

2025 PROGRAM GUIDE

South Australian **AGRICULTURAL TOWN^{OF}_{THE} YEAR**

Initiative of



Government of South Australia
Department of Primary Industries
and Regions

Delivered in partnership with

IN DAILY

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Program introduction

The Agricultural Town of the Year Award, an initiative of the Department of Primary Industries and Regions (PIRSA), delivered in partnership with *InDaily*, highlights the vital role that agriculture plays in the regional landscape – being the backbone of most regional communities.

The Agricultural Town of the Year Award recognises South Australian towns that excel in agricultural practices and are great places to live and work.

The award provides an avenue where communities can learn from one another which will play a role in building capacity and increasing growth in regional South Australia.

The Agricultural Town of the Year Award will be announced and presented at the South Australian Regional Showcase Awards in early November, with a celebration event held in the winning town in the following months.

Program overview



Stage 1: Nominate a town

29 April 2025 – 21 May 2025

- Complete your town nomination on the Agricultural Town of the Year website.



Stage 2: Vote for a town

26 May 2025 – 20 June 2025

- Vote for a nominated town to win the Agricultural Town of the Year Award.
- Encourage community support and additional voting (download the voting marketing material from the Agricultural Town of the Year website).



Stage 3: Top 10 town submissions

24 June 2025 – 28 July 2025

- Public votes collated and Top 10 towns notified and announced.
- Top 10 towns to complete their written submissions, with the option to include photos.
- Online Q&A session held for the Top 10 towns providing guidance about writing the submission. The 2024 Agricultural Town of the Year winner will share their experience.
- An independent judging panel to determine the three finalist towns.



Stage 4: Town visits for three finalist towns

8 September 2025 – 12 September 2025

- Online information session for the three finalist towns to discuss and prepare for the town visits.
- Agricultural Town of the Year independent judging panel will conduct town visits.
- Solstice Media's videographer will capture each town's agricultural capabilities and initiatives.



Stage 5: Agricultural Town of the Year announced

November 2025

- The winner of the Agricultural Town of the Year Award announced at the South Australian Regional Showcase Awards event to be held in November 2025.
- Winning Agricultural Town of the Year provided media exposure through *InDaily* and *SALIFE* published editorial articles and video footage.



Stage 6: Winning town celebration event

Early 2026

- The winning town will be supported to host a fun celebration and town signage unveiling event.

STAGE 1: NOMINATE A TOWN

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Why nominate your town

Entering the award will provide regional communities the opportunity to reflect on their contributions to South Australia's primary industries and regional development and increase awareness of their town's agricultural contribution.

In addition to being recognised as the 'South Australian Agricultural Town of the Year', the winning town will receive:

- Certificate and trophy presented by the Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development at the awards event.
- Media exposure around the award.
- Video highlights showcasing the regional development and agricultural contribution captured in the written submission, plus the people and places that make up the fabric of the community.
- Stories published to showcase the achievements of individuals and businesses that have made a significant contribution to the town.
- Double page feature in the 2026 February edition of *SALIFE* magazine.
- Sign for the town entrance recognising the town's achievement.
- Community event and sign unveiling to celebrate the 'Agricultural Town of the Year' win.
- Networking opportunities with other regional towns, throughout the program and at the awards event, to connect and discuss shared learnings.



Eligibility

Who is eligible to be nominated?

- Any regional town in South Australia can be nominated and enter the Agricultural Town of the Year Award. 'Regional' is defined by those towns that are located within Areas 1-6 on the [PIRSA Regions Map](#), and the McLaren Vale Preservation District, Virginia and Gawler.
- For the purpose of this Award, 'agriculture' refers to all primary industries – agriculture (field crops, horticulture, meat and livestock, dairy, grape and wine, forestry), and fisheries and aquaculture.
- A town's involvement in agriculture is not limited to farmers, but includes the wider community that supports the industry – e.g. shops, service providers, community activities.
- Previous winners are not permitted to apply if they have been an Agricultural Town of the Year winner in the last three years (2022 – 2024).



How to nominate

Nominate a town via the [nomination portal](#) and select a town you feel has helped grow primary industries and driven regional development the most, and should be recognised as the 2025 Agricultural Town of the Year.

A nomination can be made by anyone.



STAGE 2: VOTE FOR A TOWN

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How to vote for a nominated town

Once town nominations have been received, public voting will occur between 26 May to 20 June 2025. A voting toolkit is available to download from the Agricultural Town of the Year website, to encourage your local community to get behind the program by sharing on social media and enhance your town's opportunity.

Your vote could help that town be selected as one of the Top 10 towns, and have the opportunity to be crowned the 2025 Agricultural Town of the Year.



STAGE 3: TOP 10 TOWN SUBMISSIONS

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Top 10 town submissions

Step 1

Each of the Top 10 towns will be contacted in late June to seek their endorsement and acceptance for their town to proceed through to the next stage of the award process. The towns will be invited to complete a written submission responding to seven questions (as per page 13).

Photos that support the written submission can also be provided.

Applicants should seek to address in their answers the following:

- Collaboration across the community – people working together for united benefit and success.
- Community awareness of the town's agricultural contributions and achievements, and what the industry does for their local economy.

PIRSA and *InDaily* will deliver an online session to help guide the Top 10 town applicants in writing their submission. The session will also provide a platform for the Top 10 towns to connect and discuss shared learnings.

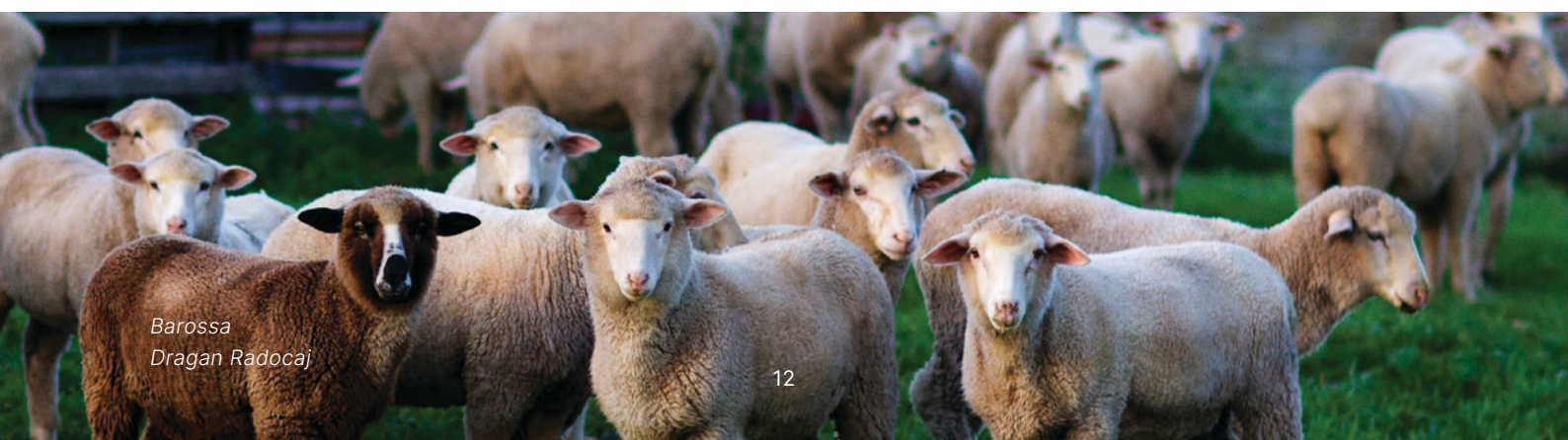
Helpful tips on writing a stand-out submission:

- Talk about how your community collaborates to achieve shared benefits: how is individual success contributing to the success of others?
- Highlight your town's uniqueness: what are you doing differently to others? What initiatives or ideas have you adapted to be locally relevant? Share some examples of how your community spirit manifests in your agricultural activities.
- Be as specific as possible – give names of projects, companies, groups you are referring to, or share specific data or results that back up the success of your initiatives.
- Aim to use the entire word limit. We know you have lots to share, so please tell us as much about your town as you can!
- Strongly consider forming a working group which includes community members, council and local business; your submission will shine with a collaborative approach.
- Nominate two people (representing the community and council) to be the leads for your town's submission.
- Keep coming back to the central focus that the judges want to know about – how your town is helping agriculture to flourish.

Step 2

Independent judging panel to assess the Top 10 town submissions, with a judges meeting to be held in early August 2025 to determine the three (3) finalist towns.

Finalist towns notified of the outcome.



Written submission questions

The Agricultural Town of the Year Award will be given to the town that demonstrates excellence in supporting their local agriculture, food and wine industries to flourish, through outstanding collaboration between community, business, industry and council. An independent judging panel will assess the written submissions.

Question 1

Provide an overview of your town, highlighting your most important contribution to agriculture. (max. 75 words).

Note: this copy will be published in the award program should your town proceed to the finalist stage.

Question 2

How has your town helped local agriculture, food and wine to succeed? Tell us about your achievements both historically and in the past two (2) years, as well as your plans for the future. (max. 400 words).

Question 3

What leadership activities are local people involved in that foster growth in agriculture in your area and across the state? Tell us about how you include and develop the next generation of agricultural leaders. (max. 250 words).

Question 4

What steps has the community taken to develop the local and state agricultural economy? This could include value adding activities, income diversification to complement agricultural activities, and collaborations with other local industries. (max. 250 words).

Question 5

What initiatives has your town implemented to create jobs in agriculture, and attract people to (and remain in) the area? (max. 250 words).

Question 6

In challenging situations, how has your town shown resilience to protect and rebuild agricultural activities? This could include bushfire, flood, drought, biosecurity risks or outbreaks, and other local community or industry challenges. (max. 250 words).

Question 7

What makes your town a great place to live and work? (max. 250 words).

STAGE 4: JUDGING PROCESS FOR FINALIST TOWNS

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Town visits for finalist towns

What to expect for your town visit if you are a finalist town:

- Online information session for the three finalist towns to discuss what the judges are looking for from the town visits.
- Once notified as a finalist, PIRSA will get in touch to organise a date and time for your town visit which will occur between 8 September 2025 – 12 September 2025.
- The finalist towns will be visited by an independent judging panel, a journalist from *InDaily*, a videographer for filming and a PIRSA representative.
- Prior to the town visit, the town will be required to submit an itinerary showcasing their town's agricultural initiatives. The visit should reflect the content of the written submission (as per page 13). All itinerary details will be required by COB on Wednesday 27 August 2025.
 - » Towns are encouraged to build 'activities-in-action' into their itinerary, where possible.
 - » Map inclusions are also helpful to assist the judges with their pre-visit planning.
- Transportation will be required for the judging panel town visit. It has worked well when arrangements have been made for the judging panel to travel together.
- The judging panel enjoy hearing from a diverse range of community members. For example both men and women, different age groups, people with varying levels of experience and any recent agricultural award winners.
- Town visits will run for four hours in total. Three hours will be allocated to visits and presentations, and one hour for networking and informal discussions.
- The judging panel will need to adhere to a strict timeframe. This is to ensure there is enough travel time between town visits, and to make time allocations consistent for each town.
- The journalist from *InDaily* will have a few questions for community members at each visit, so please also allow a few minutes for this.



STAGE 5: AGRICULTURAL TOWN OF THE YEAR ANNOUNCED

STAGE 6: WINNING TOWN CELEBRATION

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2025 Agricultural Town of the Year announced

The Agricultural Town of the Year winner will be announced at the South Australian Regional Showcase Awards, to be held in early November. Key community and council members from the finalist towns will be invited to attend, providing the opportunity to network and connect with members from other finalist towns.

The winning town will be provided with media exposure through published *InDaily* and *SALIFE* editorial articles.

Winning town celebration event

The winning town will be awarded funds to hold a community event and sign unveiling to celebrate the 'Agricultural Town of the Year' win. The Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development will be invited to attend the town celebration event, providing additional media opportunities. Ideally the celebration event is to be held within six months after the announcement, as mutually agreed.

Penola: 2024 Agricultural Town of the Year Award Winner



"The 2024 Ag Town of the Year Awards was truly a momentous occasion for Penola!

We are so proud of our Penola community, their pride in its agricultural heritage and what we produce for our local, state and national markets.

Being involved in this event has emphasised the importance of innovation and education, along with honouring the accomplishments of the community.

This event will have a lasting impact on the township, those who choose to call Penola home and the growing tourism industry it supports."

– Mayor Des Noll OAM

GET IN TOUCH

PROGRAM ENQUIRIES

NICOLE DALE

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