paid tribute to the expertise and commitment of the Rabobank Port Lincoln branch staff.

“When we first came to Port Lincoln a decade ago, we opened with two key people – including Debbie Flint, Rabobank’s first female branch manager in Australia,” he said.

“Since then, Debbie has grown the branch to team of five and Port Lincoln branch is highly active in the local community. As an agri-bank, Rabobank is part of the farming community and that is how business is done.”

Rabobank Port Lincoln branch manager Debbie Flint has been local to the Eyre Peninsula for more than three decades, first starting out in the area with a career in agribusiness at the Australian Wheat Board (for 14 years) before transitioning to Rabobank.



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Mrs Flint said the occasion was special for Rabobank and for the township of Port Lincoln.

“By reaching our 10-year anniversary, we’re reinforcing our commitment to this town and this region,” Mrs Flint said.

“We’re here to stay. We’ll continue our support of the community on many levels and we’re pleased everyone could join us to celebrate such a special occasion for our team and our clients.”

Mrs Flint said that while it had been a challenging environment for the farming community throughout the past decade that has seen drought and mixed seasons, the growth Rabobank had seen on the Eyre Peninsula was even more significant due to the quality of the clients it supports.

“We’ve had droughts, we’ve had rain, and we’ve had frosts but we’re here to stay – we have a big commitment to agriculture in this area,” she said.

“We wanted to be closer to our clients and their businesses and Port Lincoln is a key agricultural area with good operators both on and off-farm,” Mrs Flint said.

Now with a total of five staff, Mrs Flint will continue to lead the team and its business throughout what she believes will be a particularly good few years ahead in agriculture.

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Rabobank Australia & New Zealand is a part of the international Rabobank Group, the world’s leading specialist in food and agribusiness banking. Rabobank has more than 110 years’ experience providing customised banking and finance solutions to businesses involved in all aspects of food and agribusiness. Rabobank is structured as a cooperative and operates in 42 countries, servicing the needs of approximately 10 million clients worldwide through a network of more than 1600 offices and branches. Rabobank Australia & New Zealand is one of Australasia’s leading rural lenders and a significant provider of business and corporate banking and financial services to the region’s food and agribusiness sector. The bank has 93 branches throughout Australia and New Zealand.

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