

Some articles from earlier days

SAOGA SEMINAR JUNE 29 - JULY 30

Advertising feature

Cowell to host growers

About 100 oyster growers from around South Australia will converge on Cowell next Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, June 29, 30 and July 1, for the annual South Australian Oyster Growers Association (SAOGA) seminar.

SAOGA committee members Steven Pope and Mark Jarvis said the seminar is the main event on the oyster growers' calendars for sharing information and finding out what's new in the industry.

Mr Jarvis, who is Cowell's representative on the SAOGA board, said while some of the industry suppliers may release something new at the seminar, it is mostly oyster growers who have come up with something innovative that take centre stage amongst the growers.

"For us, it's all about swapping ideas and being able to grow oysters more efficiently," he said.

The members of SAOGA, which is about 90 per cent of South Australian growers, are a unified group who work well together, and often solve common problems.

Association treasurer Steven Pope said the group has organised a quality assurance program for the industry and is about to launch and Occupational Health and Safety Manual for the South Australian industry, instead of having individual members come up with their own, saving members many hundred of

dollars.

South Australia's oyster industry was worth about \$23 million to the State last year, which is expected to increase over the coming years as the demand for the product goes up and more markets are found.

Most of the 52 million oysters grown in South Australia last year were consumed in Australia, however some are exported to markets in Asia and Dubai.

The 'cream' of the oyster crop will be on show at the dinner on Thursday night when the 'Best Closed Dozen' and 'Best Open Dozen' oysters are selected.

Mr Jarvis said there are some excellent oysters entered in the competitions and the winners hold bragging rights for a year.

"If you win that you are doing really well!" he said.

Field Day open to the public

This year's field day is intended to be more relevant to the general public.

The field day, which will be held from 2.30pm on Thursday at the foreshore in Cowell, will have displays from businesses and companies involved in the oyster industry and those not directly linked to the oyster industry.

Business attending the field day will include motor vehicle sellers Pringles Ag Plus, Ramsey Bros and Star Motors; pressure cleaning company Spitwater; boat manufacturer Brett Flavel; cleaning equipment manufacturers; wetsuits and waders from Aussie Oyster Wear; and a host of other businesses.

Three oyster hatcheries will be on hand with displays and representatives to answer questions.

The Cowell Area School's Aquaculture course will be represented with displays and the school will be open for visits throughout the seminar.

Refreshments will be provided and if the weather turns bad, the field day will be held in the AusBulk shed on the Lincoln Highway.

For more information phone 8629 6080.



Organisers... Cowell oyster growers Steve Pope and Mark Jarvis are helping to organise the State's premier oyster grower seminar in Cowell next Wednesday, Thursday and Friday.

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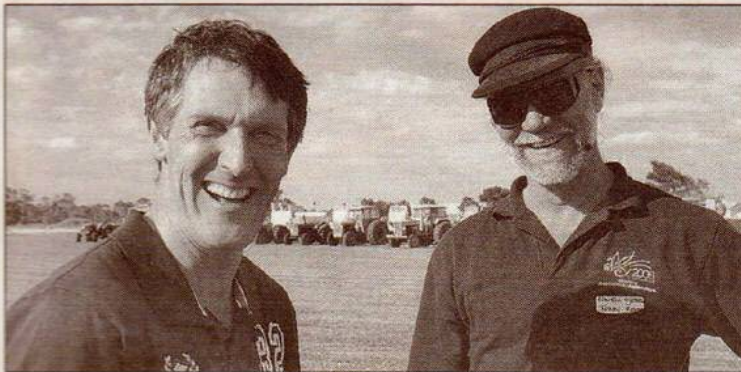
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Oyster growers seminar



INDUSTRY TALKS...
Oyster growers Michael Cameron of Dunelly, Tasmania, and Terry Rehn of Cowell at the SAOGA field day.

LEFT... Ashley Turner of Cowell and Robbie Swincer of Coffin Bay discuss the newest trends in oyster farming techniques and products.



ABOVE... Linda Hank of Coffin Bay and Lynda Turner of Cowell discussing wet suits at the SAOGA field day in Smoky Bay this month.

BELOW... Steven and Tanya Pope of Cowell at the SAOGA field day.



by Tom Kenny

Around 200 oyster growers attended the South Australian Oyster Growers Association annual seminar at Smoky Bay earlier this month, marking the 20th year of the Smoky Bay oyster industry.

The seminar, on September 10 to 12, began with a tour of local oyster sheds at Smoky Bay's aquaculture park.

One of the key features of the weekend was presentation by Ken Lee from the SA Shellfish Quality Assurance Program (SASQAP) about the pinnatoxin closures across SA earlier this year, including at Franklin Harbour which was closed for more than six months to oyster producers.

Mr Lee revealed that pinnatoxin has been proven to be safe for human consumption and industry testing will now cease.

Oyster grower Doug McLeod spoke on his experiences overseas and gave an update on the workings of different countries in the oyster industry.

After the AGM of SAOGA Ian Nightingale, CEO of PIRSA, gave his report on the proposed changes to the fee structures based on the principle of cost of recovery.

The cost hike has been protested by local growers who can expect fees to be as much as triple under the new cost model.

The proposal is before Cabinet at the moment and local oyster growers intend to lobby against the new fee structure.

Other presenters discussed the SA marine parks proposal, regional branding and various industry innovations.

Nuffield Scholar Lester Marshal gave an account of his global study tour. The day finished with a 'field day' of various manufacturers and innovators associated with the oyster.

The annual oyster competition attracted many entries, which gave the judges a hard time picking the winners; the prize for 'best dozen whole shell' went to Robbie Swincer, 'best dozen half shell' went to Mooka Oysters while the 'best pet oyster' went to Cowell Seafood Producers.

The annual dinner dance and auction capped off a good day, with the auction bringing in monies to help run the association.

On Friday, September 12, the South Australian Oyster Research Council seminar saw Judd Evans speak about his trip to USA and Tom Madigan on the 'Cool Change' project update. Cath McLeod, a food safety senior scientist, spoke on her role with SARDI.

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