



## Monet' takes honours at awards

by Christie Lejgedza

Two Adelaide Hills businesses have taken home top honours at the national Australian Grand Dairy Awards held in Melbourne.

Cocolat and Woodside Cheese Wrights were both awarded prizes at the awards held last Wednesday by Dairy Australia.

Woodside Cheese Wrights took home the Champion Goat's or Sheep's milk cheese prize for their goat's cheese Woodside Monet.

Kris Lloyd, Manager and head cheesemaker of Woodside Cheese Wrights said it was a real honour for them and the region to take home the gold.

"It could've gone to anyone in Australia but it went to us in the Adelaide Hills – it's fantastic," she said.

"It's really good for the region as well, we're proudly representing the Adelaide Hills."

The Woodside Monet is a carefully designed cheese, made using a fresh chevre, a selection of special herbs for seasoning, topped with edible organic flowers.

"The cheese is named after Monet and his garden – I've always been a fan of Monet and the whole concept of beautiful gardens, you can still go and visit it in France," she said.

"A lot of the flowers we use are herb flowers and they actually impart a really good flavour into the cheese.

"We got some comments from the judges about the perfect structure of the cheese, and about how it was so well made – apparently they couldn't fault it."

The cheese has been sold at Woodside Cheese Wrights for the last five years and has proven to be one of their best sellers.

"People will buy it, then they'll come back and buy it again and again – once they've got a taste for it they definitely keep coming back," she said.

"When I first put the cheese together a lot of people were saying 'you can't do that! You can't put flowers on cheese!' but I guess in a way I'm glad I'm such a stubborn person and didn't listen to them.

"I think a cheese like that is innovative and different, it pushes the boundaries - I think

it's also great for the cheese industry because it might inspire others to think outside the box."

With 115 cheeses judged in nine classes, chief judge Neil Willman praised the Woodside Monet.

"The exceptional freshness and clean flavour of this cheese and its smooth velvety texture is what makes it a winner," he said.

"The fresh dill, oregano and nasturtium really suit its subtle flavour."

As well as Woodside's locals, Balhannah business Cocolat received high accolades for their Pistachio Ice Cream.

Neil said their ice cream was one of the standout products in this year's competition.

"This ice cream has an incredibly smooth and creamy mouth feel with the true flavour of pistachio," he said.

"It's just delicious."

Dairy Australia's Managing Director Ian Halliday said the awards paid tribute to inspiring people within the dairy industry.

"The dairy industry has a strong history of innovation and inspiration," he said.

"Our dairying tradition has been forged by people with vision and a determination to succeed and is literally brimming with inspirational stories of resilience, passion and energy.



Woodside Cheese Wrights's Monet