

THE PINNAROO FARMER

Bootcamp 2021-21

Value-Adding Red Lentils

Pip and Skeet Lawson are broadacre farmers located in Pinnaroo, SA who grow wheat, barley and red lentils. Pip and Skeet were experiencing a number of challenges in relation to fluctuations in international tariffs and downgrading of weather affected lentils that were having a significant impact on their ability to secure sustainable revenue for their farming business.

Similarly, Pip also identified a personal problem in wanting to provide her children with more nutrients in their diets.

Pip and Skeet were also highly driven to create an opportunity for other grain producers in their region who were also experiencing these problems, to capture more value back to their businesses and provide more financial control. These were the motivations that inspired Pip to apply for the Farmers2Founders Ideas Program 2 in early 2020 to explore a concept around a value-added, gluten free, high protein lentil flour.

Following Pip's participation in the F2F Ideas Program #2, she launched her first product at the beginning of July 2020 direct to consumers via an online shop who were looking for a new flour that is gluten-free, nutrient dense and versatile.

In just 3 months following launch, Pip achieved strong traction with consumers selling over 300kg of lentil flour. She also secured 4 wholesale customers via retail, bakeries and health food shops. She is now expanding the range and is looking to develop a new product line using sprouted lentils.

"Understanding the market channels and strategy, learning about IP and how potential investors think and what they want to see from a start-up; the art of grant writing and identifying our B2B market & strategy"



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The Pinnaroo Farmers Bootcamp Journey

Farmers2Founders continued to support Pip following the Ideas Program by accepting her into its pathway support program. Through fortnightly 1:1 business coaching Pip was able to progress her business to a point that allowed her to be successfully accepted into the 2020/21 Bootcamp Program.

Pip entered the Bootcamp program with a new idea around sprouted lentil flour and an overarching vision to provide other producers in her region involvement in her value chain to capture significant value back to their businesses and the industry. Following on from the learnings in the Ideas Program, Pip had been able to generate good traction with her online direct to consumer business model which has put her in a great position to look to other channels to drive her business growth.

A big focus for Pip during the Bootcamp Program was developing her go-to-market strategy through new B2B channels. Her strategy expanded to include foodservice, artisan bakers/bakeries and larger food manufacturers who are looking to provide their consumers with healthier, gluten-free and more nutritionally dense options. As part of this strategy, Pip has built her team and capabilities with two new contractors who are assisting in the delivery of this strategy, making key connections and partnerships with important players in these channels.

Farmers2Founders also offered a new service to Bootcamp teams in the form of an Advisory Board (not director or equity position) to those with a solo founder. Pip has started this process with the F2F team which will provide additional governance and support moving forward.



"Coming into bootcamp I was not familiar with a go-to-market strategy, by participating in bootcamp I was able to identify the channels that we wanted to explore and from that, we analysed our opportunity cost and helped us to make a decision to start in foodservice and grow our channels from there."

The
Pinnaroo
Farmer



I liked the idea of having a business mentor and being able to tap into their knowledge, the learning around business strategy and bring my business knowledge up to speed, being supplied with knowledge and tools to implement into my business.

What's Next?

For Pip, the best parts of the Bootcamp was learning about a go-to-market strategy, how to create a vertically integrated business model and accessing new customers via channels they had not been considered previously. Also, the outside perspectives and support that was provided by the Farmers2Founders mentor and expert network was invaluable to Pip who now feels much more confident in her business knowledge and strategy, implementation of new business tools, understanding around IP, investors and raising finance to support her growth.

The Bootcamp Program has assisted Pip in refining her vision and focus for the next stage of scaling her business and helped to create achievable goals in the next 6-12 months.

Pip is already seeing strong demand from b2b customers within these new channels to market; has finalised the manufacturing process of the sprouted lentil flour, and secured distributors in major cities such as Sydney to trial the new solution. Similarly, with the help of F2F, Pip continues to build her profile on social media and more widely through national television and other media.



Key Bootcamp Results



Increased sales of lentil flour to 2.5tonnes



Increased stockists from 4 to 7



Employed 2 full-time staff and resigned from off-farm job

About Farmers2Founders

Farmers2Founders is a private national organisation that exists to help producers to fast-track the development, implementation and commercialisation of agtech and innovative value-adding solutions that deliver benefit at both the individual business level and broader industry.



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