



Peel Agri-innovation Ecosystem CASE STUDY

The Lupin Co

Growing the Peel’s agri-innovation and food production sectors is a priority for the Peel region as outlined in the Peel Development Commission’s Strategic Plan (2023-2025) and the Peel Regional Investment Blueprint. This case study highlights the outcomes of an agribusiness engaging with the agrifood innovation ecosystem, supported by the Commission’s programs, investments, and partnerships.

About the business

The Lupin Co was founded in 2016 and has a factory in Bullsbrook. They focus on Australian Sweet Lupin, a high-protein, low-carbohydrate food catered to a global market.

As a family-grown Aussie company, they’re passionate about making seriously good nutritious food that tastes great, is easy to use, and delivers amazing benefits to everyone in the food chain. (Source: The Lupin Co website)

"Lupin flakes are good for you, good for the earth and good for the Aussie growers that The Lupin Co supports."
- David Fienberg, Managing Director, The Lupin Co

Engagement with FIPWA/agri-innovation ecosystem

The Lupin Co participated in the Food Innovation Precinct Western Australia (FIPWA’s) **X-Protein Lab (XPL) program** in 2022 trying to find a way to increase the protein content of Australian Sweet Lupin in a commercial product.

The Lupin Co collaborated with FIPWA for about three years at a concept level. The Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) and Murdoch University became involved to help identify business gaps the food precinct could address, aiming to develop innovative solutions to commercialise sweet lupin products.

"The engagement with others and the support and mentorship gave us a solid stepping stone to help commercialise sweet lupin into the global market."
- David Fienberg, Managing Director, The Lupin Co



X-Protein Lab program

Participation in the **X-Protein Lab program** was made possible with complemented funding from the Department of Primary Industries & Regional Development that enabled The Lupin Co to engage complex, high-level expertise to extract protein from sweet lupin. The program provided access to a good mentor framework of people who knew about food technology. It also provided collaboration with other **XPL program** participants to share non-competitive challenges, knowledge, learnings, and successes and helped knit together SMEs that were struggling in many respects to commercialise a valuable project.

Five years into their commercialisation project, having made significant investments and advancements, the X-Protein Lab brought The Lupin Co together with highly experienced scientists to bounce off ideas and test product concepts. With the project at the point where significant commercial decisions were being made, having this expertise and mentors available helped de-risk the project. Dr Regine Stockmann from CSIRO, who has a substantial background in commercialising high protein levels through extraction and other innovative methods, assisted The Lupin Co. She helped them comprehend the challenges ahead, informing their strategic planning and tactical development.

The X-Protein Lab also built connections to other mentors internationally which provided insights into how the company could take their product to market, attract additional investment and get the world to sit up and pay attention to them.

Lupinology

“Did you know that 85% of the world’s lupins are grown Down Under? While lupins have been grown in Australia for more than 150 years, it’s only recently that we got the bright idea that they are good for our health.

With a slightly nutty flavour, these tasty little legumes use minimal water to grow and help put nitrogen back into the ground. All of this reduces the need for fertilisers, making them great for Aussie farmers as well as for our bodies.” (Source: The Lupin Co website)

For more information about the Food Innovation Precinct Western Australia please visit their website:

<https://fipwa.com.au>

For further details about The Lupin Co, visit: <https://thelupinco.com.au>

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Sustainable jobs
Diverse industries



peel.wa.gov.au



Benefits to the business

The **X-Protein Lab program** enabled The Lupin Co to clearly understand their strategy and the work required to de-risk the project. No SME is infallible, but the program equipped them to minimise errors and mitigate the potential impact of future mistakes. The **XPL program** delved into the details of how they could go about their business, taking away a clear plan and strategy, and getting access to the whole package through engaging with the FIPWA rather than doing things in increments.

Managing Director David Fienberg said, “X-Protein Lab allowed us to look really deeply at the technology associated with the pilot plant and enabled us to ask our potential partners the really difficult questions and provide absolute clarity on what we, and our partners would respectively deliver. Ultimately we withdrew from that potential partnership, but had we proceeded without the background of the **X-Protein Lab** learnings, then it would have been a fundamental commercial failure to execute and our partners would not be able to deliver, which is something that we did not see coming.

“The **X-Protein Lab** was about rolling your sleeves up and getting engaged as you never quite know what’s going to come out of it. The engagement with others at a pre-competitive level has been amazing and the support and mentorship from both a deep science and commercial level gave us a solid stepping stone to help commercial sweet lupin into the global market”.