




Speech By
Dale Last

MEMBER FOR BURDEKIN

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PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Burdekin Electorate, Pacific Reef Fisheries

 **Mr LAST** (Burdekin—LNP) (2.34 pm): The Burdekin electorate is the most diverse in Queensland and is a powerhouse of the Queensland economy. Whether it be the resource sector down through the Bowen Basin, sugarcane farming around the Burdekin or the horticultural industry around Bowen, the Burdekin electorate is providing jobs and economic prosperity throughout North Queensland. I am proud of what is achieved by my electorate and the people who live and work in it.

Today I rise to inform the House that, once again, a business operating in the Burdekin electorate is an Australian leader. Pacific Reef Fisheries recently gained certification from the Aquaculture Stewardship Council and just weeks ago won the Australian Prawn Farmers Association's Prawn Farming Sustainability Program Award.

Pacific Reef Fisheries was started by the Mitris family in 1998 with a vision to provide the best seafood to Australia and the world. They operate a state-of-the-art hatchery at Guthalungra, just north of Bowen, as well as a 98-hectare prawn farm near Ayr. By supplying their own seed stock, Pacific Reef Fisheries can maintain full biosecurity control and constantly improve their product. It is these products that have caught the eye of the Australian food industry.

Black tiger prawns farmed by Pacific Reef Fisheries in my electorate have taken home a gold medal and a champion's medal at the Sydney Royal Easter Show Fine Food Show and in 2015 they were a finalist in the Delicious Produce Awards. These award winning prawns are available from Christmas through to June in Coles supermarkets, making this delicacy from the Burdekin available to everyone.

It is not just prawns. Cobia from Pacific Reef Fisheries is sold to some of the best restaurants in the nation. Just like the black tiger prawns, cobia is award winning. A gold medal, a champion's medal and the esteemed president's medal at the Sydney Royal Fine Food Show are testament to the quality of this product.

Receiving awards for their produce is not enough for Pacific Reef Fisheries. Among their core values are innovation and sustainability. Like every food producer in this state, Pacific Reef Fisheries are committed to caring for the environment. They have recently hosted trials into remediation of nitrogen and phosphorous from waste prawn farm water. Some 23 hectares of mangrove wetland was established and is now home to an amazing variety of fish and bird life. They hold a position on GBRMPA's Burdekin/Bowen Marine Advisory Committee and even the World Wildlife Fund has praised their operations.

This is a business that symbolises that people in my electorate and throughout the state can and do produce the best quality food while caring for the environment. Despite the nay-sayers here we have a business that operates on the doorstep of the Great Barrier Reef that produces over 1,000 tonnes of black tiger prawns each year and is benefitting our environment.

Mr Costigan: Delicious.

Mr LAST: I take the interjection from my colleague the member for Whitsunday. They are superb. Like my colleagues on this side of the House, I am proud to stand in support of the food producers in Queensland. I commend the amazing achievements of Pacific Reef Fisheries to the House.