

MEDIA ALERT

*For Immediate Release*

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***Riverina growth and prosperity lures big-city residents seeking a Country Change***

A one-day event targeting city dwellers fed up with the hustle and bustle of city living is on this weekend. The inaugural [RDA Country Change Expo](http://www.countrychange.com.au/make-the-move.aspx) in Temora has been campaigning heavily to educate people in city areas why a Riverina move could be a life-changing decision.

‘We’re seeing more people than ever moving to the [Riverina](http://www.rdariverina.org.au/our-region/regional-profile.aspx) to cash-in on the opportunities here,’ said Rachel Whiting, CEO of [Regional Development Riverina (RDA-Riverina),](http://www.rdariverina.org.au/) which will facilitate this year’s event on September 23.

According to Census data, between 2011-16, over 4,000 people made the Riverina home – an annual average increase of 0.5%. With an estimated population of 170,000, it’s equivalent to around 2.2% of New South Wales’ residents.

‘People in the cities are worn-out by long daily commutes and [soul-crushing mortgages.](https://www.propertyvalue.com.au/) They’re looking for the work-life balance and even career advancements that can come from making a Country Change. It also provides an opportunity for older Australians looking to take advantage of the Government’s new [downsizing initiatives](http://treasury.gov.au/Policy-Topics/PeopleAndSociety/Housing-affordability),’ said Mrs Whiting.

Robyn Otley, 54, and her husband, Garath, 61, made the Country Change to [Temora’s Airpark Estate](http://www.temora.nsw.gov.au/facilities-recreation/airpark-aerodrome/temora-airpark-estate.aspx) from Nowra seven years ago. They’re now mortgage free and run two successful businesses.

‘It’s a fantastic life. We absolutely fell in love with community who made us feel so welcome. The opportunities here are growing which, as a resident and business owner, is exciting to watch,’ said Mrs Otley.

According to data from RDA Riverina, businesses registrations grew 0.8% between 2015-16. The annual turnover range which experienced the largest increase in business numbers was the ‘$100,000 to $200,000’ range, which increased by 4%, followed by the ‘$500,000 to less than $2million’ range which increased by 50 businesses (or 1.4%).

Overall, the output generated by Riverina’s economy is estimated at over $21.5 billion.  ‘Manufacturing’ accounts for $4.9 billion (22.7%) of total output, followed by ‘Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing’ ($2.3 billion or 10.7%), and‘ Rental, Hiring and Real Estate Services’ ($2billion or 9.2%).

‘We urge anyone interested in re-locating to come to the Country Change Expo. It provides excellent tools and resources to research a move. You can also meet locals and try the region on for size - it’s really about making the transition easier,” said Mrs Whiting.

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 <http://news.medianet.com.au/blue-clay/riverina-ecosystem-underestimated>