

ANN FURNER



VOTE NOW

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Voting for Member Director Ballots

Opens Friday 15 October 2021

Closes Wednesday 3 November 2021

MURRUMBIDGEE IRRIGATION A-CLASS MEMBER DIRECTOR POSITION NOMINEE.

Ann Furner is a mixed horticultural farmer from Yenda, NSW. She runs and manages a 20-hectare prune farm and jointly runs a 20-hectare wine grape farm with her husband, Anthony Nehme. She has had 20 years' experience working in horticulture, 15 of which have been in the local area of the MIA.

Ann is a local. She was born in Griffith and grew up on a broadacre irrigation farm 60km west of Griffith, near Goolgowi. She attended Griffith High School, completing her Higher School Certificate in 1999, before heading off to university at Charles Sturt University in Wagga Wagga. After a course structure change in Wagga, she moved to the University of Western Sydney – Hawkesbury campus, completing her degree in Horticultural Science, in 2003.

Ann spent several years working as a Quality Assurance Officer for Woolworths at their Distribution Centres in Homebush and Flemington, and for a stonefruit marketing and export company in Cobram, Victoria. She then moved back to Griffith to start her new role as a Horticultural Agronomist at Yenda Producers Co-operative.

During this time Ann familiarised herself with the local horticultural areas of Tharbogang, Hanwood, Bilbul, Lake Wyangan, Nericon, Hillston, Coleambally, Darlington Point and Leeton. Ann loved spending time on farm talking with growers, learning from them about their practices at the same time as helping them make important on-farm decisions. She too, became a farmer when she purchased her own farm in 2009.

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MICHAEL NEHME, ROBERT NEHME, ANTHONY NEHME, ANN FURNER, AND EMILY NEHME

BIO SUMMARY:

- Ann is a local.
- 20 years' experience in the field of horticulture
- BA Horticultural Science (UWS) + Masterclass in Horticultural Business (UTAS)
- Quality Assurance Officer –
 - Woolworths DC (Homebush & Flemington)
 - Stonefruit marketing and export company in Cobram, Victoria.
- Horticultural Agronomist at Yenda Producers Cooperative Griffith Branch
- Owns and operates a 20-hectare prune farm in Yenda and established a value adding business in 2019.
- Industry Development Officer for the Australian Prune Industry – 5 years
- Managed the installation of Yenda's Skate Park in 2020
- Nominated for Griffith City Councils Citizen of the Year 2020.

She took a break from agronomy to manage her farm and to have children. During this time, she accepted a contract to become the Industry Development Officer (IDO) for the Australian Prune Industry. Ann worked in this role for 5 years and reported to the prune industry board and Horticulture Innovations Australia (HIA). During this role Ann travelled to several prune growing countries, where she learnt about new automated prune solar drying technology from Switzerland. She continued to research the potential of this technology for Australian conditions and in 2017, invested in this new technology. This has helped reduce her carbon footprint and dehydration costs. Differentiating her product led to the development of her new brand, Naturally Dried Prunes.

Ann prides herself in continuous improvement. In 2017, she focused on improving her business skills and completed a 10-month Masterclass in Horticultural Business through the University of Tasmania. In 2019, she attended a 3-day Foundation of Directorship course through the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

Ann spent several years on the Yenda Preschool Committee and as the Secretary of the Yenda Public School P&C. Ann has been successful in applying for and receiving over \$400,000 in grant funding for local schools, the prune industry and more recently \$200,000 for the installation of Yenda's Skate Park. Ann volunteered her time to provide Yenda with its newest facility. This project received the 2020 Community Project of the Year at Griffith City Councils (GCC) Australia Day awards. Ann was also nominated for GCC Citizen of the Year in 2020.