



GROWTH SERVICES & INNOVATION CONNECTIONS

GP & SJ Daly Pty Ltd – digging up new products for family potato farm

Customer Story

Entrepreneurial spirit turns second grade spuds into ‘paddock-to-glass’ drop, and leads to new opportunities



Hellfire Bluff Distillery makes fine use of the perfectly good ‘second grade’ potatoes from the Daly family farm.

A family potato farm in Tasmania has used Australian Government assistance and funding through the Entrepreneurs' Programme to transform and diversify their business, and create jobs in regional Australia.

GP & SJ Daly Pty Ltd's husband and wife team, Gerard and Susie Daly, sought to make use of the perfectly good potatoes that did not meet the shape or size requirements for their A-grade fresh market sales.

Most of their washed and brushed potatoes go to major retailers in Tasmania that have stringent quality control requirements on size and shape, meaning many potatoes are ruled out.

About 20 per cent of each crop fell into this group of 'second grade' spuds, and with limited alternative markets, these potatoes

had historically been sold for stock feed at very low prices.

The Dalys family knew there must be an opportunity to develop new products from these potatoes and in the process, transform their business.

They began investigating options which led to the production of vodka and a range of ready to use potato-based products.

The creation of two new brands, Hellfire Bluff Distillery (named after Hellfire Bluff, a rocky outcrop above Marion Bay in Tasmania where the Dalys are located) and Daly Gourmet Potatoes, have created nine new jobs in the region.

The Dalys are strongly committed to their local community, and the provenance of their products – locally produced – underpins their brand.

To develop and take these new products to market, the Dalys engaged with [Growth Services](#) and [Innovation Connections](#), two elements of the Entrepreneurs' Programme.

Their dedicated Business Facilitator, Sarah Jones, is thrilled with their achievements.

“I am enormously proud of them. They have done a phenomenal amount in a very short period of time. They are quite an inspirational business.”

SARAH JONES, ENTREPRENEURS' PROGRAMME
BUSINESS FACILITATOR

Part of Sarah's role is to make the right connections to suit the needs of each business. "A lot of my role was connecting the Dalys to the right people. They have taken on advice and support. They have sought out mentors."

Sarah also provided practical support and guidance. She helped Susie and Gerard plan and prioritise, to access specialist advice on branding and customer awareness, as well as the technical distilling support they needed.

The Dalys now have a distillery onsite housing a local and custom-built copper still.

Innovation Connections provided help and information about various types of technology and research available.

They helped the Daly family understand alternative methods of distilling and what equipment would be required.

Following the success of Hellfire Bluff vodka, the distillery now also produces a Tasmanian London Dry Gin and a Tasmanian Limoncello Liqueur with plans to develop further products and distribute Australia-wide.

To ensure the success of their ready-to-eat potato salads, bakes and mashes, Daly Gourmet Potatoes established a new facility at nearby Sorell and employed a production manager with a strong food development background.

Funding has been used for the engagement of a food scientist to help with new product development, including more alcoholic beverages, and a range of new products are in production.

To develop their skills and capabilities, Growth Services connected the business to a range of technical expertise and advice.

Projects include refining their marketing and brand story through design thinking, creating sustainable costing models and wholesale pricing structures, navigating the licensing requirements for alcohol and defining new sales channels, and developing quality assurance systems.

Susie Daly credits the Entrepreneurs' Programme with giving them the confidence, knowledge and contacts to diversify into new products in order to maximise the value derived from every potato.



Facilitator Sarah Jones, left, and Daly Pty Ltd's daughter and father team – Ruby and Gerard, talks spuds.

"The Growth Services engagement was the support we needed to keep moving forward with our plans to expand and grow."

"We knew the right connections would be on hand and they helped us make a detailed and prioritised growth plan, and we have kept that on track."

SUSIE DALY, OWNER, GP & SJ DALY PTY LTD

The move into distilling and food production is being followed by tourism, as the Daly clan consider the opportunity for a cellar door for their distillery, to enable them to share their story "from paddock to glass".

Visit [Hellfire Bluff Distillery](#)

Visit [Daly Gourmet Potatoes](#)

Entrepreneurs' Programme

The Entrepreneurs' Programme is the Australian Government's flagship initiative driving growth and competitiveness for small and medium businesses.

The Business Management element provides experienced Business Advisers and Facilitators to review business operations including business direction, strategy, growth opportunities and supply chain.

[Growth Services](#) provides tailored support and advice from expert advisers with relevant private sector experience to identify and maximise growth opportunities. Funding is offered through matched grants of up to \$20,000 to assist businesses develop and embed the capabilities, strategies, culture and connections to accelerate growth.

[Innovation Connections](#) is a facilitation service that provides expert advice and solutions on knowledge-related issues, and a brokering service to connect businesses with knowledge providers and research organisations. This may include access to matched funding grants to assist with direct access to research capability to work on identified research projects.

Check your eligibility by visiting the [Entrepreneurs' Programme](#) or call **13 28 46**.