



Checking out Chaffey

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A REVITALISED citrus industry, supporting small businesses and boosting tourism were some of the key topics discussed when the State Liberals' Regional Affairs Committee (RAC) visited the Riverland last week.

The committee, which includes Member for Chaffey Tim Whetstone, was recently established to hold the Labor Government accountable on its commitment to regional South Australia.

Liberal Member for Hammond and Regional Affairs Committee chair Adrian Pederick told *The River News* the visit proved informative.

"It gave us a bit of an overall view of the development and business innovations that are going on in the region, as well as the tourism opportunities," he said.

The committee toured the Nippy's factory at Moorook, Syntec Diamond Tools at Berri, AgriExchange at Renmark, The Frames accommodation at Paringa



SITE manager Kevin Brand (right) at the Nippy's Fruit Juices Moorook facility with the State Liberals' John Dawkins MLC and Regional Affairs Committee chair Adrian Pederick during their visit to the Riverland last week.
PHOTO: Supplied

and a cod farm at Renmark North.

Mr Pederick said he was a firm believer in economic diversification in regional South Australia, and recognised the challenges of 'red tape' and other constraints on small businesses.

"There's just not that much incentive for them," he said.

"We've had the extended drought, which hit the Riverland hard..."

"We're certainly taking those issues up with the Government."

Mr Pederick said his committee would ensure that regional development funding

was delivered fairly, rather than focused on Minister for Regional Development Geoff Brock's electorate of Frome in the Mid North.

He said the money should go towards boosting employment and export opportunities in the regions.

"It's been the topic of pretty well every discussion I've had," Mr Pederick said.

"The committee wants to make sure that the Government has got the appropriate regulatory controls and aren't impairing the citrus industry..."

"From what I've witnessed, a majority of the citrus here

is transported out of the region...

"With increasing demand... I think there's a very bright future for the citrus industry, and we've just got to maximise those opportunities."

Mr Whetstone, who invited the RAC to visit, said it was important regions such as the Riverland and Mallee received support and recognition.

"Chaffey is the food bowl of South Australia, and it is important the region is provided with support to continue to grow and prosper," he added.