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The region's successful job creation program has signed up Ben Furney Flour Mills and Native Harvest and both are recruiting now



By [Elizabeth Frias](#)

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It all starts now as Ben Furney Flour Mill's chief executive officer Sarah Furney and Secret Harvest founder Phil Thompson announced



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"It will help us attract the skills we need to bring people to the benefits of regional living where they can pursue their professional careers and have meaningful jobs while enjoying living in a regional area," Ms Furney who heads the Furney family's over 100-year-old flour milling enterprise said.

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"We're adding 25 more full-time staff members and we're looking for both highly-skilled employees and also apprentices we can train in our systems as well."

The company has received \$500,000 through the NSW government's jobs program to employ skilled machine operators for its \$5.4 million high-speed computerised packaging line and warehouse management system.

Furney's new investment is geared to modernise and increase the company's productivity, as well as upgrade the skillset of its existing 66 workforces at its Dubbo flour mill.

Ms Furney said they've started recruiting for machine operators, food technologists and quality assurance staff, among the blue-



Searching for skilled staff willing to relocate to Dubbo is one of the challenges the company has faced in recent times, Ms Furney said.

Mr Thompson said joining the jobs creation program meant his company's current range of Secret Harvest brand of cosmetics and oil products is expanding to create therapeutic products from Gumby Gumby bush plant backed by the CSIRO.

Secret Harvest is part of the Native Secrets group of companies operating in Dubbo since 2014 founded by Mr Thompson and his wife, Cherie.

The company received \$400,000 under the program to recruit staff such as a scientist, machine operators and general hands to work with CSIRO's Kick-Start Program testing bioactive extracts from Australian native plants.

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Mr Thompson is now recruiting 30 staff and has plans to add another 20 in the next two years as they upscale their operations



a CSIRO technology.

His company's cosmetics brand uses extracts from cypress leaf while Gumby Gumby will be used for treating eczema and psoriasis and also being developed for its qualities to help in treating other forms of cancer that have attracted the interest of pharmaceutical companies, Mr Thompson said.

Mr Thompson said he was excited to help create new local jobs "for our people in our local area where we live and love".

"On top of creating jobs, we're also sharing cultural knowledge and creating safe places for cultural exchange from our old people to our young people.

"We're passionate about reconciling this country with Indigenous and non-Indigenous people through sharing our knowledge of traditional native plants."

Dubbo MP Dugald Saunders said he was delighted to announce that the two well-known local companies are now part of the region's ambitious and exciting jobs creation program.

"These companies are both driven by being the best they can be and we are delighted that we can provide the funding through the Regional Job Creation Fund.

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"For more than 100 years, the Furney family has actively operated farms as well as the Dubbo mill where they oversee the supply chain from the paddock, most of them from right here in the Dubbo region, to plate.

"Secret Harvest combines the ancient knowledge of the world's oldest continuing culture, with world-first technology being trialed right here in Dubbo."

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Elizabeth began her news reporting days at Western Sydney before joining the Daily Liberal's Dubbo NSW newsroom.

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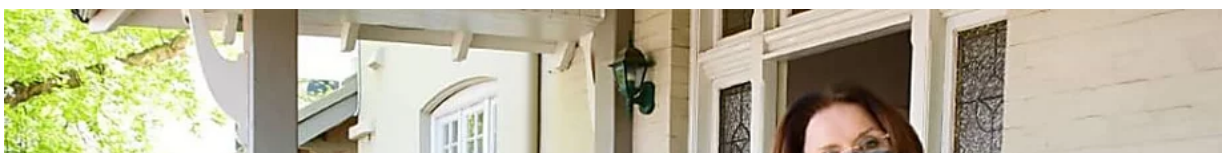
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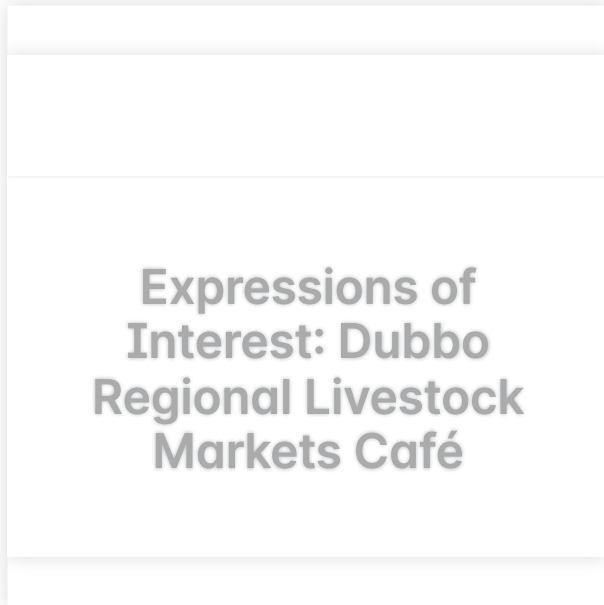
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