



Peel Agri-innovation Ecosystem CASE STUDY

Groundswell



Growing the Peel’s agri-innovation and food production sectors is a priority for the Peel region as outlined in the Peel Development Commission’s Strategic Plan (2023-2025) and the Peel Regional Investment Blueprint. This case study highlights the outcomes of an agribusiness engaging with the agrifood innovation ecosystem, supported by the Commission’s programs, investments, and partnerships.

About the business

Groundswell Drivethru and Frothin Coffee is a small family business, coffee roastery and café. They are Western Australia’s only wood fired coffee roaster using custom-built, traditional Italian roasting equipment.

They have been roasting coffee for 12 years and expanded into chocolate making during the past couple of years.

The business evolved from roasting coffee in a shed and selling it in a park, to expanding its reach and exploring international markets.

"Meeting prominent Singaporean investors that were interested in our product and keen to see if South East Asia would like your product, has been instrumental."
- Purri Gould, Owner, Groundswell

Engagement with FIPWA/agri-innovation ecosystem

During the pandemic, Groundswell sought ways to expand their business with the normal café operation disrupted by COVID-19. In 2020 they successfully applied for a **Regional Economic Development (RED) Grant** and secured \$33,000 in funding for a bean-to-bar chocolate-making project. Their vision for the project was to one day take their product to the Asian market. The grant allowed them to develop a product and start the wood fire chocolate making.

Through their relationship with the Peel Development Commission, Groundswell was introduced to the **Food Innovation Precinct Western Australia (FIPWA)** ecosystem, connecting with prominent Singaporean partners (The GrowHub) with an interest in their product and testing it in Southeast Asia.



Engagement with FIPWA/agri-innovation ecosystem (cont.)

GrowHub's expertise in the market and understanding of technology helped position Groundswell's product and communicate with Southeast Asian consumers. Having the support of people who knew logistics, marketing, language and everything that makes it possible for a small family business to export a product to an Asian market enabled Groundswell to reach a level of exposure and access potential markets they wouldn't have been able to do on their own as a small local business.

As a small business, Groundswell had a core product; however, they did not know how to distribute it with the resources they had. Through the **FIPWA** ecosystem, they met people who recognised the value of their product in the market and received support related to website development, packaging requirements, and the logistics requirements to ship the product to Singapore. They became part of a group of Australian businesses whose products were showcased at the Food Hotel Asia - Trade Expo with the support of the **FIPWA** and GrowHub partnership.

"The **FIPWA** will take your business/project out of your own little backyard – connecting you to university, research, potential finance for your project, professional networks where your business will learn a few things and is a great opportunity to expand your horizons. Our business has gone from a coffee hobbyist nerd to a cool family business, to expanding our reach and looking at international markets. We are hiring, upskilling our workers, and having fun along the way", said Mr Gould.

Wood Fire Coffee Beans

"Groundswell coffee is lovingly roasted over a wood fire. Using wood slows the roasting process and enriches the natural flavour profile in every bean. With the development of modern roasters (Gas and Electric), few roasters still use this sustainable coffee process. In fact, there are only 3 wood fired roasters in all of Australia. Roma, our roaster, is the only wood fired roaster in WA."

Groundswell is proud to provide local products through their café including locally sourced milk, Pinjarra Bakery pies and WA-based juices and kombucha. (Source: Groundswell website)

For more information about the Food Innovation Precinct Western Australia please visit their website:

<https://fipwa.com.au>

For further details about Groundswell, visit:

<https://www.groundswelldrivethru.com.au>

A stronger economy
Sustainable jobs
Diverse industries



peel.wa.gov.au



Benefits to the business

Resulting business has grown in excess of 10% for Groundswell. This reflects circa 3,000 monthly sales of wood fired chocolate through their cafe venue and other retailers as well as international export opportunities presented through the **FIPWA** ecosystem partnerships. Groundswell now has a sound e-commerce website and a small cottage industry is shifting into a more significant one that could deliver products to a wider market.

"The **FIPWA** is groundbreaking. At a time when we as a business faced challenges like never before and the threat of being isolated, it opened up the opportunity of what's possible. As an SME, we suddenly had access to the expertise for any food research we might want to do and knowledge of packaging. We had the opportunity to understand what the market requires in our products, how we might make products that work in those markets, and how we might do things better than we ever understood we could, working in our own spaces," said Mr Gould.

"FIPWA is a hidden gem where you can build a product, access the Solar Microgrid, and collaborate with other businesses, state and local government and smart people in the research and development space, all hosted in the one spot by the Shire of Murray."

- Purri Gould, Owner, Groundswell