

# Helping grow La Casa Del Formaggio

# SOUTH AUSTRALIAN Food Centre

## South Australian Food Centre open for business

South Australia's food innovators can now access a unique facility to help grow their business.

More than 200 South Australian food businesses have already tapped into the expertise on offer at the South Australian Food Centre.

Opened by Premier Mike Rann in September 2008 and based at the Regency International Centre TAFE SA, the SA Food Centre is the first stop for the food industry, offering advice on areas such as research, food science, packaging, marketing and product development.

The SA Food Centre brings together the resources and expertise of key government and industry providers. From practical advice and workshops through to innovative scientific advances and packaging solutions, it has every business need covered.

Your business can connect to a range of food technologists, industry experts and scientists who can assist to develop better business systems, processes and technical capacity to respond to market and consumer demands.

## Want help to grow?

Food specific programs have been developed and are being delivered through the SA Food Centre to help businesses improve and grow.

You could get assistance with:

- Business management, planning and strategy
- Financial management and investment
- Marketing and market research/consumer insights
- People management, training, education and skill development
- Processing/packaging/production systems (including process improvement)
- Value and supply chains and alliances
- New product development and innovation
- Environmental management/water, energy and waste
- Food Safety and HACCP, traceability and integrity
- OHS&W.

Access to a range of facilities including:

- Product development kitchen
- Sensory testing facility
- Processing equipment for all sectors.

## Growing our food industry

South Australia's food industry is dynamic and innovative.

Agrifood currently contributes \$11.5 billion to the state's economy each year and accounts for 145,000 South Australian jobs.

The SA Food Centre is a key initiative to help grow industry under the South Australian Food Plan 2007-2010 to achieve the target of 8% growth in the value of finished foods per year.

It is a partnership between Primary Industries and Resources SA (PIRSA), South Australian Research and Development Institute (SARDI), Department of Trade and Economic Development (DTED) and TAFE SA.

## Your next step

Connect to the SA Food Centre and see how it can help grow your food business.

Your first stop will be the Industry Development Officer (IDOs) in your region. Supporting and facilitating your food business, IDOs assist in sourcing the skills and experience you need. They will connect you to the right people and places to help you grow.

Advice is free. Please contact us on the details below to find out more or visit [www.safoodcentre.com.au](http://www.safoodcentre.com.au)



Your first  
stop for  
growth

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Government  
of South Australia



## La Casa Del Formaggio Twenty years and still going strong

South Australian food icon, La Casa Del Formaggio, is one of many businesses already using the services delivered from the South Australian Food Centre.

The family business, set up in 1988 by Gerardo and Rosa Cicchiello, has grown significantly and now employs more than 50 people from its purpose-built export capable factory at Glynde, South Australia.

Producing a range of fresh Italian style cheeses – many made using traditional techniques – La Casa has been working with the SA Food Centre team of industry experts and food technologists on several projects including seeking advice on strategic planning, market development, strengthening brand positioning and new product development.

SA Food Centre Industry Development Officer Linda Kwok has been facilitating the La Casa team on the projects, in conjunction with Managing Director Claude Cicchiello. A strategic marketing plan was developed in early 2008 identifying a number of critical areas that required a far more intensive effort in order to move the business forward.

The two key areas were:

- A total reassessment and restructure of their distribution model to increase profits from sales.
- A number of new products and packaging initiatives will be developed to help strengthen the brand and extend sales.

“It is a joy working with South Australian businesses like La Casa,” Linda said. “They are very committed and passionate about what they do and they really want to be the best by giving their customers a great food experience complemented with excellent service. The family has worked very hard to get to where they are today.”

Food technologists from the SA Food Centre have also assisted in refining and improving milk supply issues. Currently they are working with La Casa on providing expert advice on ways to improve production and product yield, standardise manufacturing procedures and assist with a new product range.

Claude said the business often sought assistance from the SA Food Centre through their business development programs, applying for grants and targeted industry networking.

The business recently became involved in the Graduate Access Program – which aims to attract, retain and increase skilled staff in the industry. It has been an outstanding success providing the opportunity for a young marketing graduate to work under the guidance of a senior industry mentor on market research, reviewing the marketing side of the business including sales and distribution, new product development and upgrading of the website. Due to the success of the program La Casa plans to continue with the employment of the graduate.

Involvement with the SA Food Centre has also helped create and maintain valuable networks with people within the food industry, both within South Australia and nationally.

“Some of the initiatives that we have been exposed to have helped us as a business to gain the confidence to move forward at a faster rate than otherwise would have been the case,” Claude said.

“For example, Professor David Hughes presented his experience on global consumer trends through the Growth Series program from the SA Food Centre. These events are invaluable resources for the business to keep abreast with what is happening in the world.”

During 2009, La Casa will build on its customer feedback – sourced from in-store and factory based market research, as well as the La Casa Del Formaggio website – to gain a better understanding of its consumers and brand.

“Gathering customer feedback is not always easy to obtain but can be one of the most powerful tools to a business. We have recently upgraded our website and this enables us to communicate directly with many of our consumers who visit the site. This year we will undertake a significant piece of research that we hope will provide insights into how far we can stretch the brand and grow our markets,” he said.

Claude said the service from SA Food Centre can help with the challenges of moving forward and will help the business meet its growth targets.

For more information visit [www.lacasa.com.au](http://www.lacasa.com.au)

(front) Claude Cicchiello, Managing Director  
(above) Claude with his father Gerardo Cicchiello