



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

**PROOF**

**ADJOURNMENT**

**Harvest Moon**

**SPEECH**

**Monday, 21 February 2011**

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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## SPEECH

**Date** Monday, 21 February 2011  
**Page** 129  
**Questioner**  
**Speaker** Sidebottom, Sid, MP

**Source** House  
**Proof** Yes  
**Responder**  
**Question No.**

**Mr SIDEBOTTOM** (Braddon) (10.15 pm)—What do you get when you have got a long growing season, rich volcanic soils, a mild maritime climate without the extremes of heat in summer and cold in winter, pristine waters and attention to detail? You get very flavoursome vegetables. Where I live, in Forth, we have got all of these things. Let me name some: beans, broccoli, carrots, kabocha, onions, potatoes, swedes, brussels sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, lettuce, leeks, pumpkins and zucchini. You get flavoursome vegetables and a first-class product. What do you call it when you have a proprietor named Neil Armstrong and you have a business called Forth Farm Produce? You call it Harvest Moon—although I think he was a fan of Neil Young and the album. Anyway, the story is that Harvest Moon is named after Neil Armstrong.

On Friday, I had the pleasure of opening the new packaging shed at Harvest Moon. Harvest Moon was a recipient of \$2 million of nearly \$20 million that was put together in 2009 for the north-west and the north of Tasmania in the face of the impending closures of paper mills. Harvest Moon was one of about 123 applicants seeking nearly \$120 million—and we had only \$20 million—and it was one of the 36 successful projects that were finally assessed, with projected budgets of nearly \$35.5 million. Harvest Moon received \$2 million of that. It employs something like 350 people, and this additional funding will allow it to employ another 40 or 50 people.

This scheme, devised by us in the wake of these unfortunately closing manufacturing centres, has been an excellent template that has been working very well. I congratulate AusIndustry, in particular, and Geoff Atkinson, the Tasmanian director and manager, for successfully completing these projects.

As I mentioned, Harvest Moon is a major fresh vegetable provider not just for the markets in Tasmania but also for the mainland. It also exports throughout the world. It is one amongst many fresh food providers in my local area. I note that of the 36 successful projects, 28 were from the north-west coast, and, of the 28, 15 are associated with food production. It is our great strength. We hear people in this parliament talking about food security and the need to preserve and invest in our rich farming land. That is what many people are doing in my local area.

As well as Harvest Moon, we have also got Brandsemas, Perfecta, Webster Fresh, Premium Fresh, the Strawberry Patch, Forest Hill Farms and New Life Industries, which specialises in zucchini. All of these businesses are devoted to fresh food production and/or processing of those foods for export, particularly to the mainland and beyond. Part and parcel of that is the excellent logistics system that they have been able to develop, not just road transport with businesses like Chas Kelly but also the TT-Line, which allows for the daily transport of all this fresh product to the mainland.

I would like to congratulate Neil Armstrong—or 'Moon' as we affectionately call him; we have played many games of footy together—Mark Kable, Steve Evans, Peter Wyatt, Greg Heathcote, Leigh Richardson, Andrew Bott, Andy Doran and many others at Harvest Moon who produce first-class product in a very professional way. I congratulate them on not just the \$2 million but also the \$4 million expansion of their plant. (*Time expired*)