



## Iconic festival introduces 'Seasonal Harvest' to celebrate regional producers

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The iconic Stanthorpe Apple & Grape Harvest Festival this year introduces Seasonal Harvest Tours, Dinners and Appreciation Sessions as a way to celebrate the region's producers and the diversity of product on offer on the Granite Belt.

Harvest Festival Director Trevor Fitness said "We are really excited to introduce Seasonal Harvest to the mix of events on offer across the festival, offering visitors the opportunity to find out what it is like to be a farmer and how the seasons affect the harvest."

"Visitor and locals will be able to sample fruit and vegetables straight from the paddock, learn how this produce is turned into award winning products, and sample the ways fresh seasonal produce is served up by the region's top chefs with some delectable harvest dinners," he said.

"The festival has long been a celebration of harvest season, but this year we really wanted to get back to the core essence of the festival and reconnect the event back to the produce and producers," Mr. Fitness said.

Granite Belt Wine & Tourism Director of Marketing Sarah Reeves said "we are honoured to be working with the committee to develop Seasonal Harvest and offer visitors a reason to stay longer and learn about where their food comes from – all while sharing our passion for fresh seasonal produce."

"The tours, dinners and sessions have all been specially crafted to showcase the diversity of the product currently in season, meeting colourful producers and pioneering winemakers along the way and creating gourmet menus that showcase regional heroes," she said.

At the event, a special Seasonal Harvest marquee will run a mix of appreciation session including cheese & wine matching, cooking demonstrations and wine appreciation sessions.

Full and half day tours including harvest lunches and dinners can all be booked online through the Apple & Grape website at [www.appleandgrape.org](http://www.appleandgrape.org). The first tour begins on Thursday 6th March and ends on Monday 10th March, with the main festival on from the 7th-9th March.

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A photographic library can be shared through Dropbox – please contact by email if you require access.

PDF flyer can be downloaded by clicking [here](#)

PDF Programme can be downloaded by clicking [here](#)

More about Seasonal Harvest:

Harvest Lunches & Dinners

Varias seasonal menu continues to emphasize the abundance of quality ingredients available in the region, showcasing our 'local heroes', the farmers and artisan producers of the granite belt. Ben Lanyon, Executive chef at QCWT says "We are privileged to act as an ambassador for the region's produce and for a growing host of suppliers and small businesses working with us, providing a great and increasing support to the local economy". Varias at QCWT will host a Harvest dinner with Head Chef Ben Lanyon, in conjunction with the Varias hospitality team during this years pilot Harvest Tours. The degustation will marry the award winning wines from Symphony Hill and Golden Grove. Featuring local produce, beer and wine, the harvest lunches being hosted at Granite Belt Brewery and Hidden Creek winery during the Harvest tours being piloted over the festival. Granite Belt Brewery & Hidden Creek are hosting Harvest lunches over the festival for people attending the Harvest Tour. Geoff from Granite Belt Brewery said "We're thrilled to be part of the new Harvest Tours for the festival. Visitors really enjoy talking directly to the maker" Vineyard cottages and café along with Whiskey gully Wines will host Harvest dinners at their properties at the completion of the tours on Thursday and Monday. Menus consist of seasonal produce sourced locally. Winemakers

Winemakers from the Granite Belt are involved in the new Harvest Tours across the region by hosting Vineyard walks, Sunset tastings and hosting Harvest lunches across the region leading up to and following this years Harvest Festival. Sunset tastings in the vineyard with the winemaker is one of the features of the Harvest tours at this years' Apple & Grape Harvest Festival. Award winning winemakers like Paola Rhymer from Summit Estate and Peter McGlashen from Ridgemill Estate, will host visitors on the Harvest Tours through the vineyard answering the hard questions about

winemaking. Producers

The Harvest Tours will be visiting farms across the district educating visitors and locals alike, what it's like to be a farmer. Farms experiencing the difficulty of weather i.e. Hail are enjoying the opportunity to tell their story. Small to large scale farms will be visited across the region over the course of the harvest tours. Harslett Farm, Amiens, Symara Organic Farm at the Summit and Bent & Haynes at Ballandean, are a few of the farms visitors can enjoy. Lirah Vinegar's Ian Henderson will be one of the makers who will be guiding visitors on the Harvest Tour through his operations. Unlike winemaking, the process will be discussed on the Thursday harvest Tour prior to the festival. McMahons farm at Pozieres is one of the featured farms on the Harvest Tour program for Saturday. Mal, Jeff and Rosemary McMahon will show the visitors on the tour where they produce a medical herb for a Danish Pharmaceutical company which is turned into a skin cancer product. Simpsons Farm from Ballandean has invested in the only punnetting machine in the district. Visitors on the Harvest Tours will be able to experience first hand seeing the cherry tomatoes packed directly into punnets. Farmers who diversified in the early days around the district include Suttons Farm & Cidery and Bramble Patch. Newcomers like the Strawberry Patch & Mallow Lamb will also welcome visitors during the Harvest Tours onto their farm, understanding the value of the retail dollar and diversifying.