

Grower profile

Joanna Wren



BY HAYLEY WILSON
VEGETABLESWA



Joanna Wren is an extremely passionate young grower from picturesque Karridale, about half an hour south of Margaret River. Joanna has now been running her own business, Sunshine Produce, in partnership with her brother George for three years. The business produces mainly cauliflowers and tomatoes for the Perth and local markets.

Joanna grew up in the area where her parents have been farming for over 30 years. From an early age she was involved with the growing and farming operations, and so her love of growing fresh vegetables began.

After finishing school, Joanna originally began on a very different path and moved to Perth to study at University and completed a Bachelor of Arts, Film and Television.

In the five years she was away, Joanna realised that she missed the country lifestyle and so decided to move back to work in her parent's business.

After enjoying being back on the farm and involved in the running of the business, she decided to further her skills in this area by completing a Certificate IV Traineeship with her parent's business. In 2008 Joanna won the Trainee of the Year award at the WA Training Awards.

In the same year, Joanna also completed her training and assessment qualifications

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Name Joanna Wren

Location Karridale

Enterprises Cauliflowers and tomatoes

PERTH






“One of the advantages of living in one of the most beautiful parts of the world is that it is a tourist destination. So it works well for branding and marketing techniques,” said Joanna of the beautiful WA south west. Taking advantage of this opportunity, Joanna has now developed her own pasta sauce made out of the ripest of their tomatoes, and sells it at local shops.

Joanna is passionate about local food and especially keeping it local and sells her produce in local shops, to wholesalers and will also be selling at the local farmers markets this season.

In the rare moments that Joanna isn't working on the property, she likes to take advantage of the amazing area she lives in, spending time at the beach and relaxing with friends.

“I really have found my place in the industry — I can't imagine and wouldn't want to be doing anything else now. I love growing fresh and sustainable food for people to enjoy.”

Although she acknowledges all the hard work involved in growing vegetables, Joanna loves that every day is different, exciting and brings new challenges. 

which enabled her to begin lecturing at the South West Institute of Technology in Margaret River, where she now train students in horticulture.

“I have a real interest in training within the horticultural industry and take both class-based and work-based students from Certificate II up to Diploma level.”

For the past year Joanna has also been an Ambassador for Agrifood Skills Australia, a national organisation that looks after training and skills in the industry and promotes a positive view of agriculture.

“I've been quite involved in the last year in promoting the great career and training opportunities in the wider agrifood sector and it would be nice to see more young people looking at horticulture as a career.”

Another of Joanna's interests is the promotion of local food and was recently on the committee for the South West Food Bowl Festival.

“We wanted to highlight WA's south west region and the variety of products that come from there. The idea is to try to bridge the gap between the wider community and the farming community in the area and hopefully the event helped in some way to achieve that.”

A whole day of the festival was dedicated to educating students about different agriculture industries, and about 200 children attended the farm tours to experience what a farmer does day to day and listen to some of the issues involved.



Photos: Joshua Higgins