



# MASTER CHEF

Tony Carroll, an iconic face of the South Australian food and restaurant industry, has joined Bedford as production manager of Cultivate Food and Beverage

**Q Tell us how you came to be involved with Bedford?**

**A** I have a good friend who has been involved with Cultivate Food and Beverage, which is backed by Bedford, from its inception. He's always spoken about this social enterprise so passionately and with total commitment. It intrigued me, and I wanted to learn more – how it worked, what it was about. When I learned about Cultivate's mission to not only produce great food but to also help people with a passion for food to enter the industry, I was sold. That's why, when the position of production manager became available, he asked if I'd be interested, and I jumped at the opportunity.

**Q What do you hope to achieve there and what do you think having someone with your pedigree and experience will mean to the people you work with?**

**A** I am fortunate to have worked in some amazing hospitality businesses, where quality

and excellence are extremely important (Carroll was most recently head chef at Fishbank and before that head chef and part-owner of Jolleys Boathouse for 10 years). I now feel privileged to be part of an organisation that provides opportunities to people who might otherwise face barriers to entering the industry and to pass on the knowledge that I have been lucky enough to acquire during my career. Together, we are delivering some outstanding food products. I also lead the Research and Development for Cultivate's stable of national foods brands which include the much-loved Emmaline's product range, Positano, Emma + Myrtle's Bakehouse, James Road and Barossa Pizza. There's so much opportunity for people interested in the industry to learn and emerge as leaders in their own right.

**Q I understand Cultivate recruits people of all abilities, how passionate are you about supporting people who might otherwise face**

**Chef Tony Carroll at Cultivate's commercial kitchen in Brooklyn Park. Picture: Tom Huntley**

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**barriers to employment in the food and beverage industry?**

In the kitchen, I am keen to apply my wealth of experience and knowledge to help shape the careers of aspiring chefs. I hope to inspire them to be the best version of themselves, and to recognise it's not just about where you start or even where you finish in this industry, but it's about enjoying the journey along the way, and exploring every opportunity this amazing trade has to offer. I'd like them all to fall hopelessly in love with food and cooking. In addition to supporting individuals to achieve their work and independence goals, what we're doing here at Cultivate also has wide-reaching social and financial benefits for the community.

**Q Tell us about Cultivate Food and Beverage?**

**A** Cultivate Food and Beverage, backed by Bedford, opened in early 2023. As a social enterprise, Cultivate's purpose is to deliver quality food and beverage products while scaling social impact. We achieve this by providing open employment opportunities for people of all abilities. Employing more than 100 South Australians, Cultivate offers world-class commercial food manufacturing capabilities from its Brooklyn Park and Lobethal sites.

**Q If I or someone I know is experiencing barriers to employment, how might I become involved?**

**A** If anybody is experiencing barriers to the workforce, jump on the Cultivate website ([cultivatefb.com.au](http://cultivatefb.com.au)), have a look at what we do, and if you're interested, we would love to set up a time for you to come in for a chat and a tour of one of our Cultivate sites. We have a number of full-time, part-time and casual roles on offer.

**Q We've just had another round of Tasting Australia, what's your view of SA's culinary scene?**

**A** South Australia has always been blessed with so many great restaurants both in the city and regionally. We currently have one of the best restaurants in the country and internationally at Restaurant Botanic, led by Justin James. This has been the case for a long time, going back to the late Jock Zonfrillo at Orana, Cheong Liew at The Grange and so many more. But our real strength doesn't only lie at the elite level, but also more the middle ground of quality restaurants, offering unique, seasonal and regional food at a very affordable price.

**Q How would you like to grow and develop Cultivate?**

**A** Cultivate is growing into a solution-based facility for food-based industries struggling to meet demand for their products, who may need help developing scale or who are going through a tough time. Kitchens are expensive places to run, and staff shortages, skills shortages and the cost of investing in reliable equipment only compound the issue. Cultivate offers a state-of-the-art kitchen, food safety program, and packaging and delivery systems that are second to none. Our greatest asset is the can-do attitude of the team, and their ability to come up with problem solving strategies to assist all areas of the food production industry. Our diverse team has a tremendous amount of industry experience, coupled with the resources and knowledge to assist almost any food service outlet.

**Details: [cultivatefb.com.au](http://cultivatefb.com.au)**