

Friday, 14 January 2022

AUSSIE PRODUCERS CAN NOW APPLY FOR GRANTS TO DRIVE INNOVATION AND SUSTAINABILITY

Australian food and beverage producers can now apply for financial support from the Coles Nurture Fund to help them drive innovation and sustainability.

Coles has opened a new round of the Coles Nurture Fund to provide grants of up to \$500,000 for small businesses to develop new market-leading products, processes and technologies.

Coles General Manager Corporate Affairs Sally Fielke encouraged small and medium sized businesses to apply for financial support from the Coles Nurture Fund ahead of the deadline on Friday, 25 February.

"At Coles, we aim to drive generational sustainability in Australia and one of the ways we believe we can do this is by funding innovative projects which make a significant difference - whether it's increasing recycling and renewable energy, reducing water use or supporting the local production of Australian food and beverages," she said.

Businesses with innovative ideas, fewer than 50 full time employees and turnover of less than \$25 million in annual revenue are eligible to apply.

Since it was established in 2015, the Coles Nurture Fund has committed more than \$28 million in financial support to over 80 Australian producers to help them introduce ground-breaking technology, establish new products and drive innovation and sustainability.

Previous projects funded by the Coles Nurture Fund range from Australia's first quinoa processing facility, to fence posts made from recycled plastic, and a state-of-the-art factory to grow grass indoors.

In 2021, the Coles Nurture Fund provided a \$455,000 grant to NSW agricultural business, Sawmill Circuit, to purchase a large vacuum truck which will collect manure from 18 dairy farms in Nowra so that it can be transported to a biogas plant which is being built in the local area. Once collected, the manure will be converted to renewable energy and put back into the grid.

David Ryan of Sawmill Circuit encouraged Australian producers to consider applying to the Coles Nurture Fund if they needed financial support for a unique or ground-breaking idea.

"The support we received from the Coles Nurture Fund will make a significant difference to the way in which dairy farms in the Nowra area manage effluent. I would strongly encourage other producers who have a unique plan to drive sustainability and innovation on their farm or factory to consider applying for a grant in Round 10 of the Nurture Fund," he said.

To apply for Round Ten of the Coles Nurture Fund, log onto www.coles.com.au/nurturefund Applications close at 5pm AEST on Friday, 25 February 2022.

For further information, please contact *Coles media Line (03) 9829 5250 or media.relations@coles.com.au*