



Speech By  
**Julianne Gilbert**


**MEMBER FOR MACKAY**

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## **ADJOURNMENT**

### **Mackay, Farm to Plate Strategy**

 **Mrs GILBERT** (Mackay—ALP) (11.45 pm): By 2020 the Mackay, Isaac and Whitsunday regions will be a community connected by our food. We will be recognised as the fresh taste destination grown out of authentic seasonal experiences. This is the vision of the Greater Whitsunday Food Network, a not-for-profit community organisation established to oversee the implementation of the Mackay-Isaac-Whitsunday regional Farm to Plate strategy. This network is driven by a diverse group of passionate individuals who are instigating change and fostering growth in our local food culture amongst the community and our region.

Queensland Week 2016 was a special time for the Greater Whitsunday Food Network with the launch of the Greater Whitsunday Farmers Market and the Farm to Plate dinner. I was thrilled to attend both of these events to represent the Queensland government that helped make these projects a reality. Mackay Regional Council was successful in obtaining a state government Queensland Week grant for the Queensland Week Farm to Plate dinner. This grant was made available to help communities celebrate what is special and unique about their part of our great state, and for our part of the great state that is our fresh produce. The Farm to Plate dinner was a perfect example of what the Queensland government aimed to achieve through the Queensland Week grants.

The Farm to Plate dinner was a true celebration of the region's most outstanding produce grown, caught or raised locally by passionate producers in the Mackay, Isaac and Whitsunday regions. Dishes were prepared by Queensland favourite chef Matt Golinski along with four other local chefs who prepared meals from the farm to the plate. All food at the dinner was grown locally.

Leading up to the dinner, a number of activities took place to encourage conversations about Queensland Week and supporting local farmers, including the very first Greater Whitsunday Farmers Market held in Mackay city centre. A perfect winter afternoon in Mackay was the ideal backdrop for the farmers' market, which will now be held each Wednesday in the Mackay city heart. The Queensland Week Farm to Plate dinner and the associated lead-up activities connected the best of our people, places and producers to create an authentic quality farm-to-plate experience and ultimately encourage local residents to support our local farmers. This event will assist the Greater Whitsunday Food Network build our local food economy and provide a catalyst for future agritourism opportunities in our region.

On behalf of the state government, I congratulate the Greater Whitsunday Food Network, the Mackay Regional Council, local farmers and the suppliers and producers.