

Burnett Inland Food Destination Strategy and Roadmap

DRAFT 1 published in July 2025 by Burnett Inland Economic Development Organisation (BIEDO)

Prepared for BIEDO by Regionality Pty Ltd

This project is jointly funded by the Australian and Queensland governments under the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements



Australian Government



Queensland Government



Funding Statement

This project is jointly funded by the Australian and Queensland governments under the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements.

About the Author

This Roadmap has been developed for BIEDO by Regionality Pty Ltd - a highly regarded and specialised consultancy working across Australia in the areas of agriculture, food and regional tourism, specialising in agritourism and culinary tourism. Regionality delivers strategic support to assist regions with business innovation programs and cluster development. Learn more about Regionality at www.regionality.com.au.

Disclaimer

BIEDO has commissioned Regionality Pty Ltd to prepare this strategy as part of Phase Two of Flavours of the Burnett program helping to help support BIEDO's aim "to build the economic capacity, preparedness and resilience of Burnett agricultural community through transformation of the region to a successful food destination. The information provided has been assembled with all reasonable care and may change without notice. Neither Regionality Pty Ltd nor BIEDO makes any assurance or warranty as to the suitability, currency, correctness and completeness of the information contained within it. Neither Regionality Pty Ltd nor BIEDO will be liable to any person, contract, or other arrangement in any event or circumstance if any information in this Roadmap is inaccurate, incomplete, not current or not suitable for the purpose you use the information for.

The material published in this document is intended for general information only and is not legal advice or other professional advice. While the authors and BIEDO have made reasonable efforts to gather the most current and appropriate information, Regionality Pty Ltd as the author and BIEDO as the Commissioner do not make any warranty as to the accuracy, currency, completeness or suitability of the information, and shall in no event be liable for any loss or damage that you may suffer as a result of your reliance on this information.

Message from the General Manager

At BIEDO, we are proud to work alongside our communities to bring bold ideas to life. This roadmap reflects the passion, ingenuity and optimism of producers, community members, councils and changemakers across the Burnett Inland. It outlines both a vision and a practical pathway to grow a thriving agritourism sector that celebrates our people, our places and our produce.

BIEDO extends our sincere thanks to everyone who contributed to this work and in particular to Rose Wright from Regionality, whose expertise and insight helped shape the strategic direction and actions within this plan.

We are excited about the opportunities ahead and look forward to supporting the region to bring this roadmap to life.

Mistrel Badesso

General Manager

Burnett Inland Economic Development Organisation (BIEDO)

Table of Contents

MESSAGE FROM THE GENERAL MANAGER..... 3

INTRODUCTION 7

RELEVANT STRATEGIC REFERENCES..... 8

VISION STATEMENT 8

THE ROLE OF BIEDO IN DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT 8

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES 9

STRATEGIC PRINCIPLES 9

SITUATION ANALYSIS 10

AGRICULTURE IN THE BURNETT INLAND REGION 12

TOURISM IN THE BURNETT INLAND REGION 13

TRENDS AND OUTLOOKS..... 16

STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION..... 18

BUILDING A FOOD DESTINATION 20

KEY CONSIDERATIONS..... 20

STRATEGIC FOCUS	22
2030 AND 2034 STRETCH GOALS	23
ROADMAP STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK	24
STRATEGIC PILLAR 1: ENGAGE AND COLLABORATE	24
STRATEGIC PILLAR 2: INDUSTRY AND LOCAL FOOD SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT	24
STRATEGIC PILLAR 3: GENERATION OF DEMAND	25
ACTION PLAN.....	26

Table of figures

Figure 1: Burnett Inland Region	10
Figure 2: Burnett Inland Region Agricultural Production (ABARES).....	12
Figure 3: Tourism Research Australia North and South Burnett Profiles (2019)	14
Figure 4: National Economics (NIEIR) North and South Burnett Profiles (2023/24).....	15

Acknowledgement of Country

BIEDO acknowledges the Wakka Wakka, Wulli Wulli Goereng Goereng, Djaku-nde, Jangerie Jangerie, Kabbi Kabbi, Gurang and Taribelang Bunda Peoples – the traditional custodians of the land on which we work and live. We also acknowledge the cultural diversity of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People, elders past and present and the significant contribution Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People have made and continue to make to shaping the identity of the Burnett region and Australia. We pay respect to Elders past, present and emerging.

Introduction

BIEDO (Burnett Inland Economic Development Organisation Inc.) was established in 1996 by Burnett local governments, community and industry activists concerned about the impact of drought on the region. It is a not-for-profit, economic development organisation proudly serving the North and South Burnett regions, and working with a vision of strong, capable and cohesive Burnett Inland communities.

BIEDO's "Flavours of our Land" initiative is working to recognise the Burnett Inland Region as Queensland's next food bowl; a region which significantly contributes to the plates on Australian tables and around the world. The consumers' obsession with food is growing, not just at home, but particularly while on holiday. All visitors eat and drink, and increasingly they preference destinations with great food and beverage options and experiences on offer.

In recent years, the Burnett Inland region has seen an increasing focus on food led by the community – a "paddock to plate" focus. This cultural movement is complimented by existing offerings and events like Kingaroy BaconFest, Blackbutt Avocado Festival, Mundubbera Blueberry Festival, Goomeri Pumpkin Festival and Gayndah Orange Festival.

As part of BIEDO's delivery of Phase Two of its Flavours of the Burnett – Building a food destination project, Regionality has been engaged to develop the Burnett Inland Food Destination Strategy and Roadmap. The broader project aims to transform the region (encompassing both North Burnett and South Burnett Local Government Areas) into a successful food destination, and this initiative will enhance the capacity and resilience of the Burnett Inland agricultural community.

To maintain an authentic identity for success, Burnett Inland communities need to be talking the talk, and walking the walk. In practise, this means consuming "local" in their everyday, building a capable and authentic food system that champions regional and seasonal, and values transparency, sustainability and the connection between producers and consumers.

The development of agritourism and culinary tourism is a second vital piece in the puzzle, building capacity for producers and business owners whilst inviting visitors to discover and connect with local product. Through collaboration, the development of agritourism will bring together two key sectors – agriculture and tourism – and leverage the unique strengths and opportunities in both the North Burnett and South Burnett LGAs whilst encouraging regional dispersal. Perhaps more importantly, it builds upon the above-mentioned culture and lifestyle of the region, acknowledging the importance of the Burnett Inland region as a major food producer and its capacity to service the "paddock-to-plate" movement.

This Food Destination Strategy and Roadmap considers the existing strategic direction of both North Burnett Regional Council and South Burnett Regional Council, alongside the priorities of BIEDO and other key stakeholders. It aims to build the economic capacity, preparedness and resilience of the Burnett Inland community through the transformation of the region to a successful food destination.

This document is accompanied by Burnett Inland Food Trail Framework, which has been created to complement this document.

Relevant strategic references

- 2021-2026 South Burnett Regional Development Strategy
- Australian Regional Tourism National Agritourism Strategy Framework and Agritourism 2030 Action Plan
- Burnett Inland Food Trail Framework
- North Burnett Regional Council Economic Development & Innovation Strategy
- Queensland Farmers' Federation Agritourism Roadmap 2020
- Queensland Government's Destination 2045: Delivering Queensland's Tourism Future
- South Burnett Agricultural Strategy
- Taste Bundaberg: A Culinary Tourism Strategy for Bundaberg North Burnett Tourism 2018-2020.
- Towards Tourism 2032: Transforming Queensland's visitor economy future

Vision Statement

The Burnett Inland region is a leading food destination in Queensland—where thriving business, vibrant communities, and celebrated experiences reflect the richness of our land. We are building a resilient and capable food system that champions regional and seasonal produce, honours transparency and sustainability, and deepens the connection between producers and consumers. Through collaboration, innovation, and authenticity, the Burnett Inland region is growing a food culture that nourishes people, place and prosperity—now and for future generations.

The role of BIEDO in destination development

The role of this Food Destination Strategy and Roadmap is to complement existing strategies at local, state and national government levels with the unique Burnett Inland lens. BIEDO can bridge local government areas, embracing a borderless tourism approach which will bring economic benefits to the whole Burnett Inland region. Visitors don't see administrative boundaries; however, they must be considered in strategic planning. BIEDO's role in destination development is therefore as a leader in collaboration, innovation and authenticity – working with key stakeholders to build a clear vision for the region and supporting business to be part of the vision's delivery.

Strategic objectives

- Build an authentic and resilient food system, underpinned by local production, consumption and distribution of fresh and value-added regional and seasonal produce
- Support local producers and businesses to strengthen and diversify their businesses and production systems
- Increase visitor spend and overnight stays in the Burnett Inland region.
- Develop 'local and seasonal' food and drink consumption as an inherent way of life for locals and a core attraction for visitors

Strategic principles

To guide the development of this strategy, the following principles have been developed:

Authentic agricultural – A food system that enhances agricultural viability and showcases a real connection to the agrarian landscape, the farmers and their passion for their produce, how and why they farm.

Eat more of what we grow and grow more of what we eat – A food system that is founded on local supply and demand for long-term viability, not just reliant on fluctuations in visitor numbers. It improves the awareness, knowledge, access and availability of fresh, nutritious local, seasonal food for locals first.

Community-focused and accessible – Connect locals to where their food comes from, improving the awareness, knowledge, access and availability of fresh, nutritious local, seasonal food, and creating opportunities for them to experience local farms and local produce in the same breath as visitors to the region. Creating experiences that are accessible to all will build community and resilience around the visitor economy.

Collaborative and connected – Agriculture and tourism sectors that work together and extend across the value chain, creating a local food system from paddock to plate to benefit locals and visitors alike.

Diverse, creative, and innovative – Like the landscape, agritourism should constantly innovate, creating and integrating diverse products and experiences.

Regenerative – Systems should regenerate, not just sustain the environment and the community. They should add to and enhance the culture and way of life of the Burnett Inland community and, through connection to consumers, help farmers to realise the value of regenerating our environment through the work they do on their farms.

Situation Analysis

Located in the Wide Bay Burnett Region of south-east Queensland, the Burnett Inland region spans two Local Government Areas – North Burnett and South Burnett. Both LGAs are major food producers and suppliers with strong and diverse agricultural sectors, and are geographically accessible from Brisbane, Toowoomba, the Sunshine Coast, Bundaberg and Rockhampton.

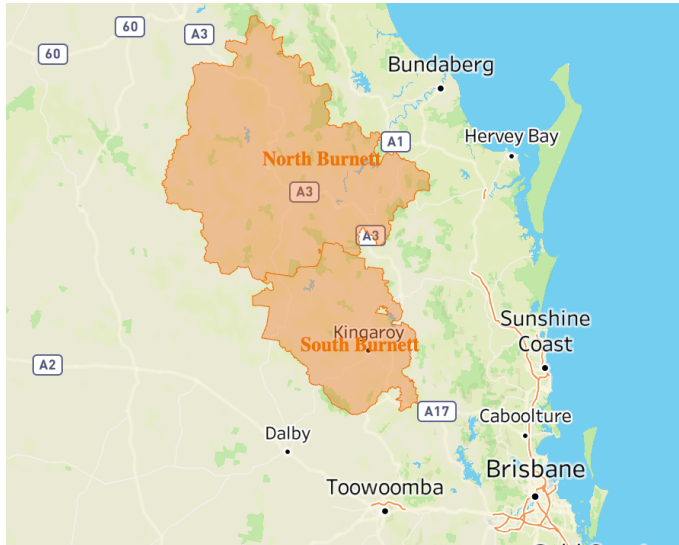


Figure 1: Burnett Inland Region

According to Economy.id¹, the total value of agricultural output in the North Burnett and South Burnett LGAs was \$455 million and \$169 million respectively in 2020-21. Over the same period, figures for tourism show total sales in the North Burnett LGA to be \$26 million and \$85 million in the South Burnett LGA. The total value added by the industry to the North Burnett LGA is \$11 million, whilst it contributes \$43 million to the South Burnett LGA.

Both agriculture and tourism contribute significantly to the economy; moreover, both sectors shape the landscape and culture of the community. The region's lifestyle and diverse agricultural and natural landscapes combine to create a unique opportunity for agritourism in a beautiful subtropical environment that is accessible, interesting, and appealing all year round.

¹ National Institute of Economic and Industry Research (NIEIR), 2025. Compiled and presented in economy.id by [.id \(informed decisions\)](#).

In recent years, the Burnett Inland region has seen an increasing focus on food which has been led by the community. Existing tourism offerings championing local produce include:

- Kingaroy BaconFest
- Blackbutt Avocado Festival
- Mundubbera Blueberry Festival,
- Goomeri Pumpkin Festival
- Gayndah Orange Festival

Destination marketing for the region is facilitated by North Burnett Regional Council and Visit South Burnett.

Given that the median age for both LGAs² sits a decade higher than State figures³, the Burnett Inland has both opportunities and challenges in terms of diversifying its economy and industry sectors. The creation of a food destination facilitated through agritourism and culinary tourism provides an opportunity to leverage the culture, lifestyle and changing demographic of the region to build a sector that appeals to locals and visitors alike.

² <https://abs.gov.au/census/find-census-data/quickstats/2021/LGA35760> and <https://abs.gov.au/census/find-census-data/quickstats/2021/LGA36630>

³ <https://abs.gov.au/census/find-census-data/quickstats/2021/3>

Agriculture in the Burnett Inland region

According to Agricultural Resources, Economics and Sciences (ABARES) 2021 Agricultural Census⁴, the Burnett Inland's commodity production – in terms of economic value – is dominated by livestock with a meat cattle herd numbering over 440,000 head, and over 148,000 pigs. While livestock is critical to the economy, the region is also home to significant fruit production contributing to 49.5% of the North Burnett LGA's gross agriculture value⁵ and 4.5% of the same in the South Burnett LGA⁶. In the North Burnett LGA, over 21% of employment is attributed to the beef cattle and citrus growing industries⁷, whilst over 10% of employment in the South Burnett LGA is through the meat processing and beef cattle industries⁸.

The landscape also supports cereal and other crop production, nurseries, cut flowers or cultivated turf and vegetables as demonstrated in Figure 2.

		Gross value (\$m)	Area (ha)	Animals (no.)	Production (t)	Trees (no.)
Cereals	Barley	1	1,901		4,130	
	Maize	3	3,691		7,182	
	Oats	1	1,138		2,775	
	Other cereals	0	405		322	
	Sorghum	4	8,130		12,722	
	Wheat	2	3,629		7,272	
	Sub-total	11	18,895		34,403	
Fruits and nuts	Avocados	8			2,360	111,202
	Macadamias	0			49	15,047
	Mandarins	148			64,119	1,044,592
	Mangoes	2			546	14,025
	Nectarines	1			231	20,957
	Olives				0	1,269
	Oranges	5			2,763	45,420
	Other berries	33	107			
	Other citrus	36				123,323
	Other fruit	0				
	Other grapes	1				
	Other nuts	2				28,858
	Other stone fruit	0				4,008
	Peaches	1			218	15,377
	Wine grapes	0				
	Sub-total	236	107		70,286	1,424,077

		Gross value (\$m)	Area (ha)	Animals (no.)	Production (t)	Trees (no.)
Grapes	Other grapes		82		332	
	Wine grapes		18		9	
	Sub-total		100		341	
Hay and silage	Hay		8,052		51,097	
	Silage		2,298		48,362	
	Sub-total		10,350		99,459	
Livestock	Meat cattle	247		442,069		
	Other livestock	0		7,824		
	Pigs	72		148,964		
	Poultry	0				
	Sheep and lambs	0		6,652		
	Dairy cattle	11		6,715		
	Sub-total	331		612,224		
Nurseries, cut flowers or cultivated turf	Cultivated turf	1	32			
	Cut flowers	2	45			
	Nurseries	1	3			
	Sub-total	4	81			
Other crops	Chickpeas	0	309		236	
	Cotton	6	946		213	
	Other crops	2				
	Other oilseeds	1	1,328		1,783	
	Other pulses	12	9,427		11,295	
	Sub-total	21	12,010		13,528	
Vegetables	All other vegetables	1	8			
	Cabbages	0	0		7	
	Lettuces	0	0		0	
	Melons	1	46		1,149	
	Onions	0	1		82	
	Pumpkins	1	59		997	
	Sweet corn	0	1		6	
	Tomatoes	0	0		7	
	Sub-total	2	116		2,250	
Grand Total		606	41,658	612,224	220,266	1,424,077

Figure 2: Burnett Inland Region Agricultural Production (ABARES)

⁴ ABARES, 2021. Australian Agricultural Census 2020-21 visualisations – LGA [<https://www.agriculture.gov.au/abares/aclump/land-use/agriculture-census-dashboards-lga>]

⁵ National Institute of Economic and Industry Research (NIEIR), 2025. RDA Wide Bay Burnett Region economic profile [<https://economy.id.com.au/rda-wide-bay-burnett/tourism-value?WebID=140>]

⁶ National Institute of Economic and Industry Research (NIEIR), 2025. RDA Wide Bay Burnett Region economic profile [<https://economy.id.com.au/rda-wide-bay-burnett/tourism-value?WebID=150>]

⁷ Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2021. North Burnett 2021 Census All persons QuickStats [<https://abs.gov.au/census/find-census-data/quickstats/2021/LGA35760>]

⁸ Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2021. South Burnett 2021 Census All persons QuickStats [<https://abs.gov.au/census/find-census-data/quickstats/2021/LGA36630>]

However, the data does not reflect the diversity of small producers of primary and value-added products across the production profile; producers that could help support a growing local food economy and are increasingly seeking options to diversify and add further value.

The diversity of meat processors in the area is a significant point of difference for the Burnett Inland, and an opportunity for further value-adding to local meat production. These include the following processors who are all located in the North Burnett LGA:

- BigMeats - medium family-owned processors of cattle in Biggenden
- Monto Meats - small-scale butcher-operated multi-species facility
- Millers Meats - organic small-scale butcher-operated multi-species facility in Monto
- Mundubbera Butchering Co - small-scale butcher-operated multispecies facility

This creates an opportunity for boutique meat processing, to create a regionally-branded meat range. There is also significant opportunity in leveraging the production of fruit, vegetables, nuts, nurseries and cut flowers. These account for \$242 million in gross value according to Figure 2.

Tourism in the Burnett Inland region

The South Burnett region's brand is currently centred around its landscapes, with food and agriculture primarily referenced through the region's wineries. Similarly, the North Burnett region's brand centres explicitly on natural beauty, utilising the tagline "Naturally Beautiful". Collateral references the region's food and agriculture through references to citrus, grapes, blueberries, watermelons, pecans, peanuts, beef, pork and dairy.

Local government data sets based on 2019 profiles by Tourism Research Australia (TRA) provide a snapshot of both the North Burnett and South Burnett LGAs' tourism profiles⁹ as outlined in Figures 4 and 5. This is the most relevant local data and while these numbers are six years old, the pre-COVID data represents an excellent benchmark for comparison in 2025 and beyond – a "return to normal" or "new normal" in terms of travel patterns. Most regions reference and build upon 2019 numbers in this way.

In the North Burnett LGA, 185,000 visitors spent 510,000 nights whilst in the South Burnett LGA, 671,000 visitors spent 663,000 nights in the visitor economy.

⁹ Tourism Research Australia, 2019. Local Government Area profiles [<https://www.tra.gov.au/en/regional/local-government-area-profiles>]

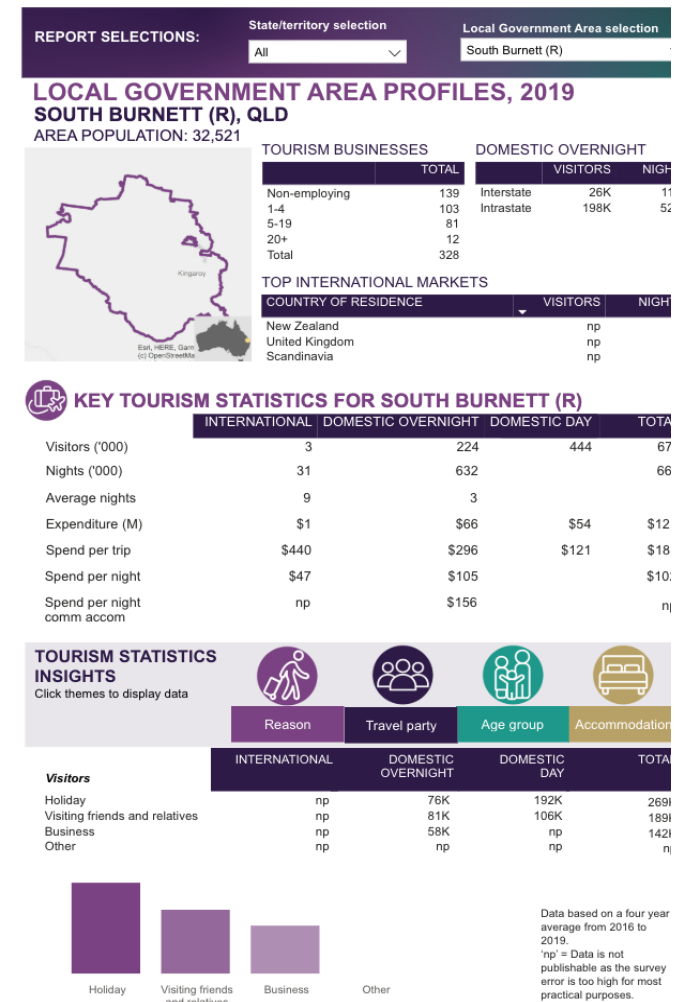
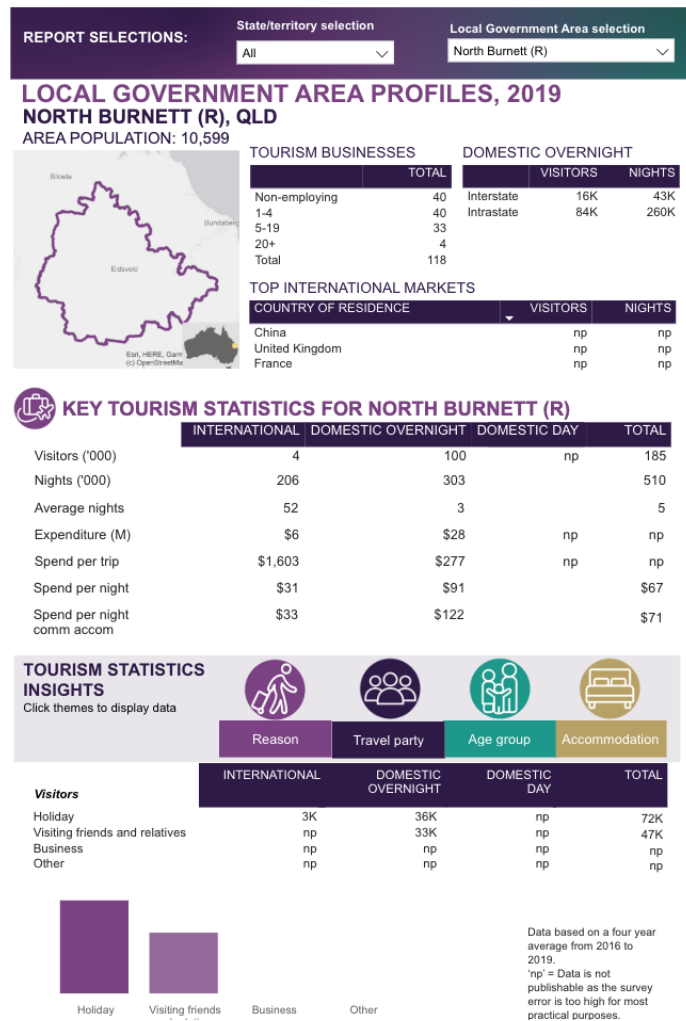


Figure 3: Tourism Research Australia North and South Burnett Profiles (2019)

Further insight can be gained from data sourced from the National Institute of Economic and Industry Research (NIEIR) through .idcommunity, which presents the economic value of the tourism economy to both the North Burnett¹⁰ and South Burnett¹¹ LGAs as outlined in Figures 6 and 7 below. In 2023-24, the total tourism sales in the North Burnett and South Burnett LGAs were \$45 million and \$165 million respectively, whilst the total value added by the industry in the North Burnett LGA was \$21 million, and \$87 million in the South Burnett LGA.¹²

Value of tourism

South Burnett Regional Council		2023/24		
Measure	South Burnett Regional Council	% of total industry	Queensland%	South Burnett Regional Council as % of Queensland
Employment (total)				
- Direct	618	4.4	5.3	0.4
- Indirect	330	2.4	4.9	0.2
- Total	948	6.8	10.2	0.3
Output/Sales (\$m)				
- Direct	75.15	1.6	3.1	0.3
- Indirect	90.30	1.9	4.8	0.2
- Total	165.45	3.5	7.9	0.2
Value added (\$m)				
- Direct	38.97	1.7	3.1	0.3
- Indirect	48.37	2.1	4.8	0.2
- Total	87.34	3.7	7.9	0.2

Value of tourism

North Burnett Regional Council		2023/24		
Measure	North Burnett Regional Council	% of total industry	Queensland%	North Burnett Regional Council as % of Queensland
Employment (total)				
- Direct	196	4.0	5.3	0.1
- Indirect	121	2.5	4.9	0.1
- Total	316	6.5	10.2	0.1
Output/Sales (\$m)				
- Direct	19.99	1.5	3.1	0.1
- Indirect	25.79	1.9	4.8	0.1
- Total	45.78	3.4	7.9	0.1
Value added (\$m)				
- Direct	10.54	1.8	3.1	0.1
- Indirect	10.47	1.8	4.8	0.0
- Total	21.02	3.6	7.9	0.1

Figure 4: National Economics (NIEIR) North and South Burnett Profiles (2023/24)

¹⁰ National Institute of Economic and Industry Research (NIEIR), 2025. RDA Wide Bay Burnett Region economic profile [\[https://economy.id.com.au/rda-wide-bay-burnett/tourism-value?WebID=140\]](https://economy.id.com.au/rda-wide-bay-burnett/tourism-value?WebID=140)

¹¹ National Institute of Economic and Industry Research (NIEIR), 2025. RDA Wide Bay Burnett Region economic profile [\[https://economy.id.com.au/rda-wide-bay-burnett/tourism-value?WebID=150\]](https://economy.id.com.au/rda-wide-bay-burnett/tourism-value?WebID=150)

¹² National Institute of Economic and Industry Research (NIEIR), 2025. RDA Wide Bay Burnett Region economic profile [\[https://economy.id.com.au/rda-wide-bay-burnett/tourism-value?WebID=150\]](https://economy.id.com.au/rda-wide-bay-burnett/tourism-value?WebID=150)

Trends and outlooks

Of significance for the Burnett Inland region, Tourism Australia's Future of Demand Industry report¹³ (launched in 2022) identified Agritourism as a demand-driving experience, detailing appeal for on-farm, aquaculture and winery stay experiences. The report highlights that:

- Travellers with an interest in farm experiences are also interested in Indigenous arts and crafts, eco tours and ecotourism, staying in an agricultural region, Indigenous crafts workshops, homestays with locals, campervanning, local cooking classes and birdwatching.
- A third of Out of Region travellers (international visitors) are interested in farm experiences such as farm gate tours, farm stays and pick-your-own whilst 37% are interested in tasting trails, with greater demand among High Yield Travellers and Working Holiday Makers
- Travellers view farm experiences as a niche and sensorial way to experience animals and food, are interested in farming practices and see it as a fun activity for children
- Travellers view food trails as a fun, easy and flexible way to truly immerse into local culture, meet locals and connect to the landscape
- Those with an interest in tasting trails are also interested in meet the maker food/drink tours, artisanal food workshops, staying in an agricultural region, eco tours and ecotourism, winery stays and glamping.

At Tourism Australia's 2025 "Destination Australia" conference¹⁴, agritourism was spotlighted as an emerging opportunity for the regions, with a growing interest from international travellers.

Further, research presented through Australian Regional Tourism's Agritourism 2030: National Agritourism Strategy Framework illustrates Australia's competitive advantage as a world-leading producer and exporter of agriculture products.

"We are known globally for clean, green and safe produce and have a history of investment in agriculture innovation. Australia's export markets for agriculture align to Australia's source markets for inbound tourism meaning customers in similar markets are exposed to Australian food and drink exports and Australia's tourism marketing messaging." - Agritourism 2030: National Agritourism Strategy Framework

¹³ Tourism Australia, 2022. The Future of Tourism Demand [<https://www.tourism.australia.com/content/dam/digital/corporate/documents/future-of-demand/tourism-australia-future-of-demand-experience-fact-sheets-v2.pdf>]

¹⁴ Tourism Australia, 2025. Destination Australia Sydney 2025 [<https://events.tourism.australia.com/destination-australia-2025/program>]

This strategy for the Burnett Inland region recognises and embraces these findings at a national level, whilst accounting for the unique opportunities and challenges in Queensland.

Agritourism is an important growth industry for regional and rural economies and according to the Queensland Farmers' Federation¹⁵, is expected to be worth an estimated \$4.5 billion to the Queensland economy by 2030. As outlined in the Queensland Farmers' Federation's Agritourism Roadmap, Queensland has "*enormous potential for agritourism due to the scale and diversity of production...*".¹⁶ The Queensland Government's Destination 2045: Delivering Queensland's Tourism Future strategy addresses agritourism through its focus on "ecotourism", aiming to "boost agritourism with more farm stays and experiences, helping farmers diversify and improve on-farm profitability"¹⁷. This strategy also considers the actions identified in the Queensland Government's Towards Tourism 2032 strategy.

Acknowledgement of the opportunities presented through this focus on food and agritourism at multiple levels of industry and Government will enable this strategy to leverage the networks and audiences of these important stakeholders, setting the Burnett Inland region up for strategic success.

¹⁵ Queensland Farmers' Federation, 2025. Agritourism [<https://www.qff.org.au/projects/agritourism/>]

¹⁶ Queensland Farmers' Federation, 2020. Agritourism Roadmap [<https://www.qff.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Queensland-Agritourism-Roadmap.pdf>].

¹⁷ Queensland Government, 2025. Destination 2045 [<https://d1w2s48w6qezig.cloudfront.net/media/Destination%202045%20-%20Delivering%20Queenslands%20Tourism%20Future.pdf>]

Stakeholder Consultation

Positioning the Burnett Inland as a food destination can enhance the capacity and resilience of the Burnett Inland community, and the region is well placed to do this successfully by leaning on its agricultural strengths and developing a sustainable local food system – one that produces, distributes and sells local food and drink for locals. This approach will benefit the region in two ways: ensuring viability for farmers by developing local retail and wholesale demand and underpinning the essence and development of food and agritourism for visitors. It will improve the food quality in the region and create opportunity for a range of new or diversified production and food, catering to the region's needs.

The development of a provenance-based regional food system, new pathways to market through the development of local and regional demand, and the expansion of consumer-direct distribution systems, agritourism and culinary (food and drink) tourism are all opportunities to create consumer awareness. These points and more were identified via stakeholder consultation during sessions in September 2024 (see a summary in the below table). Where appropriate, these concepts have been integrated into the strategy's goals and strategies.

Opportunities for Agriculture	Opportunities for Tourism	Opportunities for region across economy and community
• Circular economy • Waste value adding • Access to multi-species, small-scale processors • Landscape supporting huge variety of agricultural production • Swap and share food groups • Farm-gate retail through roadside stalls • Development of food system to champion local and seasonal produce • Wholesale supply to support culinary tourism • Co-operative farm shop or local community centres to collaborate and share retail costs • Produce partnerships outside of the region to leverage existing brands ie. Bundaberg • Farmers Market – opportunity for retail front and knowledge sharing • Seasonal calendar • Collaborate with existing food festivals – take the region to the market • REKO	• Map experiences and offerings • Collaborate with and leverage existing communities and platforms ie. Farm 2 Fork Collective • Storytelling linked to agritourism • Day trip distance from Sunshine Coast; divert people off the highway • Development of food system to champion local and seasonal produce through local supply and farm-gate retail • Co-operative farm shop or local community centres to concentrate visitation and ensure a whole-region experience for visitors • Creation of A-Z of local produce • Farmers Market – retail front for producers • Seasonal calendar • Taste the Trail event – Kingaroy to Wondai	• Activating community • Build local pride tied to “paddock-to-plate” concept • Workers accommodation gap • Swap and share food groups • Development of food system to support distribution of local food, improved local food security and resilience, community health and wellbeing through access to fresh seasonal local produce – we are what we eat. • Day trip distance from Sunshine Coast; divert people off the highway • Enable and empower business to step up • Ingrain value of produce in local culture through school kitchen gardens, The Gumnut Place catering, TAFE classes, community care providers • Farmers Market – community gathering space and direct-to-consumer opportunity • Seasonal calendar • REKO • Community education

Opportunities for Agriculture	Opportunities for Tourism	Opportunities for region across economy and community
Education of consumers improves and supports farming and seasonal production – teaching people where their food comes from and how and when it grows		

When asked what the Burnett Inland of the future looks like as a food destination, representatives of the community, Council and industry articulated the following core values:

- Vibrant
- Diverse
- Innovative
- Sustainable
- Accessible
- Inclusive
- Reputable
- Authentic
- Profitable
- Delicious
- Edible and drinkable.

Building a food destination

Key considerations

Developing a food destination requires focused and strategic intervention as a catalyst for change. This is needed to overcome intractable problems and barriers that face any new sector (in this case, culinary tourism, agritourism and local food system development), and to help existing sectors overcome what many regard as market failure in the current food system which is dominated by large companies at the retail end of a constrained supply chain.

A sustainable food system

To successfully position the region as a food destination to those on the outside, Burnett Inland communities need to be talking the talk, and walking the walk. In practise, this means consuming “local” in their everyday, building a capable and authentic food system that champions regional and seasonal, and values transparency, sustainability and the connection between producers and consumers. One of the key challenges will be sourcing local produce in a viable way – ensuring that there is consistent local retail and wholesale demand for farmers, resulting in a consistent supply for retail and wholesale end users. Further, educating local people (and visitors) what is and isn’t local season produce will be vital. Agriculture also needs to learn how to work within a business model that includes a consumer-facing value chain. This food system must champion collaboration and innovation whilst prioritising business sustainability, learning from the successes and failures of both local and out-of-region projects.

Developing a local food culture

In the Burnett Inland region today, “eating local” does not require or champion local ingredients. This is due to the nature of food distribution in regions:

- The scale and commercial nature of agricultural production
- A lack of education and awareness of the concept.

Affordability, convenience and local knowledge are also barriers to the development of a truly local food culture. Building the food system and educating the community about the benefits and important nutritional advantages of eating fresh, locally produced food is not a quick fix; this will take time and consistent

investment and focus. The development of a provenance brand with strict guidelines for use is an important means to facilitate this educational process. Relevant guidelines are outlined in the *Burnett Inland Food Trail Framework* (see Appendix 1).

Agritourism

Agritourism provides an opportunity to connect directly with consumers, regardless of the scale of production. Businesses can not only sell produce, but also value-add to produce and place through the provision of products, services and experiences. For smaller-scale producers, agritourism provides an opportunity to develop brand and direct-to-consumer sales. The wine industry has a long-established pathway to market using agritourism through the “cellar door” concept. Larger producers may embrace the educational aspect or find opportunities to create value from waste or excess production ie. fermented or distilled products. Alternative avenues of diversification could include the utilisation of spare capacity or under-utilised assets ie. the conversion of old farm buildings into on-farm accommodation. Most other agricultural sectors are only now starting to comprehend agritourism as another way to market their products and increase the potential return on investment for their agribusiness, by creating a direct emotional connection with their customer. Linking into this focus on agriculture and connection with producers, one of the greatest opportunities is to transition some agricultural production from commodity or supply chain focus to high value, value-added or value chain production.

It's important to understand that agritourism is not like other forms of tourism, as it is likely to occur on a working farm that is the primary focus of the business. The agritourism business needs to ensure it does not compromise the productivity and productive capacity of the farm on which it is conducted, or that of neighbouring farms. The importance of connecting farm production, production landscape, infrastructure and the farming family with the offering is a distinctive component of authentic agritourism. It's about connecting visitors (and locals) with real farmers who share their story and passion for why and how they farm, care for the environment and produce food and fibre.

Culinary tourism

Culinary tourism extends local food production beyond the farm gate to town, facilitating meaningful connections and trading relationships between local hospitality and tourism businesses and retailers, and creating wholesale demand for local and regional produce with provenance. A focus on culinary tourism not only naturally ties into the strengths of the Burnett Inland's agricultural offerings, but complements the momentum gained by the Taste Bundaberg 2018-2020 strategy – enticing visitors from the broader region in to experience the Burnett Inland.

Destination marketing

There is an opportunity to leverage and further build on existing and relevant tourism experience marketing from across the Burnett Inland region through further destination development and collaboration with North Burnett Regional Council and Visit South Burnett.

North Burnett Regional Council:

- Scenic Drives
- Market Trails
- Eat North Burnett Harvest Calendar

Visit South Burnett:

- Roadtrip itineraries
- Wine in the South Burnett
- Loop and circuit rides

Strategic focus

The Burnett Inland region's resilient food system will reflect the diversity of its unique landscape and sustainable agricultural production. It will support innovation and provide access to seasonal and regional food and drink for locals and visitors alike, creating opportunities for artisan producers to grow and connect with their consumers at home, and for some to launch their products on a global table.

The region will become renowned for its sustainable, diverse and vibrant agritourism and culinary tourism experiences, and local food culture that reflects the creativity of its community and the diversity of its production capabilities and landscape. Authentic, local farm-to-plate experiences will improve the region's livability and visitor appeal.

2030 and 2034 stretch goals

1. By 2030, the Burnett Inland will have:
 - a. an established and functional local food system with clear provenance and traceability that supplies fresh and value-added produce to the local community, retail and hospitality sectors
 - b. trademarked a provenance brand with provenance criteria
 - c. 10% of local farms with diversified production and/or agritourism integration into their business model
 - d. implemented a strong, borderless food destination brand.
2. By 2032, the Burnett Inland will have:
 - a. 50% of local food service and hospitality businesses regularly using and featuring local ingredients on their menus
 - b. 20% of agritourism businesses export-ready (attracting international visitors)
 - c. become known as one of Queensland's premier food and agritourism experience destinations, without losing its unique country charm.

Roadmap Strategic Framework

The Roadmap has three strategic pillars, which fall under the broad categories of engage and collaborate, industry development and generation of demand.

Strategic pillar 1: Engage and collaborate

Outcome:

- Build a network of industry leaders and innovators to lead strategy implementation, reflecting the production to consumption value chain (not just tourism operators)
- Boost regional collaboration between key stakeholders including Local Government, farmers, local business and community groups to create opportunities for unique partnerships and innovation
- Targeted strategic intervention and support for regulatory reform, to make it easier for farmers and food businesses to innovate and diversify.

Strategic pillar 2: Industry and local food system development

Outcome:

- Build local food system and culture through investment in supply-side development, prioritising capacity-building to increase the supply and diversity of agritourism and culinary tourism products and services in the region
- Support farm-to-plate value chain development to ensure farm viability across local food system, agritourism and culinary tourism.
- Support development of accredited local weekly farmers markets to:
 - Serve the needs of local consumers
 - Act as a wholesale distribution hub for commercial food service and retail food businesses
 - Create a regular event to attract visitors

Strategic pillar 3: Generation of demand

Outcome:

- Implement strong culinary destination branding, leaning on the region's existing, signature events
- Generate demand for agritourism and local food, dispersing visitors throughout the region by creating agritourism, food trails and sustainable local food systems that attract people to the region all year
- Educate the Burnett Inland community about "local food".

Action Plan

Strategic Pillar 1. Engage and collaborate		Lead	Measurable Outcome	Timeline
Outcome 1.1	Build a network of industry leaders and innovators to lead strategy implementation, reflecting the production to consumption value chain (not just tourism operators)	BIEDO		
Action 1.1.1	Establish a working relationship with Agritourism Queensland (AQ) to support the sector locally	BIEDO	Memorandum of Understanding and membership established	Short-term
Action 1.1.2	Identify retailers and cafes who are using and/or featuring authentic local food and create a series of case studies to educate and inspire the region's business community	BIEDO	Creation of up to five case studies	Short-term
Action 1.1.3	Engage with Local Government to establish buy-in for Food Destination Strategy and Roadmap	BIEDO + Local Government	Local Government is engaged and open to collaboration	
Outcome 1.2	Boost regional collaboration between key stakeholders including Local Government, farmers, local business and community groups to create opportunities for unique partnerships and innovation	BIEDO		
Action 1.2.1	Create a regional food destination working group with leaders from across stakeholder groups including Local Government, producers, industry and community	BIEDO	Leadership and support for strategic direction established Industry is engaged and active in sector development activities	Short-term
Action 1.2.2	Create a Local Provenance industry network, connecting members across the value chain	BIEDO	Local Provenance industry network established	Short-term

Outcome 1.3	Targeted strategic intervention and support for regulatory reform, to make it easier for farmers and food businesses to innovate and diversify.	BIEDO		
Action 1.3.1	Adopt the Food Destination Strategy and Roadmap as an economic development priority, including: - Demonstrated commitment by allocating an internal resource to oversee the Strategy and Roadmap's implementation - Develop an annual budget for priority projects and seek funding and investment for Strategy and Roadmap implementation over the three year "<i>strategic intervention phase</i>" - Identify additional resources and funding options to implement the Strategy and Roadmap - Establish a data collection framework to measure the sector's growth	BIEDO	- Strategy and Roadmap adopted - BIEDO lead established - Budget approved for implementation - Grant applications made - Data collection underway	Short-term
Action 1.3.2	Lend support to AQ's efforts in state planning reforms to reduce red tape and regulatory barriers to entry into agritourism for local farmers	BIEDO and BIAN	AQ has demonstrated support for reforms	Ongoing
Action 1.3.3	Support AQ's efforts to advocate for development and adoption of state-based agritourism definitions and planning code that supports the primacy of agriculture, protects agricultural land for future generations and enables current farmers to innovate and diversify to ensure viability	BIEDO and BIAN	Reforms and policies developed and adopted	Ongoing

Strategic Pillar 2. Industry and local food system development		Lead	Measurable Outcome	Timeline
Outcome 2.1	Build local food system and culture through investment in supply-side development, prioritising capacity-building to increase the supply and diversity of agritourism and culinary tourism products and services in the region			
Action 2.1.1	Partner with AQ and other relevant industry groups to deliver training, business development programs and mentoring to farmers and existing agritourism businesses	BIEDO	Partnership established and programs rolled out	Ongoing
Action 2.1.2	Adopt the Food Trail Framework and implement recommendations	BIEDO	Recommendations reviewed and scheduled for implementation	Short-term
Action 2.1.3	Introduce and facilitate a local provenance accreditation program, for farmers, retailers and food service businesses committed to using local produce linked to trademarked provenance brand guidelines	BIEDO	Local Provenance Accreditation Program established and rolling out	Medium-term
Action 2.1.4	Work with AQ to develop a local Agritourism Accreditation Program to ensure farmers establish and develop authentic agritourism ventures that meet the roadmap's aspirations	BIEDO	Agritourism Accreditation Program established and rolling out	Medium-term
Action 2.1.5	Develop and adopt a trademarked provenance brand with guidelines for use	BIEDO	Provenance brand developed and adopted	Short-term
Action 2.1.6	Support ongoing knowledge sharing by encouraging regular Local Provenance industry network events, with guest speakers hosted at local case study locations	BIEDO	Gathering calendar established	Ongoing
Outcome 2.2	Support farm-to-plate value chain development to ensure farm viability across local food system, agritourism and culinary tourism			
Action 2.2.1	Develop and maintain an interactive local produce database to make it easier for commercial and consumer trade of local produce to wholesale,	BIEDO	Database established with current and accessible information available	Short-term

	retail, consumer and visitor markets.			
Action 2.2.2	Work with existing producers to develop viable, themed half day and full day drive routes, with an aim to cluster experiences and disperse visitors with coordinated opening days and times	BIEDO	Themed routes are developed and available in-market	Short-term
Action 2.2.3	Explore industry collaboration opportunities with existing platforms and groups ie. seasonal events	BIEDO	Increased industry engagement in existing events	Medium-term
Outcome 2.3	Support development of accredited local weekly farmers markets to: - Serve the needs of local consumers - Act as a wholesale distribution hub for commercial food service and retail food businesses - Create a regular event to attract visitors			
Action 2.3.1	Develop a Farmer's Market strategy for the Burnett Inland region and co-invest in coordination	BIEDO in collaboration with Local Government	A strategy is developed and adopted	Short-term
Action 2.3.2	Allocate resource for securing budget and/or funding for delivery of Farmer's Market strategy (requires 2-5 year funding)	BIEDO	Resources allocated	Short-term
Strategic Pillar 3. Generation of demand		Lead	Measurable Outcome	Timeline
Outcome 3.1	Implement strong culinary destination branding, leaning on the region's existing, signature events			
Action 3.1.1	Collaborate with Local Government and other tourism stakeholders to embrace a "borderless tourism" approach, promoting the region consistently to visitors through a strong destination brand with a food focus	BIEDO + Local Government	Consistent branding and messaging for visitors	Short-term

Action 3.1.2	Review and revise current food trail maps to leverage provenance branding and guidelines (see Action 2.1.4), investing in adequate itinerary planning for visitors with discretionary filters and relevant business details, and linking farm gates, wineries and artisan producers	BIEDO	Food trail maps reviewed, updated and promoted through key tourism stakeholders	Medium-term
Outcome 3.2	Generate demand for agritourism and local food, dispersing visitors throughout the region by creating agritourism, food trails and sustainable local food systems that attract people to the region all year			
Action 3.2.1	Use Food Trail Framework criteria (see Action 2.1.2) to filter authentic local food and agritourism offerings	BIEDO	Only authentic, local food is linked to any provenance branding	Short-term
Action 3.2.2	Establish a regional Farmer's Market	BIEDO with Local Government	Farmer's Market strategy begins to roll out	Medium-term
Action 3.2.3	Develop a seasonal produce calendar with information on what is in season and where to source it (as referenced in the Food Trail Framework)	BIEDO	Calendar available and distributed through local and tourism information networks	Medium-term
Outcome 3.3	Educate the Burnett Inland community about "local food"			
Action 3.3.1	Create an ongoing community education and awareness program about 'local food' and seasonal production, leveraging local networks including schools and education providers and community groups	BIEDO	Program is created and rolled out	Short-term