




Speech By
Peter Russo
MEMBER FOR TOOHEY

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ADJOURNMENT

Food Connect

 **Mr RUSSO** (Toohey—ALP) (6.13 pm): I rise tonight to talk about a great enterprise in my electorate. The Food Connect Foundation is a not-for-profit organisation based in Salisbury. Food Connect's vision is for a world where all people have access to healthy, nutritious food that is fair to growers, the planet and everyone in between. Food Connect has been doing this by advocating for a fairer food system through events and demonstration projects and supporting small food and farming entrepreneurs.

Food Connect's name is synonymous with local ethical value chains, and the establishment of the first small-scale milling operation in modern Brisbane is an extension of that vision. The Salisbury flour mill represents a unique opportunity to embrace and refine old skills related to the trade of hands-on flour milling. The flour mill will be used to process lower volumes, specifically to provide local artisans and households with the freshest flour possible. It is a chance not just to revive an old craft but to be part of a new, shorter supply chain, one with stronger connections between grower, baker and the community that you will not find in large industrial mills. In doing this, Food Connect will improve local food resilience and cultural connections to native grasses.

Thanks to a successful grant from the state government's Gambling Community Benefit Fund, the Food Connect Foundation was recently able to buy a small-scale flour mill that is housed at the Food Connect shed in Salisbury.

It is important to highlight Food Connect's vision for its flour mill. Grain will be sourced from local regenerative growers, with an emphasis on native grasses and organic cereals, to create fresh flour products for sale, both wholesale and direct to the public, through its sister organisation Food Connect, and for use in the shed's commercial kitchen. The grant funded Food Connect to commission the manufacture of the mill by Woodstock Flour and will allow Food Connect to focus on wraparound support for a trainee miller, a young Indigenous trainee, along with mill room infrastructure and marketing and sales support. Stage 2 of the project will see an onsite baker, and the mill will be commissioned by third parties to create custom flour blends for local restaurants and food makers.

The mill came into being as a collaboration with Woodstock Flour, which has been running its own small-scale flour mill in Berrigan in New South Wales. Rob from Food Connect teamed up with Ian, Courtney and Hamish, who were able to source granite locally in New South Wales, as well as steel and bearings for the mill to operate. When the times comes that can all be replaced with local supplies, in keeping with Food Connect's philosophy.