

This Partner isn't Going to be Left Behind!

The Adelaide partners' tour started off with a drive to Johnston's stock feed factory and hay processing facility. We split into two groups and had a thorough look at how the pellets are made, how the hay is compressed, re-strapped and sliced to fit into containers. The logistics of the day - to - day running of this company makes the mind boggle.

Back on the bus and off to Rhode's Free Range Egg Farm, currently holding 38 000 hens laying at 85%. We had a good look through the sorting shed and saw how the staff size, grade and pack the eggs into trays or cartons, whichever the market is asking for. The hens have free access to mainly lucerne and grass pasture during the daylight hours.

Time to get a feed into everybody so we called into a great pub, whose name I can't recall. But the meals were fabulous, along with a few ales and great hospitality by the owners.

Heading back to the city we stopped at Yarralinka Livestock Co's cattle feedlot. We saw very interesting technology in the monitoring of feed consumption and weight gain on a live feed to feed basis. The feedlot had just installed new handling yards which got everybody talking about the pros and cons.

Our next stop was Eastbrook Vegetable Farms where they grow Brussel Sprouts and Kalettes (a cross between Kale and Brussel Sprouts) We were given a great look through their sorting, grading and bagging factory. This was certainly a highlight of the tour, seeing two very passionate people explain the process of growing these vegetables from choosing the right varieties to when to plant each one to have a continual harvest. We saw some state of the art bagging machines which were absolutely amazing.

Then a short drive to Lot 100 Gin Distillery where we sampled the Mistmatch range of beers and ciders whilst having a tour of the the very new 2000 L still and beer brewing and canning process. After the tour we returned to the restaurant to taste test the gin, whilst enjoying wood fired pizzas. We have all now been converted to gin drinking connoisseurs! I thought my wife would enjoy this experience so I took her back on Friday for a mini tour, lunch and a few gins.

Back on the, now very happy, bus we crossed the Goyder Line on our way to Thornby's sheep feedlot which was very interesting and led to discussions about the logistics of sourcing and selling large numbers of lambs and grain to feed them. We had a first had look at their new shearing shed and undercover working yards, which was featured on Landline last year. Those of us with sheep had shearing shed envy.

Every stop along the way of the SA partners' tour the hosts openly welcomed us and were proud to showcase their industry.

Of the last six Federal Conferences, I have been to five and joined the partners' tours each time. If my wife stops going to Federal Conference I might keep going so I can go on the partners' tour! It is a fantastic opportunity to see things that a regular tourist wouldn't. You meet great people of similar backgrounds to yourself and along the way some great friendships have been made. We even ran into some of them at this year's Cooper Pedy Races!

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